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Exploring the learners' perspective on the causes and ways of dealing with vandalism in urban schools: The case of three selected secondary schools (from Lilongwe in Central West education divisions) in Malawi.

BY

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Special Dedication

I wish to dedicate my study firstly to my unborn son Joseph Dominion Marvelous Nkhata whom I have waited long enough to see this world and share with me the kind of joy I have always anticipated. Secondly to my Wife, my Mum and Dad, Mum in law, brothers, and sisters.

Declaration (Statement of originality)

I Mcloud Nkhata Elliot declare that the work contained in, including the organization and writing of this thesis is entirely my own and has been carried at Mzuzu University under the supervision of Dr. Dominic Mapopa Ndengu. It is also specifically submitted for the purpose of my degree of Masters of Education (Education Leadership and Management) of Mzuzu University and is not being concurrently submitted for any other degree or research paper of any kind and that, all reference material contained in here, has been duly acknowledged.

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Abstract

The study was meant to explore the learners' perspective on the causes and ways of dealing with the vandalism in urban schools with special attention to the three selected secondary schools in Lilongwe urban. The participation was defined in terms of the learners who are deemed to be the chief culprits in cases of vandalism in schools. The study has been guided by the Social control and manageable space theories. The latter assumes that academic tracking is an important factor in the school misconduct, while the former emphasizes the need for management which assumes most residents can learn and even seek out responsibility and exercise considerable creativity in participating in their communities, such as curbing vandalism. Data collection was through qualitative methods of interviews, focus group discussion and mainly the photovoice. The study found out that most of the cases of vandalism in schools are orchestrated by the failure of school administrators to handle various issues concerning their welfare timely. In simple terms, poor administration is in most cases the chief cause of school vandalism by students. The main causes were: expelling students for no apparent or clear reason, not considering students complaints, lack of school maintenance, bad students diet, failure to provide entertainment facilities and lack of monitoring and tracking learners concern (e.g. Students graffiti on the walls). Several ways of curbing school vandalism were suggested. They include; negotiating and understanding (administrators and students) at equal footing (without one party domineering), need of cooperation between teachers and students, students self-control when expressing anger, good interpersonal relationships between teachers and

students, considerations of students concerns/views, teachers to also think of the good of the students, quick responding to learners concerns by administrators and civic education (life skills and problem solving).

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCING THE STUDY

1.0 Scope of the Study

This research write up will focus on the introduction, the problem statement and the purpose of this study. The study's paradigmatic perspective will be discussed, together with the clarification of the key concepts. It gives its main research problem, the critical research question and the subsidiary research questions. It further unfolds the literature review of the problem globally in general and Malawi in particular and design and methodology. Finally the write up will provide data analysis, presentation of findings, discussion and the overall conclusion regarding the critical research question.

1.1 Background of the Study

While the Malawi government is trying its best to improve the quality of education at all levels, some challenges seem to creep in and disturb these government efforts. Chief among them is the problem of vandalism by students which in most cases leave great damage to the school properties ranging from teaching and learning materials to the infrastructure. It is not uncommon these days to find in both the electronic and print media headlines like, "**X Secondary School has suspended 33 students** for allegedly taking leading roles in **recent violent protests by students which damaged school property** including classes, kitchen, laboratory and administration block" (Sabola, 2013), "**Y Secondary students torch teacher's house**", "**Students vandalism on the rise**", "**Moral decay in our school a wake up for parents**"

(Banda, 2013). Trying to curb such acts school authorities employ a numbers of interventions such as dismissals, suspensions or forcing the deemed culprits' to fines in cash or material which if not properly imposed brings a lot of resentment from the learners leading to further unrests. The problem of vandalism is a worldwide phenomenon such that in other countries, Netherlands for example, property worth 250 million Euros was reported to have been destroyed by students' vandalism (Qershor, 2007). My contention in this study was to show how poor leadership and management contribute to vandalism in schools and that the problem of school vandalism can also be addressed by incorporating the learners' views.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Vandalism is clearly prevalent in many Malawian schools. Such schools become insecure as learners cannot learn, and teachers cannot teach successfully, and therefore order and discipline are necessary in schools. Failure in ensuring discipline in schools creates a hostile environment in the learning and teaching process. Learners and educators have a legal right to learn and teach in a peaceful and safe environments. However it is apparent that this right is violated in many schools, and many learners feel unsafe at school. Failing to provide a conducive environment free from vandalism can lead to serious challenges in the performance of the school. It could also cause learning to collapse, since it infringes on the right of learners to be taught in clean, well-kept school buildings, and to develop their full potential. Esau (2007) submitted that it is generally accepted that cared for school facilities, adequate furniture and equipment, as well as clean ablution facilities, are conducive to a healthy learning

environment. As such, different discipline strategies in school management need to be explored to provide educators with the necessary skills to manage discipline problems at school. Literature shows that there is tremendous information on ways that the school authorities put in place in the fight against vandalism. While this is the case, learners' are left out in the formulation of the 'ways'. It is this aspect of sidelining learners that this research intended to explore interestingly inclusive of the ways of curbing vandalism from the learners' perspective.

1.3 Significance of the study

The study is very useful to both the learners, school authorities and other stake holders like parents and the government in general. This is due to the study findings which have provided the interested parties with knowledge of how to maintain peace in the schools and also how to respond to matters of the breakdown of law and order in the learning environments. Cognizant of the same is the usefulness of the study to the researcher in the sense that as an imminent leader and manager in the education sector, the study has imparted necessary skills that will help to foster conducive learning environments in the schools. The study therefore is of great help to the school leaders to efficiently run the organization.

1.4 Critical Research question

What do learners consider to be the main causes of Vandalism in schools and how can the problem be addressed?

1.5 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore what learners consider to be the main causes of vandalism in urban Secondary schools in Malawi and how the problem can be addressed.

1.6 Research questions

- a. What are the causes of school vandalism in the four selected schools?
- b. What are the types of vandalism in the four selected schools?
- c. What are the consequences of vandalism in schools?
- d. How do the school authorities respond to the acts of vandalism in the four selected schools?
- e. What are the learners' perceptive on the best ways of curbing vandalism in the four selected schools?

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Scope of the Chapter

The scope of this literature review will be covered through; the definition, types or forms, nature and extent of vandalism, influences of vandalism in schools on learners' academic performance, contributing factors to vandalism, ways of preventing school vandalism and improving discipline.

2.1. Definition of Vandalism

Qershor, (2007), defines vandalism as an act that involves destroying other people's property, like benches, garbage bins, lanterns, plants, bicycles, windows etcetera. It also involves graffiti on walls, windows and benches, which is hard to remove and costs a lot of money. The Oxford Pocket Dictionary defines vandalism as willfully or maliciously destroy or damage, especially public property. Dedel (2005), posit that the term school vandalism refers to willful or malicious damage to school grounds and buildings or furnishings and equipment. Specific examples include glass breakage, graffiti, and general property destruction. He further points out that school vandalism are similar to vandalism elsewhere. However, schools are unique environments; the factors underlying school vandalism may differ from those underlying similar acts elsewhere, and therefore must be analyzed separately.

2.2 Types of vandalism

Vandalism in schools might take a variety of forms, from doodling in books to writing on desks, from gouging walls to breaking windows, from slicing school bus seats to smashing school furniture (Shore, n.d.). Dedel (2005) scored that one can better understand vandalism behavior when considering it in the context of adolescence, that is, when peer influence is a particularly powerful motivator. Most delinquent acts, he observes are carried out by groups of youths, and vandalism is no exception. Participating in vandalism often helps a youth to maintain or enhance his or her status

among peers. Beyond peer influence, he submitted that there are several other forms for school vandalism *vis-a-vis*, acquisitive vandalism which is committed to obtain property or money, tactical vandalism that is used to accomplish goals such as getting school cancelled, and ideological vandalism that is oriented toward a social or political cause or message, such as a protest against school rules. There are also vindictive vandalism for instance setting fire to the principal's office after being punished, this is done to get revenge, play vandalism occurs when youth intentionally damage property during the course of play, and lastly, malicious vandalism which is used to express rage or frustration.

2.3 Contributing factors to school vandalism

2.3.1. School governance and administration as contributing factor

Esau (2007), exposes that various school management practices such as autocratic or laissez-faire management styles, poor and disorganized leadership and over-regulated, suppressive or inconsistent school control measures, can contribute to vandalism. Constant punishment, vague and unclear school rules and disciplinary procedures, as well as high staff turnover, could create an unhealthy learning environment at a school.

He stresses that the teachers disrespectful, uninterested and prejudiced attitudes and action in respect of some learners, could result in acts of vandalism by the learners. When learners' individual intellectual abilities and differences in personality are ignored and teachers portray a negative attitude towards learners, misconduct in the form of vandalism becomes more frequent Mayer, (1999:5) in Esau (2007).

Another aspect to consider is that youths who do not take part in extramural activities, or who attend schools that have poor or little recreation facilities, often find that vandalism gives colour to their otherwise dull lives (Esau, 2007). Black (2002:2) supports this view, stating that learners who are not involved in school activities or feel no pride in their school or even in their personal achievements, are more inclined to become involved in acts of vandalism. In addition to this particular stand, Tygart (1988) describes the set of learners who does not take in various extracurricular activities as low tracking students. He gives that low tracking appears to be associated with lower participation in extracurricular activities; such activities afford schools potential control of student conduct.

Esau (2007) further stresses that lack of discipline is a common problem in many schools and that acts of vandalism appears to be escalating in these schools, aggravating the existing lack of discipline and impacting extremely negatively on all learners. When discipline is lacking learners learn to disregard rules and this becomes a possible cause of learner aggression towards school property. Esau therefore advises that fair and consistent discipline is required, and both learners and teachers must be aware of school rules and the consequences of the infringement of such rules. Baker

(1985) in Esau (2007) believes that a sound educational environment is built on the foundation of good discipline. He warns that evidence indicates that lack of discipline in schools leads to increased learner absenteeism, poor academic achievement and ultimately vandalistic behaviour. Sound and fair discipline structures create a stable learning environment, with increased attendance figures and higher academic achievement. Learners consequently experience the school environment in a more positive and challenging way. Such fair disciplinary strategies also strengthen a positive relationship of trust between the learners and their teachers, as everyone is treated equally and the learners perceive that their contributions will be acknowledged. Such learners also take ownership of their school, by for example, reporting any acts of vandalism to the school authorities (p, 483).

Esau presupposes that school governance and administration as contributing factors of vandalism should also be seen in the context of where the learner comes from. Quoting Theron (1991), he points out that vandalism can be a symptom of an underlying problem, such as poverty. Learners may steal classroom doors or aluminium from the blackboard to sell in order to buy food. Research in America indicates that most schools damaged by vandals are usually situated in the lower socio-economic areas, are housed in older buildings, are situated in over-populated areas, and have little or no funds to repair and replace damaged equipment.

2.4 The culprits of vandalism in schools

Stout (2002) and Bloemhof (1990) in Esau (2007) advances that vandalism in schools is commonly committed by learners from those schools. Researchers like Finn and Frone (2003), Theron (1991) and Bloemhof (1990) have found that boys aged between fourteen and sixteen years are primarily responsible for school vandalism. However, Sanders (1981) holds a different view, postulating that girls are just as often involved in acts of vandalism. He ascribes the reason why boys have been identified as the primary offenders to behavioural theories that state that boys display more aggressive behaviour than girls. Vandalism by boys is therefore more commonly and readily noticed and reported.

