INFLUENCE OF HEADTEACHERS’ LEADERSHIP STYLES ON STUDENTS’ DISCIPLINE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MULANJE DISTRICT, MALAWI

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DECLARATION

This dissertation is my original work and achieved through my personal reading and fruit of my hard work, research and personal reflection. To the best of my knowledge, it has never been submitted to any other college/university by anybody else for academic credit. All information cited from other sources has been duly acknowledged in the reference section.

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DEDICATION

This PhD dissertation is dedicated to my beloved parents Mr. Donansiano Josen Musaiwa and Mrs. Veronica Musaiwa for their care and tender love that nurtured and taught me to be hardworking yet gentle which are qualities that have taken me to be where I am.

**May Their Souls Rest in Peace!**
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. The study was guided by six research questions as follows: What is the status of students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi? To what extent does head teachers’ autocratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools? To what extent does the head teachers’ democratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools? To what extent does head teachers’ transformational leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools? What are the challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi? What are the challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi? What strategies should be used to mitigate challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools? The study was anchored on Contingency Theory of Leadership developed by Fiedler in 2007. Further, the study was guided by Convergent Parallel Mixed Methods Design. The target population consisted of all 28 public secondary schools, 28 head teachers, 28 deputy head teachers, 9,950 students and 450 teachers from public secondary schools and one (1) Education Division Manager of the District. Under probability sampling, proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to sample 340 students and 204 teachers to participate in the study. Under Purposive sampling, extreme case sampling technique was used to select 17 public secondary schools. Questionnaires, a semi-structured interviews guide, documents analysis guide, and observation guide were instruments used to collect data. Validity was ensured through discussion with the experts and using questions framed less ambiguously of questionnaires, and reliability was ensured for both quantitative and qualitative instruments. Piloting was done and the Cronbach Alpha Technique was used to determine the reliability of quantitative data on a 5 Likert Scale items. While that of qualitative data items were determined in terms of their trustworthiness. The Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of students’ questionnaire, teachers’ questionnaire, and deputy head teachers’ questionnaire ranged from 0.74 to 0.77; 0.78 to 0.85, and 0.78 to 0.85 respectively. To test for reliability of the study, one public secondary school was piloted but was not included in the main study. Quantitative data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics by the use of Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software version 25.0. The generated frequencies and percentages summarized quantitative data that were presented in frequency distribution tables. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically and presented in form of narratives and direct quotes. Research ethics were observed throughout the entire research process. Key findings showed that autocratic and democratic styles had positive and negative influence on students’ discipline, while transformational leadership style had less positive and negative influences on students’ discipline due to lack of head teachers’ skills of application. In some schools, the status of students had deteriorated, while in other schools had increased. The study also revealed that lack of involvement of students in decision making, poor communication, non-observance of school rules, lack of cooperation among students, teachers and parents in schools and negative peer influence were among challenges encountered by head teachers. Stiff punishment or suspensions, strengthening guidance and counselling, parents’ attendance of Parents Teachers Association were proposed as mitigation measures. The study recommended that Ministry of Education needs to suspend students involved in indiscipline cases of vandalism as a way of curbing the vice. Need to provide teaching and learning materials to some schools who are in need and send science teachers in some schools.
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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CDSS  Community Day Secondary Schools
DDBSS  District Day and Boarding Secondary Schools
DDSS  District Day Secondary Schools
EDM  Education Division Manager
EDO  Education Division Office
MSCE  Malawi School Certificate of Education
MoEST  Ministry of Education Science and Technology
NGBSS  National Girls Boarding Secondary School
NED  Northern Education Division
PTA  Parent Teachers’ Association
SHED  Shire Highlands Education Division
SSHT  Secondary School Head Teachers
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Leadership is of paramount importance for the success of any institution. It is the art of influencing people to direct their will, abilities, and efforts towards the accomplishment of common goals. Globally, the concept of leadership is defined by different scholars as they perceive what leadership means. For instance, Rundassa (2017) defines leadership as a process of motivating and assisting people in achieving goals with zeal. Hansman et al (2017) views leadership as a set of processes used to get members of organization to work together to further the interests of the organization. Leadership, therefore, can be interpreted to mean influence, power, and legitimate authority acquired by the leader to be able to effectively transform the organization through the direction of human resources which are the most important organizational assets, leading to the achievement of desired goals.

