

**AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF HOW LIBRARIES IN COMMUNITY DAY SECONDARY
SCHOOLS SUPPORT LEARNING IN MALAWI: THE CASE OF SELECTED
COMMUNITY DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS (CDSSs) IN MZIMBA NORTH**

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study explored how libraries in CDSSs support learning in Malawi. It pursued this objective by looking at the presence of libraries; how they are used by both students and teachers; challenges facing library provision and how the challenges are being overcome.

The theoretical framework that guided this study was constructivism. The study followed a phenomenological, qualitative case study design. Data was collected through observation and interviews administered to three purposively selected CDSSs with six participants from each school also purposefully selected.

The study concluded that although students are interested in library use, they are constrained by the poorly stocked and spaced libraries. The exploration concluded that libraries fail to effectively support teaching in CDSS due to poor funding resulting in poor stocks in the libraries. Despite these constraints students and teachers have been reported to make satisfactory use of limited resources.

Declaration (Statement of Originality)

I, **Dickens Morton Chiulunga Nyirongo**, hereby declare that, the organization and writing of this thesis is an entirely my own and has been carried out at Mzuzu University under the supervision of Dr. **Dominic Mapopa Ndengu**. It has not, nor is it being concurrently submitted for any other degree than the degree of Master of Education (Teacher Education) of Mzuzu University. All reference material contained in here has been dully acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to

My wife, **Liness**

And

My four children,

Peter, Luke, Masozi & Pemphero.

They are always on my side. I thank God for giving me an understanding family.

And my late parents **Morton** and **Fynala Nyirongo**, May their souls rest in eternal peace.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	African Development Bank
CDSS	Community Day Secondary School
EFA	Education For All
JCE	Junior Certificate of Education
MDGS	Millennium Development Goals
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MoEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
MSCE	Malawi School Certificate of Education
TRF	Text Book Revolving Fund
PIF	Policy and Investment Framework
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNLD	United Nations Literacy Decade

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Prior to the print and electronic media era, the teacher was traditionally perceived as a purveyor of knowledge and information. In such an era, teachers heavily depended on teaching by remembering what they had learnt. This type of teaching was unarguably problematic and non-effective as it only encouraged rote learning. However, the innovation of the provision of knowledge and information through print and electronic media can be said to have eventually marked a shift paradigm from a banking model of education to constructivism. The latter paradigm encourages students to discover things by themselves but also elongates the lifespan for the application of the learned information and knowledge. Constructivist teaching and learning can possibly be achieved when schools make the library resources, be it in print or electronic form, readily available to both teachers and students.

The modernly adopted teaching methods in Malawi secondary schools emphasize constructivism by encouraging learners to participate actively in their own education in order for them to fully understand and appreciate the meaning of what they learn. This approach to teaching and learning requires that schools must have access to well stocked libraries. This is why the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) endeavors, in its annual plans, to provide almost all government secondary schools with library facilities which can be well stocked with various academic resources. From such efforts, it becomes evident that the MoEST perceives libraries as forming formidable resources that assist in its quest for quality education in Malawi.

1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The role of a library at any institution of learning cannot be overemphasized. Students, teachers, and the surrounding communities find themselves enjoying a variety of resources which the library provides (Brophy, 2007). Libraries certainly complement classroom teacher-led learning thereby leaving individuals intellectually groomed, let alone acquainted with knowledge, skills and competencies. As such, effective schools have libraries stocked with a variety of books. There is evidence that libraries contribute to performance of students' academic achievement as they provide for students to improve reading skills, comprehension, and writing and clarity of expression (Markless, 2006). A recent research study in the United States of America by Lance (2012) shows that students in schools with good libraries learn more, get better grades, and score higher on standardized test scores than their counterparts in schools without libraries.

Nowadays libraries are taking a new shape as they are providing a variety of services. Wood (1996) states that libraries are no longer stocked with books only but have become media centers with internet facilities as well that enable users to access a wide variety of information which is mainly in electronic format. Thus, effective libraries are learning hubs, each with a full range of print and electronic resources that support student learning. Today's school libraries are gathering places for people of all interests where exploration and debating of ideas happens. Libraries are not limited to a specific group of people; they are for people of all ages who desire to obtain information that matters to them.

In Malawi, secondary schools have libraries which are anticipated to enable learners to study on their own. The MoEST has a role to provide textbooks to secondary schools in accordance with stipulated objectives in the Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) 2000-2015 (MoEST, 2001). In addition to provision of textbooks by the MoEST, individual schools are expected to source out books using the Textbook Revolving Fund (TRF) which is annually contributed by

students. The TRF is solely used for procuring textbooks required by a particular school (Muita, 2006; MoEST, 2008). Similarly, some schools get donations of textbooks for their libraries from the corporate world. However, the shortfall of donations is that the donated textbooks may not be aligned to curriculum. As such, the books may not be relevant to the learners.

Much as libraries provide for students to improve their performance, some schools, especially Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSSs) which constitute 69% of secondary school student population (Ng'ambi, 2010), have libraries which are characterized by inadequacy of books. Sandikonda (2013) asserts that many CDSSs do not have the infrastructure, such as libraries, to support teaching and learning. Ng'ambi (2010) bemoans the poor learning conditions in CDSSs which are perpetrated by lack of requisite resources such as textbooks. AfDB (2001) indicates that most CDSSs in Malawi experience the challenge of inadequacy of resources such that the available meager resources, such as textbooks, have to be shared among students. For instance, one textbook can be shared by five students.

Reading from the above described challenges, it becomes a well comprehended argument by Ng'ambi (2010); Sandikonda (2013); and AfDB (2001) that the quality of education in CDSSs is generally poor as indicated by low academic achievement of students in national examinations such as the Junior Certificate of Education (JCE) and the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE). It is also paradoxical that despite the challenges, the MoEST anticipates CDSSs to provide quality education which entails students' learning being supported by library resources.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In order to enable students learn effectively and improve their academic performance, various supportive teaching and learning resources, including library resources, need to be put at their disposal. In support of this, the mission statement of the UNESCO School Library Manifesto underlines the significance of school libraries in the provision of information and ideas that are fundamental for learners to function successfully in today's information and knowledge based society (Smith, 2002).

However, in spite of the fact that library is one of the fundamental supportive inputs for teaching and learning in any academic institution, the ability of the academic library to provide the available learning resources is being continually undermined and called into question in most CDSSs in Malawi. Spot checks in secondary schools, especially CDSSs, can reveal that the MoEST`s responsibility of providing for library services remain so much at budget and rhetoric level than action. Resultantly, most CDSSs are not providing adequate library resources for both students and teachers. It is for that status quo that this study examined how the available meager library resources are used to support learning in CDSSs in Malawi.