Although Sanders (1981) admits that most vandals are in their teens, he cautions that it must not therefore be deduced that all youths are guilty of vandalism. Sanders is of the opinion that only a small percentage of youths participate in acts of vandalism. Theron (1991) agrees, adding that all people, at one or other time in their lives, do something that can be defined as vandalism (for instance, etching a word on a school desk or breaking a cupboard door to gain access to its content). Dedel (2005) notices that those who vandalize or break into schools are typically young and male, acting in small groups. Vandalism and break-ins are most common among junior high school students, and become less frequent as students reach high school. Those involved in school-related arson are more likely to be in high school. Many vandals are those who may have done poorly academically, and may have been truant, suspended, or expelled. As is typical of many adolescents, students who vandalize and break into schools have a poor understanding of their behavior's impact on others, and are more

concerned with the consequences to themselves. Offenders are no more likely to be emotionally disturbed than their peers who do not engage in the behaviour, nor are they any more critical of their classes, teachers, or school in general.

2.5 When is vandalism, vandalism in schools?

On a different note, double standards often exist regarding what could be described as acts of vandalism. When, for example, learners break desks and chairs at school, it is immediately labeled as vandalism, whereas, when adults pull down the school's soccer poles to sell it for money, their behaviour may be defended as the consequence of poverty in the area (Theron, 1991) in Esau (2007). However, Barker and Bridgeman (1994) asserts that vandalism is vandalism when a person who without lawful excuse destroys or damages any property.

2.6 What is targeted by vandals?

Vandals target everything available at schools. Targets are limited only by the fertile imagination of the perpetrators Allen and Greenberger, (1978) in Esau (2007). La Grange (1999) states that youths who are inclined to perpetrate acts of vandalism will target almost anything, from the shrubs and trees on the school grounds and nearby parks, to the walls and windows of the school and nearby buildings. Vandals mainly break windows, paint graffiti, cause damage to furniture and books, as well as laboratory and sport apparatus. Classrooms, ablution facilities and sport fields are also not spared (Cummins, 2003; Perry, 2001; Bloemhof, 1990) in Esau (2007). Esau affirms that learners deface and destroy their own schools, sometimes to such an

extent that it causes the collapse of teaching and learning. The destruction could also pose a health risk to learners and teachers, due to the resultant unhygienic conditions, such as broken toilets that do not flush (Matavire, 2001). De Wet (2004) hinted that learner vandals target everything under the sun and the targets have been limited only by the fertile imagination of the perpetrators. Those who are so inclined can damage almost anything.

2.7 Possible reasons for vandalism in schools.

Cummins (2003) and Black (2002) in De Wet (2004) point out that there are several reasons for vandalism in schools and the same are complex and varied. Examples of these causes are, adolescence love for adventure, which include a search for excitement, and the need to develop one's own identity. Vandalism is consequently not always committed for the exclusive purpose of causing damage *per se*, but could also be practiced simply for excitement and pleasure, or to gain acceptance among peers. For this reason, some investigation officers call vandalism by learners *wreck creation* (Allen and Greenberger, 1978) in De Wet (2004). Other causes include, influence of peer pressure and alcohol abuse. On influence of peer pressure Theron (1991) in Esau (2007) presupposes that the youth often acceptance within a peer group through acts of vandalism that bond them together. Alcohol and drug abuse make learners feel invincible and display a careless and adventurous attitude which hatch

into vandalism. Drugs and alcohol dependency and other social vices are expensive and may drive people to crime if they have no other means of supporting their negative habits.

Property crimes such as burglaries at schools are widely associated with substance abuse (Fourie, 2000) in De Wet (2004). People under the influence of alcohol or drugs or who abuse drugs often behave in an irresponsible and reckless manner, which may deteriorate into acts of vandalism.

2.8 Vandalism in schools in the USA

Other big countries USA are also battling with the problem of vandalism. Toch (1993) in Esau (2007) postulates that schools in America are becoming the breeding ground for increased levels of vandalism and gangster activities, particularly in poverty-stricken and less affluent neighbourhoods. Over the years, schools have been accustomed to vandalistic behaviour, but recently, vandalism has become more personal and even vicious in nature.

2.9 Preventing school vandalism and improving discipline

Dedel (2005) list a good number of preventive means to school vandalism. They are, parents support disciplinary policies, students' valuing teachers' opinions, teachers not expressing hostile or authoritarian attitudes toward students, teachers not using grades as a disciplinary tool, teachers having informal, cooperative, and fair dealings with the principal, and staff consistently and fairly enforce school rules.

Conclusion

The Chapter has handled a broad literature on the concept of Vandalism. We have looked at the definition, types, contributing factors to school Vandalism, the culprits, what is targeted by vandals, possible reasons for vandalism in schools and prevention of school vandalism and how to improve discipline. In this literature review I have not precisely come across any account of any research that has been carried in a Malawian setting to verify or compare with the kind of literature available from other countries.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of the chapter

This chapter describes the design, paradigm, setting, sampling technique, data collection tools, data collection procedure, ethical considerations and data analysis procedure this study has used.

3.2 Research design

Nachmias and Nachmias (1981) define a research design in three ways. Firstly, as the program that guides the investigator in the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting observations. Secondly, it is defined as a logical model of proof that allows the researcher to draw inferences concerning causal relationships among the variables under investigation. Lastly, they define it as something that expresses the domains of generalizability, that is, whether the obtained interpretations can be generalized to a larger population or to different situations. According to Belle (2008)

a research designed is defined as a plan or a blue print according to which data is to be collected to investigate a research question in the most economical manner. Similarly, Michael (2008) observes that the principle of the research design is to guide the researcher on the type of data to collect, how to collect, process and analyse it in order to answer the research problem(s).

This study therefore employed the case study design because the main aim of this research was to investigate vandalism within its real life context especially because there is a mist surrounding its causes between the school administrators and the learners themselves. Robinson cited in Chih-en Hsien (1994) define a case study as a strategy of doing research which involves empirical investigation of a multiple sources of evidence. In the same vein, Vanwynsberghe and Khan (2007) define case study design as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context especially when the boundary between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident.

The purposes of case studies are to richly describe, explain, or assess and evaluate a phenomenon (e.g., event, person, program), to obtain the best possible understanding of a case no matter how complex it is. However, it has to be scored here that case studies are a good example of qualitative research designs along with other designs like phenomenology and ethnography. Qualitative research enables researchers to study social and cultural phenomena. Qualitative data sources include observation and participant observation (fieldwork), interviews, documents and texts, and the

researcher's impressions and reactions (Myers, 1997). Myers further alleges that the motivation for doing qualitative research, as opposed to quantitative research, comes from the surveillance that, if there is one thing which distinguishes humans from the natural world, it is our ability to talk. Qualitative research methods are designed to help researchers understand people and the social and cultural contexts within which they live. The qualitative approach is indispensable to this research because the researcher attempt to gain an in-depth understanding of ways of addressing the problem of vandalism in schools from the learners' perspective.

Qualitative research methods are important in exploratory research in the sense that they provide in-depth understanding of a phenomenon (Ary, et al. 1972) cited in JIham (2009), multiple sources of evidence provides findings that are much convincing and accurate, and also facilitates triangulation (Yin 2003) cited in Vanwynsberghe & Khan (2007) and lastly, enables the exploration of complex situations and allows for the gathering of multiple perspectives from a range of sources (Luckner, et al 2012). Mack, et al (2005) cited in Kamanga (2012) clarifies that the use of open ended questions and probing gives the participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses. They additionally observed that qualitative methods are expedient in the sense that they allow the researcher the flexibility to probe initial participant responses, thus, to ask *why* or *how*. Qualitative case studies can also be used where you cannot manipulate the behavior of those involved in the study, where a researcher want to cover contextual conditions, as well as where the boundaries between the

phenomenon and the context are not clear Baxter and Jack (2008) cited in Kamanga (2012).

In summary, the strength of the qualitative research method is that it opens and generates new theories and recognizes phenomena ignored by previous researchers and literature (Mabaphuthi-Junior, 2005) cited in Kamanga (2012). All in all, Denzin and Lincoln postulates that “qualitative research method attempts to avoid prejudgments” (Kamanga, 2012, 21).

Although qualitative methods of collecting data was favoured in usage, they have the following draw backs; they are limited by the sensitivity and integrity of the researcher (Guba & Lincoln cited in JIham 2009). Difficult to generalize due to the small sample size (Guba & Lincoln cited in Tesol, 2011) and Sometimes case studies can be lengthy which can remove the interests of some readers. Other expected challenges include, if not properly organized the research may generate large volumes of data sometimes difficult to analyse, time consuming as much time will be needed to conduct interviews and focus group discussions and also in transcribing the recorded data.

3.3 Research paradigm

This research followed an interpretivist paradigm. According to Vine (n.d.) this paradigm was influenced by Wilhelm Dilthey in the mid-twentieth century as he wanted to highlight that the subject matter investigated by the natural sciences is different to the social sciences, where human beings as opposed to inanimate objects can interpret the environment and themselves. Vine further noted that contemporary

research practice, means that there is an acknowledgement that facts and values cannot be separated and that understanding is inevitably prejudiced because it is situated in terms of the individual and the event. He clarifies that Researchers recognize that all participants involved, including the researcher, bring their own unique interpretations of the world or construction of the situation to the research and the researcher needs to be open to the attitudes and values of the participants or, more actively, suspend prior cultural assumptions. This has also been echoed by Shawa (2007) who gives that interpretive inquiry mainly seeks to replace the scientific notions of explanation, prediction and control with the interpretive notions of understanding, meaning and action. Additionally, Mack (2010), contends that the main tenet of interpretivism is that reality must be observed from inside through the direct experience of the people.

As stated by Vine (n.d.) the interpretivist main advantage is that the detail and effort involved in interpretive inquiry will allow me as a researcher to gain insight into particular events as well as a range of perspectives that may not have come to light without that scrutiny. He however acknowledges other scholars' criticism who gives that interpretivism does not allow for generalizations because it encourages the study of a small number of cases that do not apply to the whole population. Additionally, Mack (2010) criticizes it because it abandons the scientific procedures of verification hence the problem with generalizing the results to other situations.

This interpretivist paradigm was considered as appropriate in this study because the research carried was based on the postulation that the participants' perception and

experiences are highly remarkable in the formulation of ways to curb vandalism in schools.

3.4 Theoretical framework of the study

There are so many theories that guide research in vandalism be it at school or non-school setting. For example, Kim (2005) accounted for a good number of them. They include, **Defensible space theory** by Newman (1972) which found that crime rates in high-rise buildings where hallways, lifts, lobbies, fire escapes, roofs etc. were isolated from public scrutiny, were higher than in low-rise buildings. His solution was to re-design apartment buildings so public areas would be under surveillance by some residents at all times, and also **Physical design and kinetic management theory** by Felson (1987) which suggests the manipulating of the environment to divert flows of likely offenders away from likely targets, or to restrict them to where they can be monitored.