Good leadership is indispensable if the school has to be successful. This implies that head teachers, must lead well and manage their schools effectively to influence staff, students and parents towards achieving the school objectives. Leadership in any institution serves several functions crucial to the success of an organization in that they help direct various resources to improve efficiency and achieve goals. One of the foremost functions is the provision of a clear vision. In a school setting, an effective head teacher must provide a clear vision for the school; explain to the teachers, students, non-teaching staff, parents, and other stakeholders what that vision is and the activities each should be engaged in to make it a reality.
The vision should indicate what a school can achieve and the head teachers’ work is to provide a clear road map outlining steps and the resources the school needs to become successful. It is the leaders’ responsibility to harness individual resources to achieve a common goal.

When members have understood the vision of the school, an effective leader should foster an atmosphere of creativity in the school. The head of the school should provide flexibility on how the staff and the students should work, inspire and provide insights on how work is to be performed in various departments to achieve success on objectives of the school and goals of education. As the work progresses, the staff, the students, and other stakeholders are likely to encounter challenges that hamper their success. It is the responsibility of the leaders to provide guidance and assist people in their institutions to minimize the threats that affect their potential of producing good results. Effective leaders work hard through inspiration, mentorship, motivation, coordination, and accountability to help all in school to achieve excellence.

Leadership can be viewed as the role of the leaders and their ability to achieve effective performance from others. In order to perform their functions well, head teachers and other leaders within the school need to acquire leadership skills that make an institution grow. It’s the leaders’ ability to assist people to excel in their workplace through the provision of positive feedback. This is where the leader boosts high morale among the staff by encouraging them to give input on how to improve work processes and reward excellence to enhance creativity. Studies have shown that creating high morale among the staff and students reduces distraction and motivates them to devote their energies’ to achieving the school goals.

The functions of leadership are well supported in the literature. For instance, D’Souza (2016) maintains that leaders should focus on a specific purpose and seeks to meet the needs of the member of the group by performing the desired functions. For D’Souza, leadership involves
creating a positive change, not maintaining the status quo. It is a dynamic process that set motion people who assume responsibility to guide and mobilize the group members to strive towards achieving the objectives of the organization. As used in this study, the concept of leadership in an educational organization is the way the head teacher influences, inspires and motivates his/her followers (students and teachers) in the school to achieve their expected objectives. Teklemariam (2011) supports the idea that leadership deals with higher-order tasks designed to improve staff, students’ behavior, and school performance, hence it focuses on people. In order to accomplish these tasks effectively, school heads must employ a specific leadership style in diverse situations.

Leadership styles are specific behaviors used by leaders to influence, inspire and motivate people to achieve specific objectives and goals. Kurt Lewin (1939), a psychologist led a group of researchers to identify three different styles of leadership; they include authoritarian, democratic and Laissez fair. This early study was very influential that further research used it as a springboard to establish more leadership theories. These include transformational, situational, servant leadership, instructional leadership among others. Although there are many theories of leadership, this study focused on three commonly used theories which include autocratic, democratic and transformational theories.

Autocratic leadership is defined by Lewin et al (1939) as a style where a leader maintains maximum control over the environment. They dictate all work methods and processes, that is, they set clear goals for what needs to be accomplished, when it should be accomplished, and how it should be accomplished and expects followers to accept and do as commanded. An autocratic leader, or a leader with an autocratic style, maintains control through strict rules, guidelines, and negative consequences and does not consult others in the decision-making process (Smith, 2016). When contextualized in the current study, school heads who use this type of leadership instruct
teachers to maintain a tight classroom setting that are characterized by high expectations and strict rules. At times autocratic head teachers are also recognized by punitive actions, a cold character, and restrictive behaviors. This makes students lack any voice in the learning environment.

Communication in autocratic type of leadership is one way, from the leader to the followers who in the school setting refer to the students and the staff. Although it sounds like a very poor leadership, there are situations in the school that require its effectiveness. According to D’Souza (2016), in times of emergency, people prefer to be told what to do, in this situation autocratic style of leadership is suitable. The current study preferred autocratic leadership style because in time of crisis in a school setting for instance, students’ unrests, it helps to control the situation of the environment by commanding or enforcing students to follow school rules and regulations in order to reduce students’ unrests to maintain discipline. This notion was confirmed by Jerome (2017) study on the relationship between leadership styles of principals and violence in secondary schools in rural and urban schools in Caribbean, Jamaica. The study revealed that principals utilized an autocratic leadership style in the management of discipline by enforcing rules and regulation to be obeyed by students and this reduced violence in rural schools.