1.3 THE CRITICAL RESEARCH QUESTION

How do libraries support learning in Community Day Secondary Schools in Malawi?

1.4 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Following the background information, the purpose of this research is to explore the extent to which libraries in Community Day Secondary Schools support learning in Malawi.

1.4.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of this study, which were drawn from the critical research question, were to:

- a. find out library resources which are available to support academic activities in CDSSs
- b. explore the extent to which libraries support learning activities in CDSSs
- c. identify challenges facing CDSSs in the provision of library services
- d. suggest ways of improving the provision of school library services in CDSSs

1.5 THE RATIONALE/MOTIVATION TO UNDERTAKE THE STUDY

Gordon (1995) reiterates that in each society there are facilities other than classrooms that can contribute to teaching and learning. For learning to take place, learners must have access to necessary information materials and information. Learners, according to Gordon (1995), have to interact with tangible and intangible resources for institutions to ensure some levels of performance. This, in an academic environment like the CDSS, entails that one of the main sources of information is the library. Yet, while many studies have been done on the factors that derail the quality of education in Malawi, there is very little existing literature on how libraries support learning activities in secondary schools in Malawi. The absence of literature on the importance of libraries in supporting learning activities prompted me to undertake the study.

1.6 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study will help to properly establish and place the library in its rightful position within the set up of the CDSSs. Specifically, the study findings will help to establish how libraries support learning in CDSSs thereby help to call upon stakeholders to consider the

provision of library resources to CDSSs. Similarly, this study will assist to unearth the assumption that there is little attention paid to library resources despite the fact that they play important roles in providing opportunities for learning and achievements of students.

1.7. THE RESEARCH MATRIX

	Research Question	What?	From whom?	How?
1	What library resources are available in CDSSs to support learning?	Computers, Textbooks, Maps, Reference materials, newspapers	Teachers Students/Librarian	Interviews Observation
2	To what extent do libraries in CDSS support learning?	Teaching methods, Assignments,	Teachers Students	Interviews
3	What challenges do CDSSs face in the provision of library services?	Challenges	Teachers Librarians	Interviews
4	What should be done to improve the provision of school library services in CDSSs?	Strategies	Head teachers Librarians	Interviews

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a review of literature on how the library supports learning in CDSSs. It has been organized in sub-sections as follows: definition of library, roles of libraries in supporting learning in Secondary Schools, impact of libraries on students' achievement and challenges facing libraries in Secondary Schools. These sub-sections are in line with the study topic; an exploration of how library supports learning in Secondary Schools in Malawi. The discussions were based on the available literature relevant to the topic mentioned above.

2.1. DEFINITION OF THE TERM LIBRARY

Roberson (2005) defines a library as an institution that manages the intellectual products that individuals can gain access too readily. Lyanda and Salawu (2006) on the other hand see library as a building, an instructional and self development centre, which operate as an integral part of the entire school environment. Also Rangathan as quoted by Lyanda and Salawu (2006) describes library as a public institution or an establishment charged with care of a collection of books, the duty of making them accessible to those who require the use of them, and the task of converting every person into its neighborhood into library goers and readers of books.

Islam (2004) defines library as an instrument of self education, a means of knowledge and factual information, a centre of intellectual recreation ,and beacon of enlightenment that provide accumulated preserved knowledge of civilization which consequently enriches one's mental vision, and dignifies this habit, behavior, character, taste, attitude, and conduct, and outlook of life. Smith (2002) reiterates that the word 'library' is rich in tradition, meaning and usage. The definitions of 'school library 'given by various library scientists and associations reflect this heritage. Todd (2000) states that, throughout the world, the library of a school is considered as part and parcel of the academic set-up. It is created and maintained to serve and support the educational activities of the school. It is from this perspective that this study would like to explore if the Community day Secondary Schools have the needed libraries in their campuses.

2.2. THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Todd (2001) outlines some of the key findings that establish a positive relationship between library resources and student achievement. These include a shared educational philosophy centering on enquiry learning; the systematic development of student's information and critically literacy skills; the development of student's information competence via flexibility delivered in classroom instruction; active reading programs that foster higher levels of reading comprehension, vocabulary development and language skills; and successful school library programs that set clear expectations and gather systematic feedback from students and teachers. This therefore, encouraged me to explore if the CDSSs in Malawi have the libraries that suffices this justification.

CDSSs enroll a large number of students of all secondary schools in Malawi. According to Sandikonda (2013), nearly quarter of a million students enrolled in secondary schools in 1999, CDSSs registered the largest number estimated at 69 percent. The appraisal report issued by the African Development Bank (ADB) (2001) indicates that the CDSSs have

comparatively larger proportion of teachers who are under qualified to deliver secondary school curriculum than conventional secondary schools which was 95 percent primary school teachers at the inception of CDSS. Knowing that libraries play an important role in the teaching and learning, this study therefore, explored how library support learning in CDSS where most teachers are under qualified.

In particular, the following trends suggest the need for a closer look at the potential role of school libraries in relation to students' achievement in Malawian schools: an apparent decline in the numbers of qualified teachers in the CDSS, changes in educational philosophy and practice including a greater focus on learning outcomes, evidence based practice and decline in the national examination results in both Junior Certificate and Malawi School Certificate, (Kayuni, 2010). All these point to the timelines of a review of the literature that describes the availability of school library resources and students learning activities.

Libraries have become increasingly involved in encouraging literacy development from every age, both in the UK and the USA, with a common emphasis on educating parents about the benefits of early and confident reading (Francois, 1998). The government commitment to improving literacy will not depend on teachers teaching students but also on provision of library services. Library services had close connections with schools, not just in supporting school libraries, but in encouraging the use of public libraries by pupils.

Kelsey, (2003), states that academic libraries offer a greater variety of exciting services and resources for their library constituents than in the past. Library instruction is changing in new and highly creative ways by incorporating aspects of information literacy into the traditional library curriculum.

In each society, there are facilities other than classrooms that can contribute in no small measure to teaching and learning process. For learning to take place learners must have access to necessary information materials and resources. They have to interact with tangible and intangible resources and institutions to ensure some levels of performance, (Aiyepoku, 1991). In an academic environment like the studies study, one of the main sources of information is the library.