However for the purpose of this research, **Social control theory** and **Manageable space theory** were blended in determining the outcome of the findings. Social control theory for example, by Arnold and Brungardt, (1983) was pursued because it considers academic tracking to be an important factor in school misconduct. Most likely, low-track students are prospectively to have weak social bonds to the school, education, and adult values in general. Social control exerted by the school is therefore weaker for these students. Low tracking appears to be associated with lower participation in extracurricular activities; such activities afford schools potential

control of student conduct (Tygart, 1988). Being placed in a low track increases the contact with other low-track students. Significantly, Manageable space theory by Perlgut (1981, 1982) was used. This theory emphasizes the need for management which assumes most residents can learn and even seek out responsibility and exercise considerable creativity in participating in their communities, such as in curbing vandalism (Kim, 2005).

3.4.1 Tenets of the theories used in this study.

For the purpose of this research the tenets that have been used are the learners' low tracking and participation. Low tracking (social control) was used because the study intended to establish whether learners who are poorly tracked in their behaviour by the educators and administrators are the ones who easily engage themselves in acts of vandalism amongst their colleagues.

Participation (manageable space) as a tenet was favoured because the researcher wanted to establish if allowing learners to be part of policy formulation in schools would help to mitigate the problem of vandalism in schools.

3.5.1 Study area

The study was conducted in the three selected secondary schools in the Central West Education Division of Malawi. The region lies in the Central region of Malawi covering education districts of Mchinji, Dedza, Ntcheu, Lilongwe urban and Lilongwe rural. It is bordered by Central East education division to the North and South-East education division to the south. The main schools under focus were Dzombe,

Liwamba, and Ambwene (not real names) secondary schools. The choice of these schools has been based on the fact that cases of Vandalism are more prevalent (almost every academic year).

3.5.2 De-limitation of the study

The study only involved learners from Dzombe, Liwamba and Ambwene secondary schools. This is the case considering the nature of the research topic “Exploring ways of addressing the problem of vandalism in urban schools **from the learners’ perspective.....**”.

3.5.3 Study population

This is also known as survey population by other scholars. Babbie (1979) defined a population as a theoretical specified aggregation of survey elements, whereby an element is that unit about which information is collected and which provides a basis of analysis. A survey population, he contends, is that aggregation of elements from which the survey sample is actually selected. It is this survey population on which the researcher wanted to decide and draw conclusions about. Although determination remains a problem to researchers in estimating a population value from a sample value (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1981), the research targeted approximately five thousand (5000) students who were believed to be in these schools at the time of the study.

3.5.4 Sample size and sample characteristics

The study involved eleven students as its sample. These will be senior classes' students (forms three and four) who were deemed to have vast experience in cases of vandalism in these three schools.

This sample size was considered in my view to be adequate because as highlighted by Fischer (ed. 2006) single-researcher studies, like dissertations, typically are restricted to one to five to ten or twelve participants' protocols this is the case because Fischer asserts that "qualitative research is time intensive, requiring dwelling with text, tracking insights, revisiting the texts again and again in light of changing appreciation of its depth and implications. We look again and again, re-searching, as our insight evolves" (P, 23).

3.5.5 Sampling techniques

Nachmias and Nachmias (1981) define a sample as any subset of sampling units from a population. A sampling unit refers to a single member of population for example, a student, a teacher, a household, a city, an event or a nation. They also define a subset as any combination of sampling units that does not include the entire set of sampling units that has been defined as a population. Sampling techniques therefore refers to the procedure a researcher uses to select needed study sample (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Against this understanding, this research employed simple random sampling where every conceivable samples of the same size from the population have equal and independent chance or probability of being selected (Schumacher & McMillan, 1993) and purposive sampling.

3.5.6 The procedure in simple random sampling

Chulu (2008) asserts that in drawing a sample, a researcher require a sampling frame (a listing of all cases in the population). If not one may use a table of random numbers which is a collection of random numbers in which any digit or any grouping of digits bears no relationship to any other digit or grouping of digits in the table. In a table of random numbers, each digit from 0 to 9 has an equal chance of appearing in each position in the table. Thereafter, a researcher obtains a listing of all cases in the population (sampling frame) and assign each case from 1 to n. Then a starting point is chosen in the table and from this point, a researcher takes as many numbers from the columns as needed for the sample. Chulu challenges that, if the researcher does not place the number back after selection (sampling without replacement), not all cases will have equal probability of being in the sample. This problem however, was resolved by placing the number back into the pool after each selection (sampling with replacement), some cases though were sampled more than once.

3.5.7 Purposive sampling

The three schools that took part in this study were selected using purposive sampling technique. The basis for this was that the schools have been rocked in multiple cases of vandalism and constant students' demonstrations.

3.6. Entry into the schools and data collection procedure

Mertens (2005) denotes that data collection procedures are the steps that the researcher will take to collect the data from the participants. These involved seeking permission

from head teachers of the chosen study area prior to the actual data collection. A researcher's letter of identification from the head of department for Education and Teaching Studies (ETS) at Mzuzu University to conduct the study was given to the gate keepers (the Education Division Manager, District Education Managers and heads) of the study areas.

3.6.1 Data collection methods

Data collection was done using qualitative methods. They included Photovoice, individual interviews, focus group discussions and minimally through observations.

3.6.2 Photo voice

This method was used to answer the third question in this research which mainly intends to depict the consequences, extent and nature of vandalism in schools. Wang (1999) defines Photovoice as a process by which people can identify, represent and enhance their community through photographic technique. Wang (1999:185) poses that Photovoice has three main goals. Thus, to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns, secondly, the method is used to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about personal and community issues through large and small group discussions of their photographs and lastly, to reach policy makers. Kuratani and Lai (2011), define Photovoice as a participatory research strategy commonly implemented in health research as a mechanism for personal and community change. Additionally, Community Tool Box (2013) define it as a process in which people – usually those with limited power due to poverty, language barriers, race, class, ethnicity, gender,

culture, or other circumstances – use video and/or photo images capture aspects of their environment and experiences and share them with others. The pictures can then be used, usually with captions composed by the photographers, to bring the realities of the photographers’ lives home to the public and policy makers and to spur change. Although the concept has existed for many years, much of the theoretical background of current programs comes from the work of Caroline Wang. In 1992, Wang and Mary Ann Burris developed Photovoice based on a combination of Paulo Freire’s notion of “critical consciousness” (a deep understanding of the way the world works and how society, politics, and power relationships affect one’s own situation); feminist theory, which emphasizes the importance of voice; and documentary photography, which is often used to help bring about social change (Community Tool Box). It has to be emphasized though that the term photovoice was originally proposed by Wang and Burris in the early 1990s to describe the approach of blending narrative with photography to explore community issues; however this methodology builds on a deep, historical foundation of individuals and communities blending images and words to express needs, history, culture, problems, and desires (Candace: 2011). It is this element of social change in Photovoice as a methodology that necessitated it to be the main research method in this particular study.

As Kuratani and Lai (2011) surmises, Photovoice was favoured in this study because of its accuracy in gathering information, ability to establish a partnership among the key stakeholders as it equitably involves them in all aspects of the research process. By capturing the needs of marginalized populations (of course not the case in this

research), Photovoice can direct the focus of research for a community. Photovoice goes beyond facilitating discussions for needs assessments, to a stage of action where change can occur at the policy level. To be filtered in this Photovoice method were the interviews and focus group discussions.

3.6.2.1 Stages followed in conducting Photovoice

Wang (1999:187-188) gives stages in conducting Photovoice as beginning with conceptualizing the problem, then defining broader goals and objectives, obtaining informed consent, recruiting policy makers as the audience for photovoice findings, training the trainers, conducting Photovoice training, devising the initial theme/s for taking pictures, taking pictures, facilitating group discussion and critical reflection and dialogue or in short meeting to discuss pictures (refer to the guide in the appendices). All these stages were followed and the participants were given enough time to write the photo essays (see on the presentations of the findings).

3.6.3 Interviews

Interviews as one of the methods used in this research was basically to answer the first and the second questions in this research. Thus, interviews helped to unveil what learners think are the main causes and types of vandalism in their schools. An interview can be defined as a conversation usually between two people. In conducting these interviews, it was the desire of the researcher to make use of semi-structured schedules. Letters were given to each participant to take part in the study. Each

participant was given freedom to accept or refuse participating in the study. If the participants accepted to take part, the researcher introduced himself and explained the purpose of the study including ethical issues to the participants. Introduction helped to build up the camaraderie between the researcher and the participants since interview is a social encounter Wanda (2009) cited in (Kamanga 2012).

My main role as researcher involved asking questions, and recording down each interview using a phone with a high quality recording system. However, for free giving of the responses, interviewees were asked whether the recordings should be deleted soon after transcribing. Expressions like, how, why, explain more, any additions, what about it, what else etc. were used to ensure that interviewees were able to provide in-depth responses.

The researcher used this method because of its under laying advantages. For example interviews were particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences. The interviewer could pursue in-depth information around the topic (McNamara, 1999). Interviews helped the researcher in understanding the participants' construction of knowledge and social reality. Interviews also provided access to the real feelings of people making it possible to determine what a person knows, likes or dislikes and think.

The researcher however took into consideration the fact that interviews have weaknesses in that they are prone to subjectivity and bias on the part of the interviewer (Cohen et al., 2001). The other challenge is that interviews are time consuming. To

deal with these challenges the interviewer ensured proper bracketing of any prior knowledge and time was used to its best demand.

3.6.4 Focus group discussions

Focus Group Discussions were used to uncover the learners' perspectives of the best ways of curbing vandalism in the three selected urban schools. This method was favoured here with the assumption that learners would probably feel at ease to brainstorm and share their experiences in responding to the questions. Amin (2005) in Kamanga (2012) define focus group discussion as a group of people gathered from similar settings to discuss a topic of interest to the researcher with the purpose of collecting in-depth information about a groups' perception of a given phenomenon. One advantage of focus group discussions is that it brings about an array of rich diverse views from many participants which could not be obtained from individual interviews. Limitations the researcher expected from this method were that if not properly guided no one would feel responsible to give responses leading to a problem of social loafing. Another challenge encountered was on gathering the group of participants to a common place.

In these focus group discussions the researcher used three FGDs one from each school. Each FGD had a composition of six members-three boys and three girls. Longevity of each FGD meeting was one to two hours. The role of the researcher was to, moderate the discussion, taking notes, and recording the discussion. The language used was mainly English though Chichewa could chip in where appropriate and useful

to the researcher and also considering the fact that the aim behind the study was not be to check the participants' English proficiency.

3.6.5 Validity and reliability (trustworthiness) in data collection and data collection tools

To ensure that data collection tools were valid and reliable, the researcher carried prior training sessions to the participants (the learners' who were responsible for taking photos and write photo essays) to ensure that they were able to take pictures that would make a lot of meaning to the research topic. This means I as a researcher was providing a cue on how to take 'worth story telling' pictures. The researcher was also making sure that the recording Phone was in very good condition with spare batteries in case of power losses in the process. The researcher also used probing questions to the learners as guidance in the course of writing more about the pictures taken. The researcher fully familiarized himself with the available literature on how best to conduct research using Photo voice as a data collection tool.