However, when not utilized appropriately, autocratic leadership style effects can be disastrous as it can lead to a higher staff turnover or absenteeism. This notion was confirmed by Kibiwoti (2014) study on the influence of head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mogoti Sub-County, Baringo County, Kenya. The Findings established that when authoritative style of leadership prevails, there are incidences of tension, anxiety, frustrations, arguments and outbreaks of aggression that may result in fighting. The researcher warns head teachers against shouting and yelling at teachers in the name of giving instructions. He argues that many teachers work with varying attitudes, depending on the
leadership they experience. Some may have negative or positive attitude towards specific goals and purposes. He also says that authoritarian leaders have no considerations for individual feelings, a scenario that makes the students and teachers very discouraged, because they are not given room to express their ideas and opinions. In a secondary school context, Kibiwoti views this situation as unhealthy, the reason being that, the teachers take care of students with different needs which sometimes call for immediate attention to avert a problem, which if not acted on promptly may escalate to uncontrollable levels. This in many situations have accentuated cases of students’ indiscipline.

Democratic leadership is also known as participative leadership, refers to where leaders participate in the group and allow input from other group members. In other words, democratic leaders solicit the group member’s views and incorporate them into decision-making. They inspire members of the group to participate, but they have the last word in decision-making. This is the way leaders make members of the group feel more involved in the process and more driven and innovative in their contributions to the achievement of the objectives. According to Lewin’s study, participative leadership is the most effective leadership style of the three. This notion has been confirmed by research studies. For instance, the findings of a study conducted by Okoroji, Anyanwu, and Ukpere (2014), established that a democratic leadership style is the most effective style because student performance is improved by the “encouragement of class participation in decision making” (p. 191). The authors also noted that a democratic leadership style strengthens relationships between students and teachers.

The notion of Ukpere, et al (2014) was also strengthened by Wakibi (2018) study on the influence of head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Butagaya Sub-County, Kagoma County, Jinja, Uganda. Findings of the study indicated that
democratic leadership style has a great influence on students’ discipline in public secondary schools. It involves students, teachers and parents and among others in decision making in schools. Teachers indicated that there was a need for head teachers to use democratic leadership (62.5%) besides transformational (50%) where discipline should be positive and constructive.

Laissez-Faire leadership is where a leader gives little or no guidance to group members but leaves them to do what they want and make decisions by themselves. However, Lewin, the proponent of this type of leadership noted that the Laissez-faire type of leadership is inclined to result in groups devoid of direction, where members blame one another for mistakes, refuse to take personal responsibility, make little progress and work less. This could be because the roles are poorly defined and members are demotivated. Despite its negative connotations, the Laissez-faire type of leadership can be used where employees are highly experienced, motivated, and self-directed. It gives room for personal growth as they create new ideas or innovations for sorting out emerging problems in a school. A good school leader, therefore, should employ all three leadership styles with one domineering in a given situation whereas a bad leader sticks to one of them.

Transformational leadership style focuses on how leaders create valuable and positive change in followers. The theory was propounded by James McGregor Burns in 2003. Bass advanced the theory by arguing that a leader transforms and motivates followers by generating awareness of the importance of the purpose of an organization and task outcomes. Then inducts them to transcend their own self-awareness for the sake of the organization or team as well as activating their higher-level needs.

Transformational leadership theory according to Bass has four components; idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. Idealized influence is the charisma of the leader, the respect and admiration of the followers. This
implies that the leader needs to demonstrate integrity, role models the expected standards for follower to emulate. Inspirational motivations refer to the behavior of the leader which provides meaning and challenge to the work of the followers. In intellectual stimulation leaders solicit new and novel approaches for the performance of the work and creative problem solutions from the followers. In individual consideration, the transformative leaders listen and give special concerns to the growth and developmental needs of the followers.