Libraries provide resources for knowledge acquisition, personal interests and inter-personal relationships for all categories of users. However, in an academic environment, attention is basically focused on academic and non-academic staff, students and researchers. The philosophy of librarianship is based on the concept of library services and provision of relevant resources for users. To this end, professional librarians continue to strive to collect, store, organize and disseminate all forms of recorded knowledge in order to satisfy both present and future needs of users (Rodney, Keith & Christine, 2003)

Library resources are the stock in trade of libraries. These are the materials in the library that make services possible. They are the materials which users come to consult, read or borrow. Library resources are many and varied, but they can be divided into two broad categories namely 'printed and non-printed materials'. The printed materials are books, pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers and reference resources. Non-printed materials are however, often referred to as audio-visual resources. They are the product of advanced technology, some of which require special equipment to operate. Non-printed resources can be grouped into three (i.e. audio, visual and audio visual). Libraries also have electronic resources as part of resources.

Libraries have proved to be supremely useful for educational development. According to Bergdahl (1989) information has become such an important factor in our development that our fate is often connected to our ability to access and exploit it. Developing countries can realize their lofty dreams of development if they invest a large proportion of their resources in education and plan well for the future.

Nwalo (2000) reiterates that this demands the generation, management and utilization of quality information. Such information according to Aiyepoku (1991) is derived from mankind's accumulated knowledge, acquired from all subjects. Whereas knowledge may be acquired from schools, libraries provide the impetus for the goal acquisition, processing and use of such knowledge. Libraries have therefore become very good sources of information for educational development.

The American Library Association (1998) states that information literate people are those who are able to recognize when information is needed and are able to identify, locate, evaluate and use effectively, information that is needed for the particular decision or issue at hand. Such a person is empowered for effective decision-making and has freedom of choice, being able to participate fully in a democratic society. Information literacy thus improves competence and effectiveness in every sphere of life.

It is hard to imagine a school without a library. The library is the physical manifestation of the core values and activities of academic life. The size of the collection is used as an indicator of academic quality. Though recent years have not necessarily been kind in terms of budget support, the library's central role in the academic community has never been questioned. Lindauer (1998) argues that student learning certainly is not the only relevant dimension on

which the library's value and utility should be judged. But in increasingly harsh light of public accountability and financial constraints, the question has never been important or timely.

At secondary school level the requirement for a well developed library with a good balanced stock of both fiction and non-fiction should be a priority. Read (2000) argues that the development of secondary school libraries in Malawi through Danida funded project (1997-2002), which included the provision of a minimum stock of 200 fiction titles on African themes, created an immediate increase in reading frequency among students who reported that they had rarely ever read a book previously.

Schools do not only teach subjects, they develop the child to participate meaningfully in the world it is going to live as an adult (Wary, Medwell, Paulson & Fox, 2002), which include the teaching of societal values (Everard & Morris, 1990). The library, as an integral part of the school, if properly utilized, can play an important role in this regard. A library, according to Moswela, (2011), is a 'store house of knowledge'. Roberson (2005) argues that libraries can reinforce concepts introduced during lessons of the day and can link what is taught in the classroom to life in the outside world.

The library should, therefore, be viewed in the light of a shift from oral instruction to reading or research that enhances knowledge acquisition. Traditionally, the teacher was a purveyor of knowledge and information since the print and electronic media were almost non-existence. Moswela (2011) argues that this type of teaching was not effective as it encourages rote learning. It is when students discover things for themselves that the lifespan of such information and knowledge is elongated. The concept of lifelong learning also has the implications for the school library. Commission of European Community (2000) state that in society that needs multi-skilled workers capable of adapting to a rapidly changing external

environment, including an increasingly digitized world, the emphasis is on encouraging those skills that will enable individuals to learn throughout their lives and not merely during the years of compulsory schooling. According to the European Commission's (2000) memorandum on lifelong learning, learning how to learn, to adapt to change and to make sense of vast information flows are now generic skills that everyone should acquire.

Muitta (2006) argues that school libraries provide equal opportunities for learning and achievements to all students. Resources rich school libraries and credential school library plays key roles in promoting both information literacy and reading for information and inspiration. When staffed by qualified professional trained to collaborate with teachers and engage students meaningfully with information that matters in real world, school libraries become sophisticated 21st century learning environments that offer equal opportunities for achievements to all students, regardless of social-economics or education levels of the community,(Morris,2004). Realizing the roles of libraries in the academic circles, this study ventured into an exploration of how library support learning in CDSSs in Malawi.

2.3. IMPACT OF LIBRARIES ON STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

UNESCO (2005) states that the concept of education for sustainable development and its relationship with Education for All (EFA) is a new vision of sustainable development programme by UNESCO. In December 2000, resolution 57/254 on the United Nations Decades of Education for sustainable Development (2005/2014) was adopted by the UN General Assembly and UNESCO was designated lead agency for the promotion of the Decade. Indeed the establishment of the concept on education for sustainable development and its relationship with Education for All (EFA) the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) clearly illustrate that quality education requires library resources as prerequisite for education for sustainable development at all levels and all modalities of education.

This impetus of governments of countries around the globe is to equip their citizens with the skills to function effectively in an increasingly digitized world, adapt readily to new situations, and acquire new skills quickly. This implies that library have crucial role in helping students to learn, (Bogdan, et al, 2003). However, few education system in developing or transitional economies give priority to any form of learning and teaching materials beyond textbooks and teachers' guides-and even textbooks are seriously underfunded. It is not surprising, therefore, that literacy has become a major problem in many countries when student and teachers have very little to read.

Libraries after all, provide more detailed information than a teacher can provide. Studies in fourteen schools in the United States have shown that well-equipped libraries, staffed with trained librarians have a positive influence on student success, regardless of the student's socio-economic and educational background, (Hatfield, 2005). Successful schools are therefore not those, whose students depend on the teachers as reservoirs of information and knowledge, they are those whose students optimize the use of libraries.

Several researchers have investigated the impact of libraries on students' retention. While the earlier studies connected library use to retention, more recent studies have examined the relationship between library expenditures and retention rates. Wong and Webb, (2011), for example, found moderate relationship between library expenditures, library materials and student retention among several institutions. Therefore, activities and interventions that can be designed to enhance students' academic success and retention are valuable undertakings for CDSSs.

The literature study reveals that library and education are two inseparable concepts. Whitemire (1998) emphasizes the fact that education and library are indeed two inseparable concepts, both being fundamentally and sync-chronically related to and co-existence with each other. One cannot be separated from the other, and the existence of one is impossible without the other. It is from this understanding that I have developed curiosity of conducting an exploration of how libraries support learning in schools in Malawi.

2.4. CHALLENGES FACING LIBRARIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Most of the Secondary schools in Africa and Malawi in particular experience numerous challenges which include inadequacy of funding, physical infrastructure, library resource, qualified librarians just to mention but a few. Muita (2006) states that of the 18 countries reviewed in Africa, only Botswana managed to achieve a basic level of secondary schools library provision for all secondary schools. All other countries were characterized by the wide spread absence of effective school libraries, except for a few elite prestigious secondary schools from both the state aided and private sectors. It is worrisome that many countries in Africa do not support educational institutions with library resources despite the fact that they play important role in the academic activities of students.