Conclusion:

This chapter has looked at the research design and the methodologies used in data collection. They include, interviews, focus group discussions and photovoice. The chapter has described what the methods are all about and how they been used in this research.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PROCESSING, DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Data processing and analysis

4.1.1 Data processing

Mertens (2005) gives that data processing in qualitative research is an ongoing process. Thus, it does not occur only at the end of the study as is the case with most quantitative studies. Data here was processed through the three-stage process that provides the foundation for analyzing the pictures they have taken. As put by (www.photovoice.com) the first stage was **selecting**: this involved choosing those photographs that most accurately reflect the community's concerns and assets. It stated that the participatory approach dictates this first stage. So that people can lead the

discussion, it was they (the learners) who chose the photographs. They selected photographs they considered most significant, or simply like best, from each roll of digital photos they had taken. The second process was **contextualizing**: this involved telling stories about what the photographs mean. This process is also called storytelling and it occurs in the process of group discussion, suggested by the acronym VOICE, voicing our individual and collective experience. This is so due to the fact that photographs alone, considered outside the context of their own voices and stories, would contradict the essence of Photovoice. Participants described the meaning of their images in individual (through writing below the photos), interviews and group discussions. The last in the data processing was **codifying** issues, themes, and theories. This also involved, documenting the stories and conducting the formative evaluation.

4.1.2 Data analysis

Analysis of documented data began by reading all the Photovoice documents to get a sense of all the data. While doing so, attempts were made to identify possible themes and patterns because in qualitative research, data is an iterative process, not a linear process following the collection of data Lichtman, (2010) in Kamanga (2013). The themes and patterns were identified to fit into the theoretical tenets of vandalism. Thus, data analysis considered the effect of **low tracking** of students and the administration deliberate efforts to involve learners to **participate** in policy formulation.

After reading all the Photovoice documents also known as photo essays, one document was then selected at a time. The researcher then read through each document carefully with an aim of identifying key points. Each identified key point was coded using abbreviations. Codes were then written in the margins of the note book with an arrow pointing the source of the code. The same was done with the rest of the Photovoice documents.

To develop categories, the researcher read through the codes of the from the Photovoice documents carefully to identify similar ones. Similar codes from the seven participants were grouped together and each group became the category (see table 1 below).

To develop themes, the researcher carefully read through the categories to come up with unvarying idea of all the codes in each category (see table 1 below). It should be highlighted that codes that appeared regularly were developed into categories. Kamanga (2013), poses that developing categories or themes involves looking for recurring regularities in the data. Similar processes were carried in the analysis of interview and focus group data. The table below shows the codes, categories and themes that emerged from the data. These formed the basis of my discussion, which is discussed in the section (5.4)

4.2 PRESENTATIONS

RESEARCH FINDINGS IN CRUDE (RAW) FORM

4.2.1 DZOMBE SECONDARY SCHOOL



BROKEN TOILET WINDOWS AND DOORS.

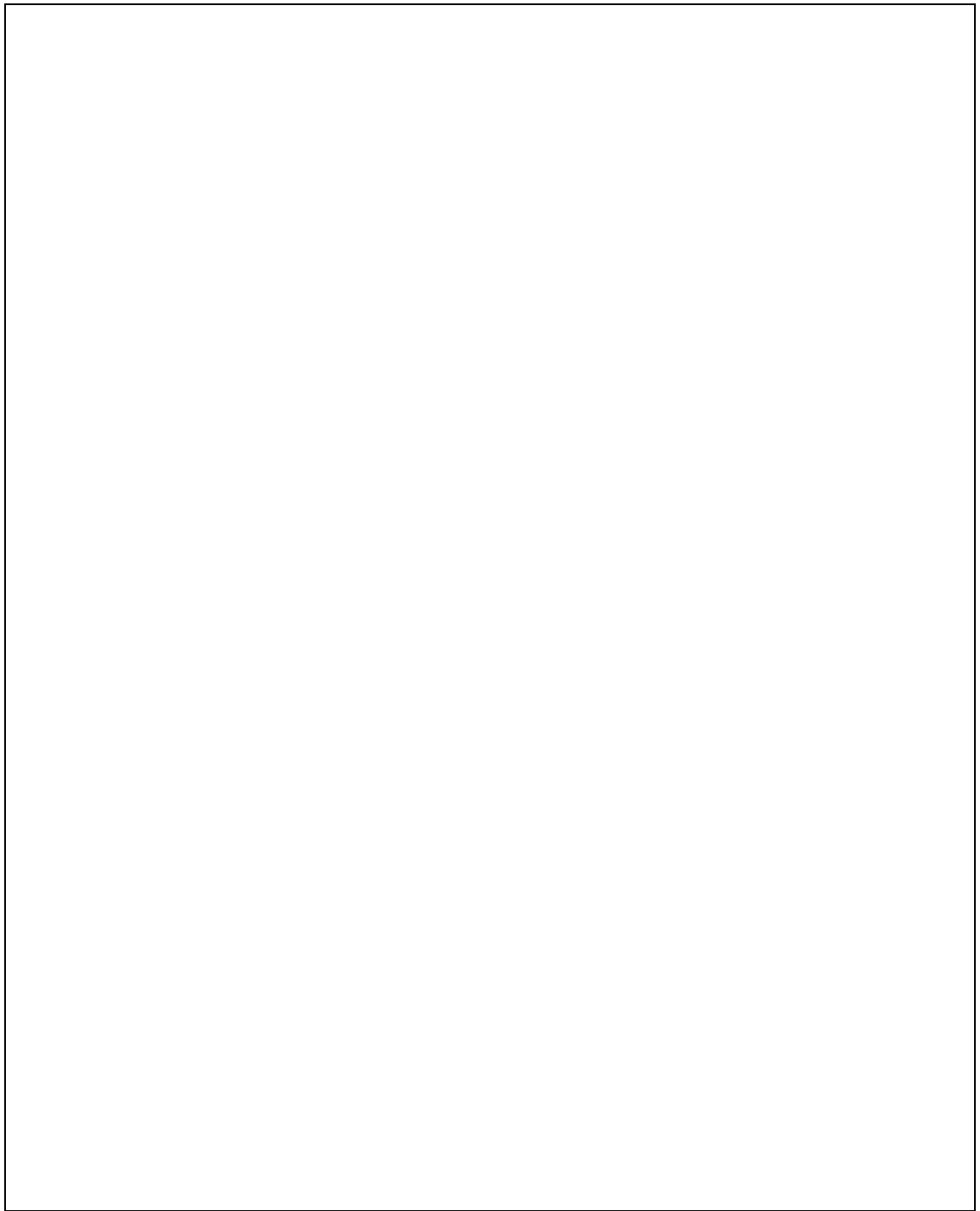
I take these photos because they remind me the day when we wage a vandalism. It was on Friday night November, 2013 when the boys hostel got burnt by the unknown people and after this events students decided to go to their respective homes but the ministry of education stopped that. And on the following day the same thing happened to another hostel on the same boys and again the ministry stopped the idea of going homes and on this Friday night another hostel also got burnt and this made the students to be confused and decided to make a vandalism. This vandalism was followed by numerous problems for example we were staying in our homes without any education yet our friends in other schools were learning and by the time we called to come back here we were far behind with syllabus and this was a big problem. And when we called to come here we were told to bring K33,000.00 as fees for the damages and because of this many parents failed to pay this charge and they children also failed to come back here and I think they future was destroyed because of this

*vandalism and some of our friends were expelled out from this school because of this vandalism and these students were taken as ringleaders of this vandalism. My opinion on these photos I can say it is not good and we should stop that. And we can correct this situation by having life skills of critical thinks and problem solving and I think the leaders also should understand our problems because if they had understood our problems this vandalism might not have happened. **Photo essay by Nancy (not real name) (16 years old)***



BROKEN TOILET AND KITCHEN WINDOWS AND A DISTRUPTED ELECTRICAL SYSTEM IN THE KITCHEN HALL.

*The photos were taken just to remember the day the vandalism took place which was the month of November, 2013. The consequences of what we see are that if these places on the photo I took then this can end into no longer learning anymore since things were destroyed and no more studies anymore since that lights in the classes were disconnected. If the windows are not put back again then if its cold time we school children can suffer of coldness and this can make we children not to concentrate on our studies. My opinion on this is that these materials which are not back in the normal places should be done very fast and quickly, everything which was destroyed should be well maintained inorder to go on with the school very well. For this not to happen again, their must be a maintenance of everything around so that I and my fellow students can be learning very well, because we can't have a good and a better education if something or somewhere there is a problem. On a school campus things should be done well e.g. if food is not cooked well then this can lead to another vandalism. I and my fellow students hope this should be done soon for our good and better education and future. **Photo essay by Christina (not real name)-14 years old***

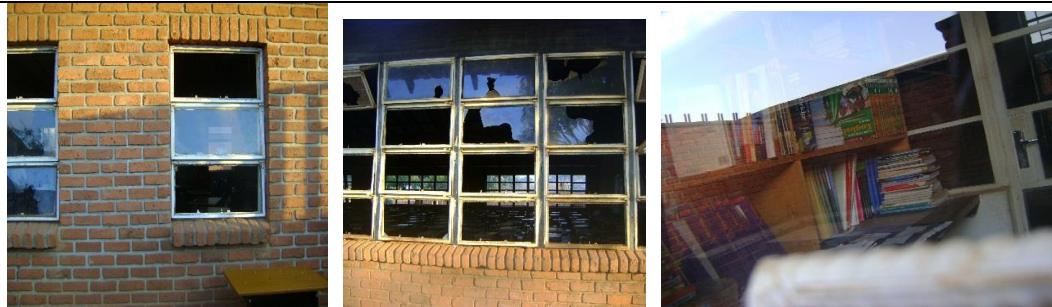




BROKEN HALL AND CLASSROOM WINDOWS.

It was on 23rd November, 2012 when I was in form two when our Chichewa teacher was praying for some students and was thought to be initiating students into Satanism. This angered the students and they started vandalism on this school. other students were taken to police because they were thought to be the ringleaders forcing other students to boycott classes. This angered other students who resorted for vandalism at this school and some classroom glasses were broken for instance in Form 1 west and Form 3 middle. It was also on 14th November, 2013 when I was in form 3 first term when another vandalism took place. This was done because of burning of boys hostels which was taking place day after day. This made the students to engage into acts of vandalism because their clothes were all burnt in the fire and most hostels were heavily affected. People behind these fires were not known as such most books were vandalized and looted form the library. Furthermore, glasses for dinning hall were hall were also broken by the angry students. It is not good to make vandalism at school because the time you are making vandalism it is the time you are supposed to be in class learning and affect the improving of education in a country because when exams come you fail because you did not learn all the lessons. If there is a situation

*that you need to be corrected you can tell a Headmaster or deputy head to improve that situation. Government should maintain security in schools like fencing the school because it is the people outside the campus who influence students to do this evil things in order for them to win some of the resources like mattresses and so on. **Photo essay by Nasibeko (not real name)-15 years old***



BROKEN LIBRARY WINDOWS

I have taken the photos because it is more less like a spot which was marked to remember the day of great destruction or vandalism whereby students at our school broke the windows of the library in November, 2013. We have seen that vandalism lead to fast school closure as we were sent home before the time appointed and also our parents were asked to pay K33,000.00 for the damages made. To my own opinion it is clearly seen that this vandalism brought some sweetest changes at our school

*such as receiving good food (balanced diet) and sleeping in well maintained hostels with good windows and beds as opposed to the situations we were living before the vandalism. For eradication of this issue of vandalism it is my plea that government should introduce or establish some organizations which will be searching on cases of corruption in schools being one of the causes of vandalism. However it is also my wish that civic education should be provided to both teachers and students which will be explaining some disadvantages of vandalism and refusing students responses. Lastly I shall be very grateful if stiff punishment is given to anyone found in staging vandalism and practicing corruption including giving good pay to teachers as some are indulging in corruption like smuggling kitchen goods, using money given by some parents because of low pay. **Photo essay by Kamunda (not real name)-17 years old.***

4.2.2 LIWAMBA COMMUNITY DAY SECONDARY SCHOOL



GRAFFITI ALL OVER THE SCHOOL FENCE AND A DEMOLISHED SHADE USED FOR SELLING ROASTED IRISH POTATOES.