Despite the strengths of transformational theory, some critics like ASAMOAH-Gyandu (2017) argue that the leadership is vulnerable to abuse of power. That transformational leaders can motivate followers by appealing to their strong emotions regardless of its effect on them. The theory is applicable to the study because it enables school heads to identify potential problems within the institution that need transformation and act on them urgently. This study encourages school heads, heads of departments and other school leaders to act as transformational leaders in planning, organizing INSETS for staff and other school activities, monitoring of both students and teachers, classroom visits with an aim of curbing indiscipline to enhance performance and improve discipline by motivating students as well as teachers. Therefore, the current study preferred transformational leadership style on students’ discipline in order to investigate whether the style influence positive behaviour in students as well as in academics to bring change in some schools where students’ unrests frequently occur in Mulanje District, Malawi.

Many researchers have conducted studies on the influence of leadership styles and students’ discipline in public secondary schools globally, regionally, and locally in the past and recent years. Educationists and other stakeholders across the world have recognized leadership styles as important aspects of an educational system. These have been previously used to assess students’ discipline in public secondary schools (World Bank, 2017). Mbiti (2007) describes
discipline as a system of guiding the student or the staff to make reasonable decisions and the ability to control class to achieve the desired behavior. Hence good discipline should lead to obedience, self-control, cooperation and being accountable for one’s behavior.

The purpose of discipline in a school is to create and maintain conducive environment favorable for learning and teaching and to make the youth responsible when they grow to adulthood. In a school setting each head teacher has his/her style of leadership in managing or running the school smoothly by instilling discipline among students. Since the core function of any educational institution is teaching and learning. Good Discipline, therefore, is identified by the way the students behave and perform academically, morally, and in all other aspects of school activities. All these depend on the leadership of the head of that particular school.

Research studies have shown that different leadership styles influence students’ discipline in a school. This depends on how the school leaders guide and direct the students, the teachers, and the entire school to commit themselves to achieving the expected objectives. All this happen when students obey rules and regulations to attain mutual respect and a desired system of values to maintain discipline. A good school head utilizes three types of discipline to create and maintain a good school environment for teaching and learning; they include preventive discipline, supportive discipline and corrective discipline. In preventive discipline, the school heads ensure that they establish clear rules and regulations which when observed, prevent disruptions in each section of the school environment (Okumbe, 1998). The rules are inclusive of prohibited items not allowed in the school because they are considered dangerous to the entire school community. They include illegal drugs, alcohol, sharp objectives like knives among others.

Support discipline are the measures taken when the established rules and regulations are broken by students and staff. This implies that school heads must have a documented types of
offences and established a range of disciplinary procedures and measures to be taken when they are not observed. These are communicated to the students, the staff and the parents to reinforce them in learners. The corrective measures are applied when the supportive discipline does not yield the required results. Okumbe further advocates that it is the responsibility of the head teacher to ensure that the school has demarcated measures to be taken to correct the deviant behaviors of the students. All these measures should enable the staff and student leaders to administer discipline appropriately.

Leadership styles are a universal phenomenon and are practiced by leaders worldwide. Both Savovic (2017) and Wood (2019) emphasize that one of the most important tasks of transformational leadership involves enhancing the participation between leaders and followers in terms of motivation and values, while also enhancing the awareness of the followers on existing problems and providing support, encouragement, and developmental experience. Al Madhahaji (2017) views transformational leadership as the best practice in developing and generating novel ideas that enable the process of knowledge sharing in terms of knowledge management. Buil et al., (2019) indicate that transformational leadership increase performance of employees in Indonesia. That transformational leaders influence the organizational commitment by promoting higher of commitment in achieving goals of the organization, creates a higher level of personal commitment to the vision, mission and share organizational goals to the leaders and followers. It enables leaders to motivate employees to work more effectively, leading to higher levels of organizational commitment.

In a global context, the US Congress (2004) in the report of the select committee on equal educational opportunity underscores the vital role of the head teacher as a leader in a school. The report states that the role of the head teacher as the leader of the school is to set the tone of the
school and the morale of staff. When teachers’ morale is low, work is of poor quality, and problems of high absenteeism arise. Leading and motivating teachers requires specific skills on the part of the head teacher as a leader. It is widely acknowledged that in schools where the leadership shows empathy and care about the staff, the productivity of the teachers is high. The school leadership needs to use motivators such as teachers’ needs for achievement, recognition, responsibility, personal growth, and professional growth as a way of motivating the staff. School performance is determined by the leadership styles of administrative supervisors who play a crucial role in an organization's performance (Kapena, 2010).