Many countries in both francophone and Anglophone Africa complain about the prevalence of donated secondhand books in secondary school libraries. Rosenberg (2000) argues that while these donations are welcomed in principle, they are often not attractive as reading books. There are complaints that the existence of second hand donations provide governments with excuses not to fund schools or even national library systems.

Regardless of these challenges, teachers need various kinds of information for teaching and research for the purpose of imparting knowledge in students and self development. To achieve this, the right information must be available for the right person at the right time in its appropriate format. This can be achieved with the presence and usage of the library. Hence this exploration of how libraries support learning in CDSSs was carried out.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the design and methodology of the study. It covers the research design, paradigm, conceptual framework, study site, sample, sampling techniques, data collection methods and tools and data analysis techniques of the study. It also discusses issues of the study such as validity, reliability and ethics. The critical question to be answered in this study was how do library resources support learning activities in the Community Day Secondary Schools in Malawi?

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study followed a phenomenological, qualitative case study design. Shuttleworth (2008) states that case study are an in-depth study of a particular situation rather than a sweeping statistical survey. It is a method to narrow down a very broad field of research into one easily researchable topic. Ndengu (2012) argues that case studies are sometimes used to explore phenomena that have not been rigorously researched. In this case, library is a phenomenon that I explored in terms of how important it is in the learning process of students in secondary schools. The focus is the case in point, showing the dynamics of how an individual behaves, thinks or develops in a particular manner.

This design suits the objective of the research as it requires in-depth investigations of a number of entities. Polit & Beck (2008) argue that the advantage of case studies is that they provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. According to Bromley (1990) case study is a systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest.

3.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM

This study has been positioned in the paradigm of interpretivism. The researcher believes that social reality is continually constructed and reconstructed. Neumann (2006) explains that the goal of social science is to develop an understanding of social life and how people construct meanings in their natural settings. Therefore, themes were emerging while data was being collected and analyzed in the field. Interpretivism holds a firm belief that measurement is fallible and therefore, this study looked for a variety of data, data sources and methods to strive for validity. Furthermore, by assuming an interpretivist paradigm, I wanted to understand issues from participant's views and make meaning out of that.

Hart (2005) argues that interpretivism is not concerned with what gives rise to the phenomenon but it identifies the procedural state of affairs that underpin the phenomenon. This study fits in the qualitative interpretivist paradigm because it aims at exploring how libraries support learning in Community Day Secondary Schools.

3.3. CONSTRUCTIVISM: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK THAT GUIDED THE STUDY

This study was guided by constructivist theory of education. Constructivism, according to Taber (2011), is a major referent in education which has been understood as a learning theory, a philosophical stance on human knowledge and an approach to social enquiry. The theory assumes that the learner comes to knowledge by recognizing the meaning of what is found in the environment. Apparently, the consequence of constructivism is the focus on the learner with the assertion that there is no knowledge independent of the meaning attributed to experience by the learner or community of learners (Christie, 2005). Constructivist theory advocates that learning is not understanding the true nature of things, nor is it remembering dimly perceived perfect ideas, but rather a personal and social construction of meaning out of the bewildering array of sensations which have no order or structure besides the explanations which are fabricated for them (Bernstein, 2000).

3.3.1 IMPLICATIONS OF CONSTRUCTIVISM THEORY IN LIBRARY SERVICES PROVISION

A key issue that arises from constructivist perspective is that teaching is seldom about helping learners build up knowledge from nothing as learning always builds upon, and with cognitive and conceptual resources already available. As Taber (2011) suggests, this leads to two key constructivist principles for teaching and learning:

- i. Teaching involves activating relevant ideas already available to learners to help construct new knowledge.
- ii. Students will build their new knowledge upon partial, incorrect, or apparently irrelevant existing knowledge unless carefully guided.

Key constructivist principles implicate the provision of library services in several ways. As what a student will understand of teaching will be contingent upon their existing ideas and ways of thinking about a topic, libraries, therefore, have a role to assist the students learn by themselves before and after the actual class lessons. This suggests that libraries can induct

learners to new knowledge just as they can clarify some misunderstandings that arise in the processes of classroom teaching and learning.

In practice, constructivist learning means that learners should turn their attention back on any idea of an all-encompassing machine which describes a phenomenon and instead look towards library resources to create their own model of knowledge about particular phenomena. Therefore, the constructivist position inevitably calls for teachers to follow a pedagogy which must provide learners with the opportunity to interact with sensory data and construct their own world. This idea implies that teachers need not to construct meaning for learners; rather learners should construct their own meanings of phenomena through their interaction with academic resources, including the library.

Specifically, the role of teachers within constructivism learning theory is simple; instead of giving a lecture, teachers need to function as facilitators whose role is to aid the student when it comes to their own understanding (Murphy, 2004). Instead of telling, the teacher needs to start asking. Instead of answering questions that only align with their curriculum, the teacher should facilitate so that the student comes to the conclusions on their own instead of being told. This involves teachers being continually in conversation with the students, creating the learning experience that is open to new directions depending upon the needs of the student as the learning progresses. According to Westbrook et al (2013), this involves small-group, pair and whole-class interactive work, extended dialogue with individuals, higher order questioning, teacher modelling, showing, problem solving, and inquiry-based.

3.3.2 HOW CONSTRUCTIVISM FITS AS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THIS STUDY

Constructivist teaching implies learner-centered education which has generally been described as a prescription for improvements to teaching and learning and panacea for the declining quality of education. Learner-centered education has the potential to address broad and intractable issues such as poverty, quality of education and undemocratic political culture (Schweisfurth, 2011). In the context of quality of education in Malawi, learner-centered education has been understood and adopted as one vision of best practice. Therefore, competent teachers are those that employ constructivist ideas to their teaching practices.

However, constructivist teaching so much depends on the possession by learners of prior knowledge to the topic under discussion. Libraries offer materials which can be studied by learners in anticipation for teacher-led lessons. Therefore, the availability or unavailability of library services in a school has a bearing on the quality of teaching and learning and of education as a whole. Hence, constructivism as a theory of education fits well as a yardstick for rating the extent to which libraries in CDSSs are used to support teaching and learning.