Classroom walls were graffiti as we can be seen in the photos above. There are so many reasons that make learners to engage in graffiti at their schools. For example teachers disrespecting learners, teachers absence from duties or abandoning students alleging that learners are rude. Oftentimes, teachers were not respecting learners making them looking foolish in the presence of their fellow students. This they were doing when the student has done something wrong for example making noise in class or giving uncorrect answers in class during lessons. For example, a certain student was embarrassed by a teacher in class when the lesson was in progress. Though the student was not wrong the teacher has kept grudges against him. The teacher embarrassed the student by saying that “look at yourself you are older than this class”. The student became very angry and he resorted to graffiti his thoughts on the school wall. Walls are graffitied in most cases if teachers are lazy in discharging their services or they do not report for duties at all. Some teachers would report for duties but just stay in the staffroom cracking jokes with other teachers. It is this time that most students have nothing to do but to scribble on the

walls of the classrooms. Sometimes the students would start making uncontrollable noise which would prompt teachers from the staffroom to come and execute some punishments to the deemed culprits. Out of anger learners organize themselves into groups with the aim of trying to express themselves through scribbling on the walls using filthy or obscene language for example “if you know you are a gang get yourself here”. Sometimes graffiti is written by unruly students who want to make a name in the society. For example there was a group called “GAZA” which had no respect for teachers and would write so many bad things on the walls of this school. Some of the ways to deal with the behavior shown above include that teachers should respect the learners because respect is yourself “ulemu mkupatsana”, teachers should teach thoroughly, and there should be good relationship between students and teachers. **Photo essay by Kapaza (not real name)-16 years old.**



BROKEN WINDOWS, GRAFFIT ON THE WALL OF THE SCHOOL FENCE AND A RING SLAB.

*One day at this school there was demonstration because teachers were not teaching us therefore we as learners we were not happy with this so we started writing on the walls of the school fence. We were writing bad names because of anger and sometimes we went to school but there was no learning taking place and my fellow students chose to be absent from school and this brought a lot of frustration among us the we started pushing the ring slab and others started writing on the walls and damaged the school gate. At that time the school was still receiving school fees although there was no learning taking place. This angered the students and resorted to vandalism. Teachers also were not supposed to start striking because of delayed salaries because once the topic has not been taught it was not taught later. Therefore when the exams come about these particular topics we fail. Unity is therefore needed between teachers and students to avoid vandalism. If teachers have not been paid their salaries, they need to let learners know so that learners are not taken by surprise the conduct of their teachers. As students we come here to learn so we are not happy that sometimes we just stay the whole as if we are at home doing nothing. **Photo essay by Kondwani (not real name)-19 years old.***



**GRAFFIT INSIDE THE CLASSROOMS AND BROKEN ADMINISTRATION
BLOCK WINDOWS.**

One day teachers were not happy because of late receiving of their salaries. Teachers suffered for some days without receiving their salaries from the government but some continued teaching. However one day all teachers across the country agreed to go on strike. And teachers at this school joined the strike. It was clear on this particular day when teachers normally reported for duties but surprisingly teachers did not show up in their respective classes. So we as students we already knew that teachers are on strike. As soon as many students started discussing they agreed to demonstrations as a sign that they were not happy with the conduct of their teachers. Many students were not happy seeing their colleagues from Private secondary schools that they were learning they planned to demonstrate. In their meeting the students agreed that it was better to destroy social services which were provided by government so that the government should quickly provide solutions to their teachers problems. When teachers heard about this plan they agreed to get out all the students from the campus and when the students were out the gates were closed by the guards. It was at this time that students saw that there was a ring slab nearby and the used it to force the gate

*open. Later the students started throwing stones at the whole campus which resulted in the breaking of windows of the staffroom and classrooms. To prevent such kind of vandalism the government should be paying teachers on time and the government should also provide enough for teaching and learning materials. **Photo essay by Gabriel (not real name)-17 years old.***



GRAFFIT ALL OVER THE SCHOOL FENCE AND BROKEN WINDOWS.

Classroom windows were broken because teachers were just coming to school without teaching us. This happened for almost a week. The second week we were converged at the assembly where the teachers told us to go into our classes. We entered our classes but no teacher was coming to teach us. Later we saw the teachers coming only to tell us that we should be going home because they said government was not paying them their salaries. So the teachers agreed that no single teacher should be found teaching. So all of us went outside our classrooms and started discussing that we are paying our school fees for nothing as we were not learning. Others suggested that we should start breaking windows as a sign that we were not happy. On this day almost seven windows were broken. At this particular time teachers were in the staffroom and they started writing names who were seen as ringleaders of their friends. When we reported back for school in the third week teachers came to our various classes and started pointing students who they thought were involved in the demonstrations and gave them immediate suspension while others were expelled for starting vandalism. On this day we did not learn as we were being forced to be disclosing names of those who perpetrated vandalism. Students who were thought to be peaceful but took part in

*these demonstrations were told to give money for purchasing and replacing window panes but when the moneys was given the administration did not buy the glasses claiming that they have used it to buy paint for painting the school laboratory. Other students who were thought to be in the fore front of this vandalism were expelled for good. Later it happened that after this issue was over teachers ordered us to clean the school windows but accidentally one of us broke the window. The teachers then called us and demanded that we purchase a new window pane but we all refused. Then they called our parents and informed them that when the school properties like windows are broken parents will be forced to replace them. In my opinion I think it would have been good for the teachers to inform us that we should not come for classes as they would be on strike for their salaries. Teachers and school administrators should also make sure that when things are not ok, it's good that we sit down and say the truth or that we should engage in discussions and that as students we should be properly represented not intimidated. **Photo essay by Aisha (not real name)-15 years old.***

4.2.3 AMBWENE PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOL



DAMAGED ENTRANCE GATE AND DAMAGED WALL OF THE SCHOOL FENCE.

Those photos are taken as evidence of what I am about to explain in the issue of vandalism at our school Athens 1 Private secondary school. Those photos are captured to show how really concerned I am about the issue. For instance the damaged gate. That gate was damaged during the day when some of the students of this school were performing demonstrations due to their arrogance of listening to the teachers. Their stubbornness led to the point that the gate was damaged. Dismissal and suspension are the consequences or lessons of what you see on the photos. Large number of students are the ones that were dismissed from school and few number are the suspended students of the school especially the Form 4s. For example the maintained school fence. If you check well those photos, you will see the maintained fence even its bricks are different, you can take it as an evidence of the fence issue. That fence was well built and big but it is looking that way because it has been rebuilt. Check all the photos that will show my opinion to show you that what I am saying is

*very true or not. But as far as I am concerned and the school what I am saying is what will help my school to shine again like before. Making the students understand the school rules and regulations, tough punishments can help the situations to be reduced. What I need from you is to find a tough way to deal with stubborn students through teachers of the school. **Photo essay by Mayamiko (not real name)-14 years old.***



GRAFFIT ON THE SCHOOL FENCE, BROKEN CLASSROOM DOOR AND BROKEN DESKS.

I have captured these pictures here at our school. These are some of the effects that have been caused by vandalism. We have written wall of the fence, broken door, and broken desks to mention but a few. But all these are the effects of vandalism. The consequences of vandalism are that students may have inadequate desks since more

*desks have been vandalized and this may lead to poor performance in class and the whole school because for a student to understand and write what the teacher is saying in class there should be good posture because the poor the posture, the easily tired you got. Another consequence is that a student loses attention to what the teacher is saying this is due to the broken door like the picture illustrate. A student loses attention in a sense that since the door is broken a student can easily see or look at what is happening outside the class not minding what the teacher is saying. This can contribute to poor performance for a student as well as the whole school. Lack of concentration in class by a student and feeling sick is inevitable. This is due to the broken of door since the cold wind will just blow in class hence students may start shivering due to coldness. Finally another consequence of vandalism is that it brings bad image for the school more especially on written walls of the fence as I have shown in the picture. The poor image can be there in the sense that whoever comes at this school and look at the walls of the classes and fences, he/she will automatically think that it is not a suitable environment to learn. What we also see on the pictures are the consequences of vandalism and my opinion is that to avoid all these schools should have good and tolerance administration because sometimes vandalism is caused by need for change by the students. For example students may realize that the mathematics teacher is not teaching well so they ask the administration to employ another teacher. If the administration denies the proposal for a change then the demonstrations occurs. **Photo essay by Kalirani (not real name)-17 years old.***



BROKEN CLASSROOM WINDOWS, BROKEN SEE-SAW AND DAMAGED TAP.

Firstly, tap damaged. The reason why I have captured these photos are that I want you to see and know how water at our school is being wasted away because of a broken tap. The tap has been broken through vandalism last year. But until now the problem has not been solved. The broken see-saw photo has been captured because before its damaging in the vandalism it used to be the center of entertainment during break time. Broken windows have also been captured because they are also a result of the vandalism that took place. Windows protect us from dust which is now freely entering into our classrooms. Windows also used to protect us from cold weather. The consequences of what we are seeing on the photos are that it leads to unnecessary changing of teachers. This is done when the students show love to teachers especially those who know how to teach. The administration think that these good teachers agree with students to vandalise school property. Vandalism may also lead to shortage of books in the library as money that were intended to buy these materials are now used to replace the vandalized resources. Photo essay by Kambani (not real name)-18

years old.

4.3 THEMES AND CATEGORIES THAT ARISEN FROM DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS OF THE ORAL INTERVIEWS, FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND PHOTOVOICE.

THEMES

1. When did vandalism take place

Categories:

- Vandalism took place in November, 2013 (Dzenza sec. sch), 2012 (Livimbo CDSS) and 2012 Athens Pvt Sec. school

2. Ages associated with vandalism in schools.

Categories:

- The ages of the boys and girls ranged from 13 to 19 yrs old.