According to Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2014), head teachers should guarantee that the school runs smoothly while also maintaining high levels of students’ discipline. The head teacher's job is to develop a link with the immediate community to foster better coexistence. Head teachers must encourage and channel students’ discipline into society, as well as push all stakeholders to participate in school events to share ideas and minimize problems in the school. In a school setting, these leadership styles may have a positive or detrimental (negative) influence on students' discipline, depending on how they are applied by head teachers in various schools to achieve their goals. They play a critical role in maintaining students’ discipline.

According to Mbiti (2009), the head teacher is charged with the responsibility of supervising and harmonizing the roles of the school staff such as teaching staff and non-teaching staff including student leaders in a school. Therefore, the head teacher is the leader of the school and his/her leadership style determines the extent to which the school meets its educational goals. Students' behavior and a school's performance are indicators of whether it is a good or bad school in terms of discipline. Hammer and Whisman (2014) assert that head teachers should motivate
students, teachers, and support staff to work towards a common goal. The attitude of the head teacher in a school to a large extent determines if or not the head teacher would incorporate followers in leadership. If the head teacher believes and trusts his/her followers, would delegate power to fellow members and that would promote effectiveness in performing various leadership tasks as well as reduce his/her workload by instilling students’ discipline in schools.

In the United Kingdom (UK) the styles head teachers used impacted greatly students’ discipline. For example, students’ politics has existed since the 1880s with the formation of students’ representative councils to represent students’ interests towards a leadership style used by head teachers. The movement varied in subject size and success, with all kinds of students in both public and private educational institutions participating. On the other hand, in the United States of America (USA), students’ discipline problems had been experienced in the past years. The authoritarian leadership style, according to Ang Bay Lee (1995), causes group members to behave violently and apathetically in the workplace. This frequently leads to the interminable industrial dispute within an organization, obstructing the attainment of the organization’s general goals and objectives. Mwalala (2008) observes that an authoritarian and harsh climate leads to poor performance of students. A Laissez-faire leadership style may lead to indiscipline due to the non-enforcement of rules and regulations in a school leading to poor performance in national examinations as cited in Kibiwot (2014). The current study focused on three leadership styles namely; autocratic, democratic, and transformational leadership styles because they are the commonly used styles by school leadership.

Globally, people are rejecting poor leadership and demanding more participatory and democratic approaches (Read, Pat, & Barbara, 2005). Students have in the past protested against political regimes, and conditions in schools, or society as a whole (Mbiti, 2007). The quality of the
A longitudinal survey study was conducted by Afullo and Bodovski (2010-2013) on the challenges of high crime rates and students’ discipline in the United States of America, Britain, and Canada. The study revealed that students’ discipline had been a great concern among policymakers and the public in general. That the outbreak of aggressiveness among students,
violence against teachers, head teachers, and vandalism of school properties was due to ineffective leadership styles practiced by head teachers in public secondary schools. Further, the study revealed that the root causes of students’ discipline in many national and international studies were due to peer pressure, lack of students’ discipline, drug and substance abuse, and community influence surrounding the school and among other factors.

A similar study was conducted by Jerome (2017) on the assessment of the current state of education in the Caribbean in Jamaica. The purpose was to assess whether there was a relationship between the leadership styles of the head teachers and violence in two Parish secondary schools in rural and urban. The study revealed that there was a statistically significant positive correlation ($r=0.88$) at the $p<.05$ level of significance observed in autocratic leadership in the Parish school of St. Ann. A moderate significant correlation was recorded in St. Catherine in democratic leadership ($r=-.52$) at the level of $p<0.01$. This means that autocratic leadership and democratic leadership styles complement each other whereby the head teachers use power and enforce rules and regulations to be obeyed by students to maintain discipline in schools.

In Pakistan, Nooruding and Baig (2014) carried out a study on students’ behavior management and school leaders in the eyes of teachers and students in Karachi. The study revealed that 97.0% of teachers and 83.0% of students said that school leadership influences students’ behavior management through policies and procedures. The majority of teachers were of the view that sharing personal experiences with school leadership, supporting staff members, and the leader’s visibility in the school context helped them in understanding and coping with behavioral issues of the students. Furthermore, the study revealed that 95.0% of teachers and 86.0% of students felt that school leadership influences students’ behavior management by providing awards
to the students for good behavior. In this case, awards were considered a positive means of strategies of influencing students’ good behavior.