3.4. RESEARCH SITE, SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

This study was conducted in Mzimba North in three Community Day Secondary Schools which had been purposively chosen and these are; School A, School B, and School C. The idea for focusing on CDSSs is that they were created in a hurry and have libraries stocked with inadequate resources. Those CDSSs with resources sometimes do not have enough rooms for students to use them. The researcher had deliberately chosen schools which are strategically positioned for proper administration of the work. The study involved teachers, students and librarians. These schools are categorized in two; cost centers (Schools A and B) and non-cost centers (Schools C). Cost centers are those that get direct funding from government through the treasury while non-cost centers get their funding through the Education Division office.

The sample size had 18 respondents comprising students, teachers, librarians and head teachers. Age ranges of students varied from 12 to 20 and there were divided into fifty-fifty by gender. One student was selected from a class making four interviewees plus two teachers at each centre.

Sampling is very important in each and every research activity. Mertens (1998) defines sampling as the method used to select a given number of people or things from a population. The author further says that the strategy for selecting a sample influences the quality of the data and inferences made from it. Since the study required in-depth exploration of the availability of the library resources, purposive sampling was used to select both respondents and schools.

Purposive sampling is believed to help in providing maximum understanding of what is being studied by targeting those who can provide required information. McMillan and Schumacher, (2006) cited in Kufaine (2008) clarify that purposeful sampling is done when you want to understand something without needing to generalize to all. They also state that it is used because it is likely to inform about the phenomenon being investigated. These schools had been purposively chosen because they have similar characteristic of being CDSSs although they may have different status, i.e. rural or urban cost centers or non cost centers they are either located in rural or urban areas. For example Schools A and B are both cost centers but the difference is that School A is in the rural while School B is in the urban, whereas School C is a non-cost center in the rural area.

3.5. DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND TOOLS

For useful data to be collected there is need for data collection techniques and instruments to be used. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) cited in Kufaine (2008) assert that the utilization of different techniques of data collection is justified on the basis of their suitability and relevance to the nature and purpose of the research. This particular study used a combination-method approach whereby different types of data collection instruments had been used which relates to the research objectives.

Using multiple sources of data and avoiding reliance on a single source enhances the confirmation of the findings (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh & Sorensen, 2006). The multi-method approach had been used to ensure triangulation process whereby the responses were cross-checked with each other. The tools which had been used were the following:

3.5.1 INTERVIEWS

Ndengu (2012) states that as a research method, an interview is a kind of conversation carried out with the definite purpose of obtaining certain information by means of the spoken word. This method enables the researcher to collect data through direct verbal interaction with the respondents. It is recommended because it is more natural form of interacting with people than making them fill out a questionnaire, (Terre-Blanche, 2006).

There are three types of interviews used in a qualitative research, namely structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. I had opted for semi-structured interviews because it allows for some flexibility as the interviewer can engage in a dialogue with the interviewees sequentially.

This study engaged interviewees with the questions which had strategically been formulated from the critical research question and these were: state library resources available in the CDSSs, do teachers and students use library in their teaching and learning activities?, what challenges do schools face in the provision of library services?, and what should be done in order to improve library services in the CDSSs?

Ndengu (2009) argues that education researchers from different disciplines and point of views have found that interview in one form or another offer a very flexible and accessible research tool. The interviewer needs careful preparation and practice to develop social and recording skills and to analyze and evaluate data collected. This type of data collection assists the interviewer to probe more in order to get in-depth information.

Because of this, interviews assisted me to obtain large volumes of in-depth data quickly and as a result the head teachers and teachers/librarians of the selected schools had been interviewed individually. Teachers were asked to explain the teaching methods they employ to influence students use the library. They were also required to highlight challenges facing schools in the provision of library resources in CDSSs. On part of the students, questionnaires had been administered in order to gather information on some of the library resources available in their schools. Librarians were requested to suggest ways of improving library services in the CDSSs. The interviews had been semi-structured and open-ended questions with various probe questions inserted as necessary in order to keep the interview conversation going.

3.5.2 OBSERVATION

This study also employed observation as a method of data collection. Observation as a method of data collection employs vision as its main means of data collection tool (Amin, 2005). It offers opportunity to record and analyze the situation and interactions as they occur. This allows events, actions, and experiences to be seen through the eyes of the researcher. In this particular study, the researcher acts as a participant observer. Ndengu (2012) explains that this method of collecting qualitative data entails the researcher immerse oneself in a research setting so that one can experience and observe at first hand a number of issues. The researcher observed various resources available in libraries such as books, atlases, computers and so forth, how students used the library, the records of students performance, exercises notes students make from the library to determine whether libraries support learning or not.

3.6. DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

Data analysis involves organizing, accounting for, and explaining the data, otherwise, making sense of the data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities. Data for this study has been analyzed basing on the objective of the study. Le Compte and Schensus (1999) define analysis as the process a researcher uses to reduce data to a story and its interpretation. It is the process of reducing large amounts of collected data to make sense of them. Patton (1987) indicates that three things occur during analysis: data are organized, data are reduced through summarization and categorization and patterns and themes in the data are identified and linked. Data analysis started while I was in the field. Le Compte and Schensus (1999) suggest that data analysis be done as data are collected in the field, as soon as possible after the data have been collected, both while the researcher is still in the field and later, when the researcher is no longer in the field.

Coding of the transcribed data from interviews and field notes had been done as an initial process. The coding processes had generated categories that must be fleshed out by seeking relevant data bits that inform the category. Boyatzis (1998) states that a good code has these five elements: (1) a label name, (2) definition of what the theme concerns, (3) a description of how to know when the theme occurs, (4) a description of qualifications, (5) a listing of examples, position to eliminate confusion.

3.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY RESULTS

This entails reliability and validity of research methods, tools used and results. This was achieved through following of guided principles which are enshrined in qualitative research. Guba (1981) argues that trustworthiness of a research study can be increased by maintaining high credibility and objectivity. Creswell (2003) reiterates that trustworthiness is a demonstration that the evidence for the results reported is sound and the argument made based on the results is strong. In order to maintain high trustworthiness in qualitative research study, Krefting (1991) suggests five criteria: ensuring valid interpretation of data, truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality. Truth value is measured by credibility through having an adequate engagement in the research setting so that recurrent pattern data can be properly identified and verified. Applicability is established with transferability, and allows leaders to apply the findings. I upheld all of the stated principles.

3.7.1 VALIDITY

Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it purports to measure, (Amin, 2005). To ensure validity of research instrument, the draft instruments was subjected to scrutiny by the supervisor, other lecturers and colleagues who have knowledge in research. Their comments and recommendations were used to improve the final copy of the

instruments. To ensure validity and reliability, the instruments for collecting data were pretested on different group of people.