3. Lack of teachers commitment

Categories:

- Teachers unnecessarily missing classes
- Teachers having grudges against learners.
- Teachers dedication to other personal commitments

4. Causes of vandalism in schools

Categories:

(a) Learners arrogance

- Most students are arrogance to the authorities

(b) Poor administration

- Expelling students for no apparent or clear reason
- Not considering students complaints
- Lack of school maintenance
- Bad students diet
- Failure to provide entertainment facilities
- Lack of monitoring and tracking learners concern (e.g. Students graffiti on the walls)

5. **Superstition**

Categories:

- Giving students limited time to pray and worship
- A teacher praying for some students was thought to be a Satanist agent

6. **Facilities prone to vandalism in schools**

Categories:

- Electrical equipments(eg fluorescent bulbs)
- Laboratory
- Hostel doors
- Windows
- Staff room
- Chairs and desks
- Library (books stolen)
- School fence

- Entrance gates
- Ceilings
- Construction materials (ring slab)
- Water taps
- Entertainment facilities eg a see-saw at Athens Pvt school

7. Short and long term effects of vandalism in schools

Categories:

- Students suspensions and exclusions from school (others to bring parents)
- Thieves find room for stealing in the vandalized broken facilities
- Learners dooming their future (others are operating bicycle taxis-kabanza)
- Poor teaching and learning affecting the whole school
- Students arrested and beaten by police

8. Penalties or fines

Categories:

- Students forced to pay damage fees for reparation even those who did not take part in the vandalism (eg at Dzenza....K33, 0000. each)

9. Prevention of vandalism in schools

Categories:

- Negotiating and understanding (admin. and students) at equal footing (without one party domineering)
- Need of cooperation between teachers and students
- Students self-control when expressing anger
- good interpersonal relationships between teachers and students
- considerations of students concerns/views
- teachers to also think of the good of the students
- quick responding to learners concerns by administrators
- civic education (life skills and problem solving)

10. Bringing peace to a vandalized environment.

Categories:

- Sitting at a round table and sort out differences amicably
- concerned students should be given chance to explain their side of the story

4.4. Summary

This study used qualitative research study design. It followed an interpretivist paradigm. It was conducted in Lilongwe city schools, specifically Dzena co-education secondary school, Livimbo Community Day secondary school and Athens Private Secondary school. The targeted population from both schools was 2000 students. The sample was 11 (eleven) students (three from Athens and four from each Dzena and Livimbo). These three schools were sampled using purposive sampling technique while students were sampled using simple random sampling. Data was

collected using Photovoice documentation, individual interviews and focus group discussions. To ensure trustworthiness, the participants were fully acquainted with the research topic and were properly trained how to use cameras. Before collecting data, permission was sought from the head teacher who was also presented with a letter of identification from the course lecturer. Ethical values of the participants was assured prior to the conduct of the study and the participants opted to hide their names. They were also assured that data collected was solely meant for academic purpose only.

Data from Photovoice documents, interviews and focus group discussions was analyzed first by coding it, then put it into categories and finally developing themes from the categories.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Scope of the chapter

The aim of this study was to explore causes and possible ways of addressing the problem of vandalism in schools from the learners' perspective. The discussion of the findings rightly fit into assessment of the two theoretical tenets (low tracking and participation) under study and addresses the objectives that this study set out to achieve. The study intends to present the following themes; when vandalism did take place, ages associated with vandalism in schools, causes of vandalism (lack of teachers commitment in discharging their duties, poor administration, superstition and arrogance on the part of students), facilities prone to vandalism in schools, short and long term effects of vandalism in schools (penalties or fines to the offenders), prevention of vandalism in schools, how to bring peace to a vandalized environment and lastly the study also tried to the question "Is vandalism entirely bad according to the students under study?" The literature review has highlighted a good number of causes of school vandalism, for example, adolescent love for adventure, search for excitement, developing ones identity influence of alcohol and peer pressure among other reasons and that one of the ways of preventing school vandalism is to allow learners to take part in decision-making processes at school and making sure that there is learners' involvement in the planning of school programs. However, according to this study, here are the major aspects, causes and ways of preventing school vandalism that emerged after data analysis.

5.2 When vandalism did take place in the context of the three study schools?

It has been reported through this study that vandalism occur regularly in most urban secondary schools in Lilongwe with the latest ones being that 2012 and 2013 in almost all the study areas. Some of these vandalisms were more violent than the others. As one 16 years old girl, Nancy (from Dzenza), narrated, *“I take these photos because they remind me the day when we wage a vandalism. It was on Friday night November, 2013 when the boys hostel got burnt by the unknown people and after this events students decided to go to their respective homes but the ministry of education stopped that. And on the following day the same thing happened to another hostel on the same boys and again the ministry stopped the idea of going homes and on this Friday night another hostel also got burnt and this made the students to be confused and decided to make a vandalism.”* The situation at Livimbo Community Day Secondary School is almost the same with that of Dzenza except that the causes are very different considering that the latter is not a boarding Secondary school. However, the situation is a little bit different from Athens Private Secondary School, owing to the fact that the students fear engaging in violent demonstrations for fear of losing the huge sums of money they pay for fees. This is so considering that the study findings show the rare occurrences of school vandalism there. The latest case of school vandalism at Athens1 Private secondary school took place in 2012.

5.3 Ages associated with vandalism

The study has revealed that the age range of the learners most involved in these acts of school vandalism were between 14 and 19 years. Surprisingly this aspect seem to have fitted well into the existing literature on the age range of learners' involved in acts of vandalism in schools. For example, Bates (2011) poses that vandalism is more likely to be committed by young people, however some of those young people are not children but young adults. Peak age of offending appear to be in the early teens around 14 to 15 years. Esau (2007) in answering the question, '*who are the culprits in school vandalism?*' found out that that boys aged between 14 and 16 years are primarily responsible for school vandalism and also that girls are just as often involved in acts of vandalism. He ascribes the reason why boys have been identified as the primary offenders to Behavioural theories that state that boys display more aggressive behaviour than girls. Vandalism by boys is therefore more commonly and readily noticed and reported (p, 16). On the same note Nkhata (2013), when conducting a similar study in Nkhatabay district found that the age ranges that are mostly associated with vandalism in schools ranges between 14 and 16 although it was discovered both girls and boys were capable of staging disastrous vandalism.

5.4 Causes of vandalism in schools

5.4.1 Arrogance of some students to the school authorities

The study has revealed that the arrogant behaviour of some students in deliberately choosing the legal instituted authority above them is one of the fertile ground for the cause of vandalism in schools. One of the respondents at Athens 1 Private Secondary school lamented that *“That gate was damaged during the day when some of the students of this school were performing demonstrations due to their arrogance of listening to the teachers. Their stubbornness led to the point that the gate was damaged.”* Another example of arrogance or failure by students to willfully engage into Vandalism can be gleaned from the conduct of Dzenza Secondary school. While the Administration of the school asked for more patience from the student body as the authorities were trying to get to the bottom of the causes of the mysterious fires which were burning the hostels, the students haphazardly started vandalizing school properties. One respondent from Livimbo Community Day secondary school postulates that in rare cases Vandalism in urban schools is caused when the school administration intends to deal with some unruly students who come to school not to learn but just to make a name in the society. He gave an example that,..... *“there was a group called “GAZA” which had no respect for teachers and would write so many bad things on the walls of this school.”*

5.4.2 Lack of teachers commitment in discharging their duties

The study has discovered that one of the major reasons why vandalism takes place in these three urban schools was teachers' lack of seriousness in discharging their duties. An 18 years old Kondwani (from Livimbo) stated that "teachers were not taking their classes seriously, i.e. they mostly missed their classes". Kondwani further narrated that

"We were writing bad names because of anger and sometimes we went to school but there was no learning taking place and my fellow students chose to be absent from school and this brought a lot of frustration among us then we started pushing the ring slab and others started writing on the walls and damaged the school gate. At that time the school was still receiving school fees although there was no learning taking place."

Gabriel concurred with Kondwani by mentioning that one of the reasons for devastating acts of vandalism which occurred at Livimbo Community Day Secondary school in 2013 was "to reduce the laziness of teachers and unnecessary absent of teachers to attend school programmes" and that "*It was clear on this particular day when teachers normally reported for duties but surprisingly teachers did not show up in their respective classes.....as soon as many students started discussing they agreed to demonstrations as a sign that they were not happy with the conduct of their teachers.*". It has been reported that most teachers are fond of missing classes without any excuse to the learners or teachers would report for duties but would just stay in the staffroom cracking jokes with other teachers until the day is gone. What surprises the students is that teachers may choose to be absent from duty to teach the Day secondary school students only to be seen later in the afternoon teaching "*Night or Open school*

students”. Through these absents from duty, teachers were unable to track and follow properly the behaviour and concerns of the learners. The Social control theory (one of the two theories being pursued in this study) by Arnold and Brungardt, (1983) considers academic tracking to be an important factor in school misconduct. Most likely, low-track students are prospectively to have weak social bonds to the school, education, and adult values in general. Social control exerted by the school is therefore weaker for these students. It is this weakness by teachers that contributed in acts of vandalism that has taken place in most urban schools.

Teachers’ lack of commitment has also been shown through abdication of their role as mentors and leaders to the learners. These two aspects calls for exemplary behaviour from teachers. However, to the disbelief of the learners, teachers were championing a behaviour of holding grudges against learners. Kapaza, mentioned that

“Oftentimes, teachers were not respecting learners making them looking foolish in the presence of their fellow students. This they were doing when the student has done something wrong for example making noise in class or giving un correct answers in class during lessons. For example, a certain student was embarrassed by a teacher in class when the lesson was in progress. Though the student was not wrong the teacher has kept grudges against him. The teacher embarrassed the student by saying that ‘look at yourself you are older than this class’”.

5.4.3 Poor administration of the school

This study has discovered that the administrations of the schools under study were not vigilant enough to address the concerns of the learners. The learners have clearly submitted that in most cases they report their concerns before the administration. The learners found fault at administrators perpetually expelling students without justifiable reasons. One of the participants, Aisha (Livimbo CDSS), gives that,

“We entered our classes but no teacher was coming to teach us. Later we saw the teachers coming only to tell us that we should be going home because they said government was not paying them their salaries. So the teachers agreed that no single teacher should be found teaching. So all of us went outside our classrooms and started discussing that we are paying our school fees for nothing as we were not learning. Others suggested that we should start breaking windows as a sign that we were not happy. On this day almost seven windows were broken. At this particular time teachers were in the staffroom and they started writing names who were seen as ringleaders of their friends. When we reported back for school in the third week teachers came to our various classes and started pointing students who the thought were involved in the demonstrations and gave them immediate suspension while others were expelled for starting vandalism. On this day we did not learn as we were being forced to be disclosing names of those who perpetrated vandalism.”

Learners also bemoaned lack school maintenance, poor diet and failure to provide entertainment facilities especially during the weekends. With proper monitoring and counselling of the students by the administrators, the vandalism could have been avoided. In the literature review, Esau (2007) gathers that various educator and management-related practices such as autocratic or laissez-faire management styles, poor and disorganized leadership and over-regulated, suppressive or inconsistent school control measures, can contribute to vandalism. Constant punishment, vague and unclear school rules and disciplinary procedures, as well as high staff turnover, could create an unhealthy learning environment at a school. The disrespectful, uninterested and prejudiced attitudes and action of teachers in respect of some learners, could culminate in acts of vandalism by the latter. And that learners' individual intellectual abilities and differences in personality are ignored and teachers portray a negative attitude towards learners, misconduct in the form of vandalism becomes more frequent (p, 21-22).

5.4.4 Superstitious beliefs

Superstitious beliefs have also played an important role in the vandalism that occurred in the study area. For example almost all the participants at Dzenza secondary school alluded to the factor of belief as behind the vandalism which took place in 2012. The main reasons were that there was a certain Chichewa teacher who was praying for some students and was thought to be initiating these prayed for students into Satanism. Nasibeko reiterates that *“this angered the students and they started vandalism on this school. Other students were taken to police because they were thought to be the*

ringleaders forcing other students to boycott classes.” Secondly, there was an atmosphere of fear caused by the mysterious fires that gutted down two hostels at Dzenza Secondary school. Nancy, purports that,

“It was on Friday night November, 2013 when the boys hostel got burnt by the unknown people and after this events students decided to go to their respective homes but the ministry of education stopped that. And on the following day the same thing happened to another hostel on the same boys and again the ministry stopped the idea of going homes and on this Friday night another hostel also got burnt and this made the students to be confused and decided to make a vandalism”.