Similarly, Chanda, Songolo, and Mutekenya (2021) investigated the management of students’ discipline in Norway: a case study of Sognal Municipality. The study established that the Ministry of Education and Research recognizes guidance and counseling as one of the methods of managing students’ discipline in schools. Since the school is a social learning institution run by different stakeholders, the head teachers, teachers, and parents have the responsibility to formulate rules and regulations to maintain the discipline of students. They should put strict measures or strategies, for instance, appropriate for those who disobey rules and regulations as a way of deterring further occurrence of similar mischiefs.

According to Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2014), head teachers should guarantee that the school runs smoothly while also maintaining high levels of student discipline. The head teacher's job is to develop a link with the immediate community to foster better coexistence. Head teachers must encourage and channel student discipline into society, as well as push all stakeholders to participate in school events to share ideas and minimize problems as a result of school decisions.

A study conducted by Adams and Muthiah (2019) on school principals and 21st Century leadership challenges: a systematic review in Malaysia, revealed that discipline and social problems, drug abuse, theft, defiance of authorities, and others are challenges encountered by school principals in the 21st century. This means that all over the world head teachers are faced with challenges of student indiscipline cases in schools which are a great challenge to head teachers’ leadership in both developed and developing countries.
Similarly in Ethiopia, another study by Rundassa (2017) conducted school leadership practices and problems: the case of some selected secondary schools in Addis Ababa City, University of Ethiopia. Key findings showed that all school leaders in the selected secondary schools lacked principal ship and educational leadership training. Their lack of leadership skills could have contributed to their mismanagement of the schools, particularly in not actively involving parents in decision-making. It indicated that principals lacked a democratic leadership style that allowed parents to participate to give their views on the effective running of the school.

Kolawale and Ahmed (2018) conducted a study on the influence of principals’ sex experience and age on their choice of leadership styles in managing students’ indiscipline in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District, Nigeria. The study revealed that principals adopted three leadership styles namely; democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles in managing students’ indiscipline. Among the three, the democratic leadership style was mostly applied by principals managing students’ indiscipline in Edo North Senatorial, Nigeria. This could be because the school leadership involved students in decision-making, they accepted the final decision and were committed to working hard and observing rules which minimized indiscipline cases.

Research studies have shown that any of the leadership styles utilized by the head teacher can trigger students’ unrest. In Uganda for instance, Moses (2018) investigated head teachers’ leadership styles and students’ unrest in public secondary schools in Sheema District, Uganda. The findings showed that laissez-faire, autocratic, and democratic leadership styles in some way contributed to students’ unrest. This implies that each of the three leadership styles had a negative influence on students’ discipline. That some of the head teachers were not very active in school, in other words they were not visible in the school management.
Similar observations were made by Akala et al. (2019) who investigated the impact of administrators' collaborative decision-making on student discipline in Kenyan public secondary schools. The study revealed that collaborative decision-making took place inside the school setting to improve school discipline. About 83.7% of principals reported that class meetings were used as an alternate disciplinary approach. The study revealed that there was no significant difference between class meetings for collaborative decision-making and students’ discipline. This means that principals involved students in collaborative decision-making as members of the disciplinary committee so that they could feel like members of the management team of the school.

Another study was done by Godfrey (2016) on heads of schools’ approaches to managing secondary school students’ discipline at Korogwe Town Council, Tanzania. It was found that heads of schools used multiple approaches based on the nature and type of discipline problems they encounter. The majority of the principals delegated the task of maintaining students’ discipline to other teaching staff. Although principals held a huge responsibility in the school; they did not receive any formal training after the appointment to update themselves with current knowledge and skills of managing students' discipline. They were dependent on their knowledge of policies about the management of students’ discipline. The findings further indicated that the majority of school heads perceived policies as non-implementable due to a lack of cooperation from other stakeholders or interference from other stakeholders. Some school heads failed to provide good leadership and created differences among other staff leading to a sense of mistrust and power struggle.

In Dar es Salam, Safi (2014) examined the relationship between school administrations and students’ protests in Ilala Municipal Council in, Tanzania. The finding indicated a considerate relationship between school administration and students’ protests. It was found that students’
protests occur when there is a poor administrative response to students’ problems and poor classroom teaching and learning activities.