3.7.2. RELIABILITY

According to Guba (1981) dependability refers to the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings did indeed occur. Silverman (2000) argues that in qualitative research reliability refers to the degree of consistency with which instance is assigned to the same categories by different observers or by the same observer on different occasion. I was being guided by rules and conventions of qualitative research in carrying out the study. This is achieved through the use of inter-coder reliability during data analysis and through documenting clearly the process by which categories have been constructed and how consistent the process has been (Ndengu, 2012). Reliability of the research was established by piloting the instruments in one selected school, I did a pilot study at Chindi CDSS.

3.8 ETHICAL ISSUES

After the approval of the proposed study, the researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Dean of Education at Mzuzu University which was used to seek permission of the head teachers in order to administer interviews to teachers/librarians, head teachers and students. All the indentified participants were being protected by ensuring confidentiality. The researcher assured participants that the whole process of research would be kept confidential and their participation would not be subject of public debate. Additionally, the participants were been treated respectfully and their consent were taken on board before collecting the data. I had assured the participants that the use of data collected being for the purpose of research only, and that they continued to be co-owner of the data collected. These had been ensured through an informed consent letter.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to explore how libraries in selected Community Day Secondary Schools in Mzimba North support learning in Malawi. This chapter presents the findings of the study and is organized into four sections. The first section presents the available library resources in the selected CDSSs which were obtained through interviews and observations. The second section presents the findings of how library resources are being used by both teachers and students in their academic endeavor. The third section highlights challenges CDSSs face in the provision of library resources. The fourth section deals with the ways of improving the provision of library services in CDSSs. What is discussed below emerged as data was being collected in the field. The sections have been created basing on the themes of the study.

4.1 AVAILABLE LIBRARY RESOURCES IN CDSS

In this part of the survey, teachers, students and librarians were asked to identify library resources available in their libraries. The study wanted to establish if the schools had the libraries which were stocked with resources to be used by both students and teachers in their academic quest. The tables below show the findings from the sampled community day secondary schools in Mzimba north district.

SCHOOL NAME	TOTAL NUMBER OF BOOKS	CURRICULUM ALIGNED BOOKS	NON-CURRICULUM ALIGNED BOOKS
A	2200	550	1650
B	3100	775	2325
C	1810	510	1300

Table 4.1: Number of available books in three schools

4.2 LIBRARY'S SUPPORT FOR LEARNING IN THE CDSS

From the three sampled CDSSs, both teachers and students acknowledged the importance of library in their teaching and learning. Teachers gave teaching methods which they feel encourage students to make full use of the libraries. For example, teachers at School A popularize the use of assignments, research, discussions and students making their own notes. As a result, students are given some days to borrow some books from libraries and read them.

However, it was discovered that students are not given enough time to read and mingle with books in their libraries. This was very common in all the selected schools. Books are kept in stores and they look very new because students do not use them. When asked why they deny students access to the needed resources they claim that schools do not have full time librarians hence students steal books once they are left alone in the reading rooms.

Subject teachers make arrangements with the librarians to get the needed books for the particular subjects. And students are given books in groups to share during the specified time. Students in all the three sampled schools lamented that access to library is almost zero

and they claim that the few books their schools have are either locked in the head teachers' offices or in small rooms where students cannot fully make use of them. Below is a picture showing a room in which books are kept away from users at school B



PHOTO NO 1 SHOWING A STORE ROOM

Teachers claim that they request school managers to organize debates and essay writing competitions, story hours, chat shows exhibitions, quiz hours etc at regular intervals so as to generate reading interest and information gathering habits. The teachers are the next set of people learners spend most of their time with after their parents. In the light of this fact, they displayed that they know the type of books children should enjoy reading. Hence they said that they usually request the appropriate numbers of books for classrooms, and school libraries.

Teachers claim that they introduce books to pupils after giving them a brief introduction about the contents. This gives freedom to students to choose according to their taste.

Teachers appreciate the importance of reading. This makes them to afford the opportunity to motivate and encourage them to read widely. Fluent reading comprehension skills are the basis of quality educational attainment.

4.3 CHALLENGES CDSSs FACE IN THE PROVISION OF LIBRARY SERVICES

The three sampled schools do not have enough library resources which can be used in the teaching and learning of students. The problem is even worse at School A and C. The researcher found out very old books which were not relevant to the secondary curriculum. Most of the shelves were stuffed with old dilapidated books which were donated by well wishers. Teachers claim that in most cases students depend on the notes given to them during class time. This is a big challenge as students are denied of their right to explore and discover much on their own. A student from school C revealed her disappointment with the situation of her school library, *"if I were at a school like Mzuzu Government Secondary I would have been spending much of my time reading because students are given ample time to read and the library has variety of books"*

Computers, newspapers, journals and other reading materials are almost absent in all the schools visited. When students were asked about these materials they showed no knowledge of them. These schools almost operate without the support of the library as evidenced during the visit. Students claim that some of the needed books are kept by teachers who do not even lend them to students when the need arises. Library rooms are very small to accommodate reading areas for students hence students have no time to read in the libraries but they only go there to borrow books. One teacher from school A queried, *"are these schools recognized by government as education centers?"* The ministry of education donot mind whether the students in these schools learn the right materials or not. The respondent was so furious of the state of the library at his school that he even wondered whether the

government values them as teachers who are supposed to teach similar curriculum their friends in the conventional schools teach.



Photo no2. Picture showing a library with no reading space for learners

Libraries do not have full time librarians in the three sampled schools. This is a critical challenge because libraries are kept closed in most of the times as teachers are busy teaching. As a result of this students do not find time to mingle with the most needed resources for their academic success.

Most of the books found in the libraries were not attractive as reading books. These are donated second hand books which are irrelevant to secondary curriculum. Good examples of such books were parliamentary Hansards, encyclopedia and other old kindergarten books.

At School C, the materials were not displayed on the shelves; they were locked up in store. There were no chairs in the library. There were no tables for students to make use of the library. The collections were outdated and they were locked up in shelves. Students had to come into the library with their seats or blocks in order to make use of the library. The collections of school library are outdated and no more relevant to the present learning and teaching.



Photo no3. Carrels with donated, outdated and irrelevant books

At School B the library is accommodated in a space of about a classroom. Few tables and racks were seen. The library was stocked with old books. In fact some books were of higher level of leadership and therefore not relevant to the teaching and learning processes in the school. The carrels are arranged for easy movement in and around the library. The books

were impressively recorded and arranged but not catalogued as was the case in other libraries. Some books were also kept in a store room and these looked very new a sign that they are rarely used by students. When a teacher librarian was asked why they were keeping books in store room, she said that they do not have enough room.

At School A, I observed that the library lacked chairs and tables. Also, there were no good shelves. The library collections were mainly donations from Tisambile Education Trust based in the United Kingdom. These materials were not properly documented and also not well arranged in the cupboards. One unit of desktop computer is stalled in the room. Very few students were observed reading books in the library. It is poorly accommodated.