5.5 Facilities prone to vandalism in the study area

This study has uncovered that almost all school facilities are equally prone to vandalism. This is the case because participants have not been able to singularly state why they were targeting the places or areas they have mentioned here and not others. According to the findings of this research, the prone areas and facilities to school vandalism are the, laboratories, hostels, doors, windows, staff rooms, chairs, desks, water taps and libraries where books are stolen in the course. In the literature review above, Esau (2007) expounds that vandals target everything available at schools. These targets, he challenges are limited only by the fertile imagination of the perpetrators. He further states that youths who are inclined to perpetrate acts of vandalism will target almost anything, from the shrubs and trees on the school grounds and nearby parks, to the walls and windows of the school and nearby buildings.

5.6 Effects of vandalism in schools

5.6.1 Short term effects

This study has discovered three main short term effects of vandalism in schools to the learners. Firstly, students who are deemed perpetrators of the acts of vandalism are either suspended or excluded from schools. Those suspended are asked to bring parents when reporting back to school. Other treatments involve taking offenders to the police station where the findings of this study reveal they are severely beaten by police officers. In some cases the rest of the student community regardless of the roles they played in vandalism are forced to pay damage or reparation fees. Nancy shares that,

“This vandalism was followed by numerous problems for example we were staying in our homes without any education yet our friends in other schools were learning and by the time we called to come back here we were far behind with syllabus and this was a big problem. And when we called to come here we were told to bring K33,000.00 as fees for the damages and because of this many parents failed to pay this charge and they children also failed to come back here and I think they future was destroyed because of this vandalism and some of our friends were expelled out from this school because of this vandalism and these students were taken as ringleaders of this vandalism”.

The study has also discovered other short term effects of school vandalism to include disturbing learning in general since the learning and teaching materials could get

destroyed in the process, studying would also be difficult as lights are mostly destroyed in the process of vandalism. The breaking of window pens would also bring very negative results to the students especially in the cold seasons as cold air would blow in these open classrooms making the learners feel very cold. One respondent asserted that “.....*this can end into no longer learning anymore since things were destroyed and no more studies anymore since that lights in the classes were disconnected. If the windows are not put back again then if its cold time we school children can suffer of coldness and this can make we children not to concentrate on our studies.*” Another short term effect of vandalism in schools it has been revealed is that graffiti may paint a bad image of the school. Kalirani (Athens 1 Private Secondary school) postulates that, “*another consequence of vandalism is that it brings bad image for the school more especially on written walls of the fence as I have shown in the picture. The poor image can be there in the sense that whoever comes at this school and look at the walls of the classes and fences, he/she will automatically think that it is not a suitable environment to learn*”, hence making the school loose its business base.

5.6.2 Long term effects

Participants have indicated that the aftermaths of their acts of vandalism have had long standing effects. They alluded to fact that learners’ who are expelled from school some end up dooming their future completely. Most of them stated that they still meet their colleagues who were expelled from school now earning life hardily through operating bicycle taxis in the most hostile environments. Nasibeko (Dzenza Secondary School) touches that “*It is not good to make vandalism at school because the time you*

are making vandalism it is the time you are supposed to be in class learning and affect the improving of education in a country because when exams come you fail because you did not learn all the lessons. Her observations sounded much like what Nkhata (2014), found in a similar study conducted in some schools in Nkhatabay district where one respondent disclosed that the strike made some students to be excluded from the school. This destroyed their future such that others by now are busy doing bicycle tax “kuyendetsa kabanza”. Another long term effect of vandalism according to this study is that the breaking of windows and doors of various blocks and offices leaves a security gap to the concerned places such that thieves found it easily to get into and steal all sorts of learning and teaching materials including students beddings. One participant challenges that “the strike made an open room for the theft such that they are able to get into the room and steel necessary materials for example Mattresses, library books and many other”. This latter aspect has collided with the discovery that in the long run vandalism lead to poor teaching and learning affecting the whole school and even the ‘generations’ that were not involved in the vandalism. Kambani scores that, “*Vandalism may also lead to shortage of books in the library as money that were intended to buy these materials are now used to replace the vandalized resources*”, and this affect the school both in the short and long run.

5.7 Prevention of vandalism in schools

Participants in this study have arrayed a good number of interventions that can help to prevent the occurrences of school vandalism. The interventions are; negotiating and understanding between teachers, administrators and students at equal footing, thus,

without one party domineering. One respondent comments that, *“vandalism can be avoided by negotiating and understanding without someone showing how powerful his part is.”* Secondly, participants emphasized on the need to have strong cooperation between teachers and students. Others pointed out that the vandals (students) on their part have a role to play when exercising their right to demonstrate by effecting self-control and regulating their angle when expressing anger and dissatisfaction. Another way of preventing school Vandalism is by the school authorities to consider carrying out maintenance or renovation work on the resources around the school especially facilities which are very vital to enhancing smooth learning. Christina stated that, *“For this not to happen again, there must be a maintenance of everything around so that I and my fellow students can be learning very well, because we can’t have a good and a better education if something or somewhere there is a problem. On a school campus things should be done well e.g. if food is not cooked well then this can lead to another vandalism. I and my fellow students hope this should be done soon for our good and better education and future.”*

The participants have expressed wish that the administration has to consider and respond quickly to the students concerns if acts of vandalism are to be prevented. Teachers can help create a vandalism free school society by not thinking of their own good when discharging their duties but also the good of the learners. Yet other respondents thought Vandalism can be prevented by their fellow students through following proper channels in presenting their concerns to the administration. For example Nasibeko (Dzenza Secondary school), arrayed that *“If there is a situation that*

you need to be corrected you can tell a Headmaster or deputy head to improve that situation". She further thinks that Government has a role to play to prevent Vandalism in schools by building sustainable school fences which cannot be broken even by outsiders. She conceded that *"Government should maintain security in schools like fencing the school because it is the people outside the campus who influence students to do this evil things in order for them to win some of the resources like mattresses and so on"*. Government may also play a vital role in curbing school Vandalism by paying teachers on time and providing enough and necessary teaching and learning materials. Some respondents felt that to eradicate the problem of vandalism in schools government should introduce or establish some organizations which will be searching on cases of corruption in schools being one of the causes of vandalism and that there should also be some civic education to be provided to both teachers and students which will be explaining some disadvantages of vandalism and sitting on the students concerns.

Another way of avoiding school vandalism is by creating room for constant interaction between teachers, school administrators and students. Most participants bemoaned the conduct of some teachers who take advantage of the learners and embarrass them even when the lessons are in progress. Statements like *'look at yourself, you are older than this class'* would mostly create a lot of resentments on the part of students and may brood disastrous Vandalism sometimes. In short, learners expect the teachers to respect them just as they do. One respondent stated that *"some of the ways to deal with the behavior shown above include that teachers should respect the learners because*

respect is yourself “ulemu mkupatsana”, teachers should teach thoroughly, and there should be good relationship between students and teachers”. Other participants sought for stiff punishments to be given to the offenders’ especially unruly students, *“Lastly I shall be very grateful if stiff punishment is given to anyone found in staging vandalism and practicing corruption”*. All in all it was gleaned from the responses of most participants that may be the hub towards achieving Vandalism free schools. This unity may take different forms including alerting learners as to why there will be no classes when the learners expect to have classes or why some teachers are not teaching when apparently they may be around and seen on school campus.

5.8 Stabilizing a vandalized school

This study has discovered that poor addressing of issues in a vandalized environment, may result in unnecessary resentments which may call for further vandalism in the schools. Participants have however, suggested that before rushing at suspending and expelling the deemed culprits from the school there has to be a round table conference with the aim of sorting out differences amicably. Moreover, the participants feel that the concerned students should be given chance to explain their side of the story. Two of the respondents noted that,

“if there is something wrong you are supposed to sit down and discuss in order to sort out that issue so that you can avoid destroying school facilities” and that *“teachers and school administrators should also make sure that when things are not ok, it’s*

good that we sit down and say the truth or that we should engage in discussions and that as students we should be properly represented not intimidated”.

In most cases schools which have failed to properly address the aftermath of a vandalized school environment invited for themselves more and more problems which may cost millions of money to renovate the Vandalized properties.

5.9.3 Summary of the findings

In summary this is how the research has answered its five major research questions: On first research question (causes of school vandalism): the findings are lack of teachers' commitment, poor school administration and superstitious beliefs.

On second research question (targets and types by vandals in the study area), the findings are that vandals target, laboratories, hostel doors, windows, staff rooms, libraries (books stealing) and chairs and desks, while on the types the research has found property destruction and graffiti.

On the third and fourth research questions (consequences (to learners) and school authorities reactions to acts of vandalism), the study has found the following; suspending and expelling students from school, developing personal enmities' with learners and administering harsh and cruel treatments to the learners who are deemed culprits.

Lastly, on best ways of curbing vandalism in the study area the research found that the administrations and teachers should not overreact to the students concerns. Secondly, learners feel that the administration should be involving them in designing policies for curbing vandalism in schools.

The study has further shown that low tracking of possible vandals (students) is the chief baker of the factors that precipitates vandalism in schools. The findings have helped me to understand clearly the theory of **Social control theory** which states that academic tracking is an important factor in school misconduct. Most likely, low-track

students are prospectively to have weak social bonds to the school, education, and adult values in general. Social control exerted by the school is therefore weaker for these students. This gives room for learners to explore successful ways of destabilizing and vandalizing the school. Accordingly, **Manageable space theory** by Perlgut (1981, 1982) which emphasizes the need for management which assumes most residents can learn and even seek out responsibility and exercise considerable creativity in participating in their communities, such as in curbing vandalism has provided through the findings of this research that with a willing and flexible administration, matters of school vandalism are able to be prevented in ways of allowing learners at policy formulation level. It has to be scored here as well that although other participants felt Vandalism would bring the positive results many have seen it as a bad way of addressing the students challenges in schools.

5.9.1 Ethical considerations

Babbie (1981) identified ethics as typically associated with morality, and concern matters of right and wrong. Babbie raises an issue that the sources of what is wrong vary across time and space (p, 59). Quoting Websters New World Dictionary, Babbie defined ethical as ‘conforming to the standards of conduct of a given profession or group’. He postulate that since social research often requires that people reveal personal information about themselves-personal things that may be unknown to their friends and associates; the information has to be treated with the highest degree of confidentiality. In other words the researcher has to strive to respect the privacy of the participants. This can be achieved through making sure that there is voluntary

participation, no harm to the people being studied, anonymity and confidentiality, and the researcher has to check publicizing their identity as well. Sometimes (depending on sensitivity of the research) a researcher's identity can be hidden for some reasons (Babbie. 1979).

In this research however, it was the intention of the researcher to ensure the following prior to the data collection; that participants were well-informed about the purpose of this research they were asked to participate in (that it is just for academic purpose), understand the risks (if any) and the benefits that might accrue to them as a result of participating, feel free to make an independent decision without fear of negative consequences especially from the school administration.