Discipline issues among students in educational institutions have gotten a lot of attention around the world. Indeed, many education experts around the world have been interested in the factors that contribute to differences in student discipline between schools and locations. Students' lack of discipline leads to undesirable outcomes such as destruction of school property, violence, low academic performance, particularly on national examinations, and unacceptable student behavior.

The Malawian government places a great deal of confidence in the type of leadership that exists in educational institutions, but it has not yielded fruits for the country. Malawi's Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (2014) raised that student discipline in secondary schools has been a subject of debate in many forums. Destruction of school property, assault, indecent bad behavior such as sexual relationships between opposite-sex resulting in teenage pregnancies and dropout, especially among girls, theft, teasing, and bullying, drug and substance abuse, rudeness, and open defiance of authority, failure to observe school rules and regulations, lack of interest in education, and among others are all examples of student indiscipline.

Kachepa (2015) looked at the elements that contribute to student indiscipline in Malawi's residential secondary schools: a case study of selected secondary schools in the Central West Education Division. The findings found that domestics issues such as a poor relationship between parents and their children, media influence at home, parents not providing essential school resources for their children, and parental approaches to dealing with misbehavior all contributed to kids' indiscipline. Further, the students’ lack of interest in school, involvement in sexual activities, drug and substance abuse, and negative influence of peer pressure also contributed to
indiscipline. Even teachers’ unprofessional conduct, poor delivery of teaching services, and inappropriate management of emergent indiscipline cases during the lessons contributed to students’ indiscipline. The study also revealed that the administration’s inability to address students’ complaints appropriately was a factor that contributed to students’ indiscipline in the three boarding secondary schools in the Central West Education Division in Malawi.

A similar study by Tembo (2015) was conducted on an exploratory of mob students’ vandalism in secondary schools: perspectives of students in the northern education division of Malawi. The study revealed that the unprofessional conduct of teachers and poor management, misunderstanding between the administration and students’ grievances due to poor diet (eating rotten beans daily), teachers’ late attendance to classes, and absconding from classes due to watching football in the staff room were the main contributing factors of vandalism in northern Malawi. This implies that ineffective leadership contributed to causes of vandalism in schools. The Ministry of Education Science and Technology is aiming at equipping the youth with relevant knowledge, skills, attitude and expertise to enable them play an effective role in the society (MoEST, 2014, pp: 27; UNESCO, 2012). However, for the past four years secondary schools in Malawi continue to face a myriad of management problems.

A study by Tembo (2015) observed that many schools still perform poorly in Malawi due to poor leadership and indiscipline. Another study by Banda (2017) was conducted on student behavioral problems: A comparison analysis of patterns and trends of student behavior problems in Malawi Secondary in Mulanje District. The study revealed that 74.0% of head teachers, 66.7% of student-leaders, and 28.6% of parents complained of the widespread alcohol and drug abuse by students as the major sources of indiscipline patterns.
In Malawi, the Mulanje District Education Officer’s (2017-2021) report indicate that the district has had over the past four years experienced 29 cases of students’ unrests even though the Malawian government places a great deal of confidence in the type of leadership that exists in educational institutions. The number of students’ unrest in Mulanje district, Malawi has been increasing since the year 2017-2020. Table 1 gives a summary of reported cases of students’ unrest in the district from the year 2017 to 2020.

Table 1

Summary of Reported Cases of Students’ Unrest in Mulanje District between 2017 and 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of reported cases of students’ unrest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Education Division Office Report in Mulanje District (2021)

From Table 1 there were 10 cases in the year 2017, 8 cases in 2018, 9 cases in 2019, and 2 cases in 2020. (Education Division Office’s in Mulanje District, 2021). This is an indication that there is a problem in the schools. The head teachers are the overall overseers of students' discipline in secondary schools. Could it be the leadership styles that the head teachers that influence students’ discipline in secondary schools? This study, therefore, investigated the influence of head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi.
1.2 Statement of the Problem

Effective leadership is key to the success of an educational institution because it provides guidance, purpose and helps others to understand the goals of education. Leadership serves several functions crucial to the success of the school; one of these functions is to provide a clear vision and explain what members must do to achieve that vision. This is done by providing a roadmap and outlining the steps and resources the school needs to become successful. The core function of the school is to provide quality teaching and learning. These services are provided by the teaching force comprising multi-talented individuals with the right skills and experience to assist learners to attain good results. It is the responsibility of the school head to foster an atmosphere of creativity in the school, provide flexibility on how employees work, motivate the staff and students, and give insights on how to perform the delegated duties to improve efficiency to achieve excellence.