4.4. IMPROVING THE PROVISION OF LIBRARY SERVICES IN CDSS

Since the study found that there is very little being done by the government to supply the needed materials in CDSSs in Malawi, I thought of provoking the teachers opinions to suggest what could be the way forward during interviews. Their views are summarized in the table below:

SCHOOL	STRATEGIES
School B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher librarians should be trained in order to improve the delivery of services and display of books • Employ full time librarians who should be fully charged with responsibility of providing services • Government should be providing matching funds to the Textbook Revolving Fund (TRF) • Government should deliberately formulate a policy that would promote provision of library resources to CDSSs
School A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Library should be lending books to CDSSs as these schools do not have capacity to procure enough books and other materials. • Stakeholders should be sensitized on the importance of library in education. • Ministry of education should construct libraries in all CDSSs as it does with Boarding schools
School C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The schools need to have library committees which should be looking into the affairs of students and teachers • There should be massive civic education on the roles of library in education • Asking well wishers to donate library materials to CDSSs • Parents should be told about situation in which their schools are.

Table 4.2: suggested strategies for improving library provision in CDSSs

4.6 CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study, it is clear that the situation in most CDSSs is deplorable because there is critical shortage of library materials. The ability of the academic library to provide the available teaching and learning resources is heavily undermined and called into question. Despite these hiccups, students and teachers strive to use the little available resources they have at their disposal in the teaching and learning processes. However, the participants made a number of suggestions that can improve the present situation in the designated schools. And it's worth noting that students from these under privileged schools write the same examinations together with the conventional schools which have good library resources.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the results of the study are discussed and summarized. The chapter is divided into four main parts; the first section discusses the results concerning the first research question, the second section discusses and summarizes the results of the second research question, the third section discusses the challenges as presented by the third research question and the fourth section discusses and summarizes the fourth research question.

5.1 RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: What Library Resources are Available in CDSSs to Support Learning in Mzimba North?

A library is not made of books only. Graphic materials, newspapers, magazines, audio and vision equipment are some of the many other contents of the libraries. 'Books', however, are the popular term for these varied contents of a library. The question sought to find out if the school had a library equipped with the needed resources. This question was formulated in line with the study's theoretical framework which is based on the belief that learning occurs as students are actively involved in a process of meaning and knowledge construction as opposed to passively receiving information. It is believed that a library plays an important role in complementing students learning processes. The results show that the schools visited did not have adequate library resources to support learning.

Firstly, teachers indicated that libraries do not have the needed resources to support learning. Seeing this problem, many teachers are compelled to summarize notes in pamphlets which students use. Books which are found in the shelves are either irrelevant or of old stock. Teachers' lamentation concurs with the Malawi National Examination Board's (MANEB) report which shows that pass rate in the CDSSs is lower than conventional secondary schools. Successful schools are therefore not those, whose students depend on the teachers as reservoirs of information and knowledge, they are those whose students optimize the use of school library.

I agree with what teachers said because the rooms which are designated as libraries are almost empty with only few old books in the shelves. Although respondents indicated that students have time to read in the libraries, one wonders as what students read in the libraries. At School B, the teacher librarian took me to a store room where they keep some books and the books looked new because students rarely use them. It was shocking because the management has defeated the role of library. Collier (1992) argues that it is only when the materials in the library are used that it be called library. The purpose not the size is a factor that determines whether a collection of books forms a library. Libraries, it is argued, can reinforce concepts introduced during lessons of the day and can link what is taught in the classrooms to life in outside world.

Some students were even wondering whether their schools have libraries as they claimed that since they were selected they had not visited the library. The most popular resources students mentioned were Children Britannia-encyclopedias, MCDE booklets, novels with no covers, books on European history, Strides in: Biology, Geography, Agriculture, History, plus many books on population and other books in large numbers were the Life Skills and HIV/AIDS. Strides were very few to be utilized by students as a result teachers usually keep

them and compile notes for students to read them. Newspapers and Magazines were completely absent in all the selected schools.

The vast majority of the students demonstrated that they value the role of library resources despite the fact that policy makers ignore its importance. Students were quick to express their dismay why the Ministry deliberately segregates some secondary schools in terms of the library resources and yet it is talking of quality education. This study is in total agreement with the sentiments purported by some students. It is indeed worrisome to see what these schools have in their so called libraries. One wonders whether the policy makers know the pathetic situation in the CDSSs or not.

5.2 RESEARCH QUESTION TWO: How Do Library Support Learning and Teaching in CDSS

The research question sought to explore how library resources are being used by students and teachers in the teaching and learning processes. 60 percent of the teacher respondents highlighted methods they employ when they want to engage students in the library use. They pointed out the methods such as assignments, essay competitions, debate, storytelling plus many more. Teachers again pinpointed that every class has library period within the week. This was seen as an important gesture towards promotion of reading culture in students which is slowly diminishing. Roberson (2005) defines a library as an institution that manages the intellectual products that individual can gain access to readily. Iyanda and Salawu (2006) on the other hand see library as a building, an instructional and self development centre, which operate as an integral part of the entire school environment.

A total of four teachers participated in the oral interviews. All the four expressed dissatisfactions with the rate at which students use the library. They all believe that the materials in the library were not relevant to the educational needs of the students. A teacher librarian answered and I quote, "materials in the library are so pathetic that students can hardly go for them". This reveals why students rarely visit the library. What are they going to do in a room with no varied books?

Contrary to what the students said, the teachers made the observation that students use the library mostly during examination times. As noted later, the teacher librarians' view is corroborated by those of class teachers. Also, the findings show that about two of the three schools that participated in the investigation have timetabled library periods for some classes. Whereas the contents of the library are relevant, there are not enough books for the large students' enrolments. The study noted this situation of large enrolment at School B where the library is too small to accommodate students.

Teachers need various kinds of information for teaching and research for the purposes of imparting knowledge in students and self development. The ability of the academic library to provide the available learning resources is being continually undermined and called into question. In spite of the fact that library is the supportive input for any academic institutions for learning, teaching and research, it is observed that government is not providing CDSSs with adequate library resources and also in some institutions where they are available; they are not put into maximum use.

5.3 RESEARCH QUESTION THREE: What Challenges Do CDSSs Face In The Provision Of Library Services?

Much as literature highlighted a number of reasons that impede the availability of library services in CDSSs, this study wanted to explore the challenges affecting the provision of library services in such schools. Contrary to a common discourse that libraries are of limited values in CDSSs, the research revealed valuable role in providing sources for sharing knowledge by students. Limitation of libraries under study included insufficient attention to reader development and inappropriateness of materials in the local context. The challenges will be discussed in three perspectives thus unavailability of resources, lacking of training of teacher librarians and size of the reading rooms.