5.9.2 Conclusion

As a way of concluding, the research has found out that Vandalism is not merely done for some excitement by the vandals but rather it is like a medium of conveying their serious concerns to the relevant authorities. The degree of vandalism, it has been gleaned, depends on where the message is being directed. If the message is meant for the big people at the Ministry of education headquarters, the intensity of Vandalism becomes so immerse. But if the message is intended for a teacher or some teachers, the intensity may always be lesser sometimes shown only through graffiti. For example, there may be expressions like, "NO ME DARE" or "IF YOU KNOW YOU ARE A GANG GET YOURSELF HERE". It is important to underscore here that one major purpose that graffiti may serve apart from relaying the learners dissatisfaction with

some of the happenings at school, is to foretell that there is an imminent strike, demonstration or vandalism to take place and leaders can therefore make use of this sign to work on all the critical issues with the learners before the situation goes off hand.

5.9.4 Limitation of the study

The main limitation in this study was the involvement of small number of participants which implicitly meant that the study may only apply to the study area and in particular the selected schools. Not involving junior class students, the study may have overlooked the other most important source of information.

5.9.5 Recommendations

According to the findings of this study it is imperative that the school administration should make use of both social control theory and manageable space theory to deal with problems of vandalism in school. If learners are tracked properly (social control theory) by the teachers and administration of the school, they can be assisted to learn, given responsibility and become creative (manageable space theory) through participation in curbing and preventing acts of vandalism in schools.

5.9.6 Suggested areas for further studies

Based on the findings of this study, areas for further study could be:

- Carrying out a similar study on a wider scale. Instead of limiting the sample study to the senior classes only, junior classes should as well be taken on board.
- Carrying out a similar study filtering both qualitative and quantitative approaches to be able to measure the magnitude and the extent of vandalism damage.
- Carrying out similar research in primary schools and colleges and universities.
- Carrying out a research on what the school authorities make of graffiti in their schools

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APPENDICES:

RESEARCH MATRIX

No.	Research Question	Where /from whom	How (method)	What
1	What are the causes of school vandalism in the four selected schools?	Student MoEST Parents Teachers	Interviews FGD Questions / interviews (calls) Interviews Interviews	
2	What are the types of vandalism in the four selected?	Student Parents Teachers	Interviews / FGD Interviews Interviews	
3	What are the consequences of vandalism in schools?	Student Parents Teachers	Interviews / FGD Interviews Interviews	
4	How do the school authorities respond to the acts of vandalism in the	Student Teachers School administrator Parents	Interviews / FGD Interviews / questionnaires Interviews / questionnaires Interviews / questionnaires	

	four selected schools?			
5	What are the learners' perception of the best ways of curbing vandalism in the four selected schools?	Students	Interviews /FGD	

Photovoice Guide

(a) Stages (NB: This is also the first level of analysis)

*Training sessions with the participants

- Training on the use of the camera
- Explaining to them the purpose of the study
- Warning them of ethical issues on taking photos

*Taking photos by participants

- Giving them a cue/ prompt (go round the school and take photo that depict acts of Vandalism)

*Interpreting photos (photo essays/ photo elicitation) by participants

- Tell them to choose one or two pictures that depicts Vandalism at its best and write a short essay about it by answering questions in **(b)** below

(b) Questions

- * Why did you take that photo?
- * What can we see from the photographs?
- * What are the consequences or lessons of what we see on the photos?
- * What is your own opinion about what we see on the photos?

Work Plan

MONTH	ACTIVITY
MAY	Preparation and writing Proposal
JUNE	Writing proposal
JULY	Finalizing and submission of final proposal Approval by the ETS Department Data collection
AUGUST	Data collection
SEPTEMBER	Data analysis
OCTOBER – NOVEMBER	Writing the draft of Dissertation

DECEMBER	Amendments of the dissertation draft Writing and submission of final dissertation Presentation of dissertation to the ETS Department
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Table 1: Codes, categories and themes that emerged from the data.

codes	categories	themes
Tm	Vandalism took place in November, 2013 (Dzenza sec. sch), 2012 (Livimbo CDSS) and 2012 Athens Pvt Sec. school	When did vandalism took place
Agr	The ages of the boys and girls ranged from 13 to 19 yrs old.	Ages associated with vandalism in schools.
Teach	Teachers unnecessarily missing classes Teachers having grudges against learners. Teachers dedication to open school	Lack of teachers commitment
Stud.mis	Most students are arrogance to the authorities	Causes of vandalism in schools
Es	Expelling students for no apparent reason	Poor administration
Ncs	Not considering students complaints	
Sm	Lack of school maintenance	
Fe	Bad students diet	

Mlc	<p>Failure to provide entertainment facilities</p> <p>Lack of monitoring and tracking learners concern (e.g. Students graffiti on the walls)</p>	
Pw Es	<p>Giving students limited time to pray and worship</p> <p>A teacher praying for some students was thought to be a Satanist agent</p>	Superstition
Vm	<p>Laboratory</p> <p>Hostel doors</p> <p>Windows</p> <p>Staff room</p> <p>Chairs and desks</p> <p>Library (books stolen)</p> <p>School fence</p> <p>Entrance gates</p> <p>Ceilings</p>	Facilities prone to vandalism in schools

	<p>Construction materials (ring slab)</p> <p>Water taps</p> <p>Entertainment facilities eg a see-saw at Athens Pvt school</p> <p>Electrical equipments(eg fluorescent bulbs)</p>	
Stud	<p>Students suspensions and exclusions from school (others to bring parents)</p> <p>Thieves find room for stealing in the vandalized broken facilities</p> <p>Learners dooming their future (others are operating bicycle taxis-kabanza)</p> <p>Poor teaching and learning affecting the whole school</p> <p>Students arrested and beaten by police</p>	<p>Short and long term effects of vandalism in schools</p>
Spd	<p>Students forced to pay damage fees for reparation even those who did not take part in the vandalism (eg at Dzenza...K33, 0000.</p>	<p>Penalties or fines</p>

	each)	
Nu Coop Sc Gil Tgs	Negotiating and understanding (admin. and students) at equal footing (without one party domineering) Need of cooperation between teachers and students Students self-control when expressing anger good interpersonal relationships between teachers and students considerations of students concerns/views teachers to also think of the good of the students quick responding to learners concerns by administrators civic education (life skills and problem solving)	Prevention of vandalism in schools
Dialg	sitting at a round table and sort out differences amicably	Bringing peace to a vandalized

	concerned students should be given chance to explain their side of the story	environment.
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Budget

The research project is estimated to cost One Hundred Sixteen Thousand Three Hundred Malawi Kwacha (**MK 116, 300. 00**). The breakdown of the estimated cost is as follows:

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	COST(MK)/UNIT	AMOUNT (MK)
Photocopies	80 copies	30	2, 400
Printing	80 copies	30	2, 400
Binding	4 copies	1, 000	4, 000
Stationary	1rim of paper		2,500
Digital Recorder/Camera			25,000
Communication	Letters, Air time		15,000
Transport	Buses/Taxi		50, 000
Miscellaneous			15,000
TOTAL			116, 300



Faculty of Education

Department of Education and Teaching Studies

RESEARCH PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORM

NAME OF STUDENT: M CLOUD NKHATA

STUDENT REGISTRATION NO. MEDLM/28122/13

YEAR OF FIRST REGISTRATION: 2013

DEGREE SOUGHT: MASTERS DEGREE

STUDENT CONTACT DETAILS: Phone: 0881265987 E-mail emsadabue@yahoo.com

PROPOSED TITLE OF THESIS: EXPLORING THE LEARNERS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE CAUSES OF VANDALISM IN SCHOOLS: THE CASE OF SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS (FROM CWED) IN MALAWI.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: D. M. MDEMBA TITLE: DR.

SUPERVISOR'S CONTACTS: Phone 0888395596 E-mail ndengud@gmail.com

SUPERVISOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS: Having gone through the proposal development process with the student:

I recommend do not recommend the student to proceed with data collection. (Circle as appropriate). If not recommended, briefly state reasons and what the student should do.

Supervisor's signature: [Signature] Date: 29/07/14

ENDORSEMENT BY HEAD OF DEPARTMENT/COORDINATOR

Signature of Head of Department/Coordinator: _____ Date: _____



MZUZU UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TEACHING
STUDIES:

Mzuzu University
Private Bag 201
Luwingu
Mzuzu 2
MALAWI

July 12, 2014

The Head Teacher,
Athens Private Secondary School
Lilongwe.

Dear Sir,

**PERMISSION TO COLLECT RESEARCH DATA FROM ATHENS PRIVATE
SECONDARY SCHOOL:**

I am writing on behalf of the Dean of Education of Mzuzu University to seek permission for **Mr. McCloud Nkhata** who is a Master of Education (MEd.) degree student at Mzuzu University. Mr. Nkhata has just finished **Phase One** of his programme and is about to start **Phase Two** of the degree programme which requires him to conduct a research which will be followed by writing a thesis.

Mr. Nkhata has chosen to conduct his research in your school. I am therefore writing this letter asking your office to grant him permission to use the school for his data collection.

On behalf of The University Registrar, The Dean of Education and on my own behalf I would like to thank you for the kind gesture you will provide to Mr. Nkhata.

Yours Sincerely,


Sam D. Dumba Safuli (PhD).
COORDINATOR FOR POST-GRADUATE PROGRAMME IN EDUCATION

Cc: The University Registrar,
The Dean of Education,
The Head, Education and Teaching Studies Department.



MZUZU UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TEACHING
STUDIES:

Mzuzu University
Private Bag 201
Luwingu
Mzuzu 2
MALAWI

June 28, 2014

The Education Divisional Manager,
Central West Educational Division
Lilongwe.

CC; District Education Manager,
Lilongwe Urban

District Education Manager,
Mchinji

Head Teacher,
Dzenza Secondary School,
Lilongwe

The Head Teacher,
Livimbo Community Day Sec. School,
Lilongwe.

The Head Teacher,
Magawa Sec. School
Mchinji.

Dear Sir,

**PERMISSION TO COLLECT RESEARCH DATA FROM THE LISTED SECONDARY
SCHOOLS ABOVE:**

I am writing on behalf of the Dean of Education of Mzuzu University to seek permission for **Mr. McLoude Nkhata** who is a Master of Education (MEd.) degree student at Mzuzu University. Mr. Nkhata has just finished **Phase One** of his programme and is about to start

Phase Two of the degree programme which requires him to conduct a research which will be followed by writing a thesis.

Mr. Nkhata has chosen to conduct his research in the three schools listed above. I am therefore writing this letter asking your office to grant him permission to use the schools for his data collection.

On behalf of The University Registrar, The Dean of Education and on my own behalf I would like to thank you for the kind gesture you will provide to Mr. Nkhata.

By copy of this letter the Head Teachers of Dzenza, Livimbo, and Magawa secondary schools in Lilongwe Urban and Mchinji Districts are being requested to take note of the development and to assist Mr. Nkhata in a way they can.

Yours Sincerely,



Sam D. Dumba Safuli (PhD).
COORDINATOR FOR POST-GRADUATE PROGRAMME IN EDUCATION

Cc: The University Registrar,
The Dean of Education,
The Head, Education and Teaching Studies Department.