As per the findings in chapter four where all the sampled schools indicated critical shortages of the library materials, the participants attributed this shortage to a number of factors. Findings from students and teacher librarians reveal that these schools were created in a hurry in order to score political points. Villagers could gang up and propose the establishment of a CDSS during a political rally and politicians could accept without consulting planners. As a result, many important educational facilities were overlooked when these secondary schools were established. Previously, construction of any secondary school was being done systematically involving all stakeholders. No secondary school was in operation without facilities such as laboratory, library, and classroom infrastructures. In trying to narrow this gap, the government should support the National Library Services (NLS) programme of running and supporting school libraries to sustain literacy among students in the CDSSs. A concerned educationist in the United States of America wrote: If libraries become unimportant, it seems to me that we dilute ourselves as a society, (Hatfield, 2005). This concern is reflected in the participants' views that jointly attributed low educational standards in CDSSs to lack of library resources.

As regards small rooms operating as libraries, it would thus appear that CDSSs deserve almost immediate attention if the quality of education offered here has to show any significant improvement. Thus, although access for secondary education in Malawi remains a major problem, it is necessary to support programs aimed at consolidating these access gains by strengthening the capacity of secondary education, in particular CDSSs, to offer education of some quality. Participants unanimously called for government intervention in the CDSSs. Support is thus urgently needed with regard to the provision of relevant learning infrastructure, classrooms, science laboratories, libraries, textbooks and other relevant equipments. Construction of bigger rooms would avert this problem of congestion and its congestion that demotivate many students from reading in the libraries. All students who participated in my interview lamented that due to small rooms some important books are kept in stores where access is almost zero.

The findings also reveal that teacher librarians do not have technical knowhow and they have never been trained in the profession. Teacher librarians indicated that training is essential for them to maximize the little resources they have in their libraries. New Teacher Centre (2009) states that trained teacher librarians provide teachers with materials and the refinement of research skills that can be infused into their teaching practices. Libraries and trained teacher librarians promote teacher effectiveness by contributing to students learning through access to resources and tools such as computers and reference books, which assist in the development of information literacy.

5.4 RESEARCH QUESTION FOUR: What Should Be Done to Improve Library Services in CDSSs

The question was trying to solicit solutions from the respondents as to how the challenges could be mitigated. Overall picture from almost three quarters of the sampled respondents showed that there can be a way out the problems. I requested the participants to suggest how library services could be improved in the CDSSs.

Almost all participants suggested direct involvement of the community around the schools. Community participation largely depends on the performance of school committees. These if well established can influence the community to mould bricks which can assist in the construction of libraries. However, there should be clear guidelines of what committee members are supposed to do and they should also be trained. The communities through elected committees can influence the government to assist the schools.

Community participation in school activity is crucial in that it shows community involvement in decision making factors that affect them at the same time is also a quality check in a sense that if more people are active participants in school activities the more accurate the information they provide on school issues.

Teacher librarians suggested that managements of the school should come up with working library committees which should be looking into affairs of the library. All the three sampled schools unanimously indicated that library committees should be charged with responsibility of writing proposals to various well wishers. They also proposed that CDSSs should introduce library fees to every student.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 CONCLUSION

This chapter presents a discussion of the conclusions drawn from the data and recommendations for further research. The first research question intended to verify library resources available in the CDSSs. Observations and responses from the participants revealed that library resources are very scanty in the CDSSs. This study draws conclusion that there is very little that is being done as regards to teaching and learning in the CDSSs. The discussions have been based on the theoretical framework of the study. It is therefore, unfortunate that despite understanding of the constructivists' learning theory, educationists still fail to understand that library resources complement learning process.

The study concludes that in as much as students have the drive and motivation to use school library, their enthusiasm is likely to be rapidly waned by the poorly stocked libraries. The passing percentage in CDSSs will always be low as opposed to Conventional Secondary Schools. The state in which libraries are now in CDSSs will not improve the pass rate; instead the results at the national examinations may steadily go down.

The notion by Wray (2002) that libraries enhance the quality and breadth of students' knowledge is not new concept. Although not new, it would seem that those who have overall control over national budgets in Malawi do not value the role of library in the academic circles. It is when students discover things for themselves that the lifespan of such information is elongated. It should be noted that modern teaching methods emphasize this

by encouraging learners to participate actively in their own education in order for them to fully understand, appreciate the meaning of what they learn and not always expect to be told what to do.

Hatfield (2005) states that studies in fourteen schools in the United States of America have shown that well-equipped libraries have a positive influence on students' success, regardless of the student's socio-economic and educational background. Successful schools are therefore not those whose students depend on the teachers as reservoirs of information and knowledge, they are those whose students optimize the use of school libraries. This study has revealed that most students and teachers who responded are not satisfied with the services and collection of their school libraries. The literature demonstrates the importance of a good school library in students' academic achievement.

6.1 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The study has managed to unearth the problems affecting CDSSs in the provision of library resources in Malawi. Coupled with these are government and community commitment in encouraging academic institutions to uphold quality in education. It is my hope that the study results and recommendations will be shared amongst the concerned stakeholders to act as a wakeup call for addressing the challenges.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study made an exploration of how libraries support learning in CDSSs in Malawi using the case of three sampled schools in Mzimba North. Based on the importance and benefits of the school libraries to both students and staff in relation to constructivist teaching and learning, the study has the following recommendations;

- The government should take steps to enhance the provision of library services in CDSSs i.e. materials for both staff and students that meet their educational needs and developments and augments classroom teaching
- The teacher-librarians should be trained so that they render effective services to staff and students
- The library should provide adequate reading and study space.
- National Library should be lending books to CDSSs as these schools do not have capacity to procure enough books and other materials.
- The library should provide adequate recreational and information materials to arouse student interest.
- Employ full time librarians who should be fully charged with responsibility of providing services

6.3. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The following limitations should be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings:

- a. Student's attitudes and perception towards library as an information and knowledge centre can be influenced by the setting and environment in which their education takes place. Their attitudes towards library may not be similar.
- b. The findings from this study were from a convenient rather than a random sample obtained from one Education Division. Therefore, they may not be representative of all CDSSs in Malawi. However, the results may be transferable in other similar contexts as qualitative studies have such a characteristic (Ndengu 2012).

6.4 AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The study gaps and potential areas for further study identified in the review of existing literature;

- a. Impact of school library services on achievement and learning.
- b. The effective role for the librarian within the school and educational setting, particularly in relation to information skills development.
- c. Library resources and their role in education.

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