However, there has been public concern about the way heads of public secondary schools manage their institutions in Mulanje district Malawi. Deterioration of students' discipline is on the increase and has been a debate in many forums. Statistics from the Division Education office (2021) indicate a considerable number of student unrests have been witnessed in some public secondary schools for the past four years, 2017 to 2020. For instance, there have been cases of vandalism of school property, assaults, drug and substance abuse, open defiance to school authorities, rudeness, and involvement in sexual relations leading to teen pregnancies among others. Head teachers, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders are complaining about these unacceptable behaviors of students. Some educationist from the Ministry of Education Science and Technology are also questioning whether or not the head teachers’ leadership was responsible for the massive destruction in schools. If these vices are not eradicated, students will continue to be unruly, perform poorly in their academics, have low transition rates and school drops out as
well as an increase in moral decadence in the society. The Ministry of Education has put interventions of offering leadership training to head teachers through the Malawi Institute of Education to enhance discipline but still, indiscipline is prevalent in secondary schools.

Available literature shows that studies have been done on leadership in schools. For instance, Rundassa's (2017) study focused on school leadership practices and problems in secondary schools in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia. It was found that principals' lack of training in leadership skills contributed to problems. Tempo (2015) explored the student mob vandalism in secondary schools in Malawi and established that the unprofessional conduct of teachers of absconding classes, poor management, and poor diet in boarding schools contributed to students' indiscipline. Limited literature has examined how the head teachers’ leadership styles influence students’ discipline in Mulanje District Malawi which necessitated the current study.

1.3 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following six research questions:

i. What is the status of students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi?

ii. To what extent does the head teachers’ autocratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi?

iii. To what extent does the head teachers’ democratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi?

iv. To what extent does the head teachers’ transformational leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi?
v. What are the challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing positive students’ discipline in public secondary in Mulanje District, Malawi?

vi. What strategies should be used to mitigate challenges encountered by the head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing positive students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The following three null hypotheses (Ho) were tested during the study:

H₀₁: The Head teachers’ autocratic leadership style has no statistically significant influence on Students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi.

H₀₂: The Head teachers’ democratic leadership style has no statistically significant influence on Students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi.

H₀₃: Head teachers’ transformational leadership style has no statistically significant influence on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to be beneficial to various stakeholders. For instance, it informs the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MoEST) on areas head teachers lack leadership skills. They can organize seminars and workshops to empower head teachers already in the field on effective leadership skills and effective ways of managing students’ discipline. Also, the results of the study would be help Teacher’s Training Colleges and Universities to equip pre-service student-teachers with effective leadership styles to enable them to resolve conflicts constructively and avert school strikes. These knowledge and skills would be beneficial to them before they could be appointed as head teachers.
The findings are expected to enlighten the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) on leadership styles and enhance students’ discipline. Hence, plan workshops to equip all in-school leadership with those skills to curb indiscipline in schools. Head teachers who produce good results in the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) as a result of good leadership styles in students’ discipline management would be promoted for others to emulate. The study's findings indicate that school management (SM) should take the initiative to provide frequent guidance and counseling to students as a way of inculcating discipline in schools.

The study's findings may inform the Curriculum Developers (CP) in developing and incorporating discipline issues and leadership styles in the curriculum that would be implemented by head teachers. To the policy makers, the findings can serve as a springboard for developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating policies on safety in schools.

The findings are likely to help education policymakers understand the importance of using autocratic, democratic, and transformational leadership styles when developing strategies to help head teachers enhance students' discipline and eliminate unwarranted problems in their schools. The Education Division Manager of Mulanje District, Malawi would be enlightened on the causes of student’s unrests and leadership styles that trigger indiscipline in schools. She can organize seminars and workshops for best strategies for improving students’ discipline.

The head teachers in all educational institutions across the country maybe enlightened on when and how to use each leadership style to improve discipline in schools. For instance, head teachers can involve students in formulating school rules and regulations which all should obey to maintain discipline. They can also establish suitable learning and teaching environment to improve school performance to achieve national educational goals. These findings would also shed light on the role of head teachers in maintaining students' discipline in motivating and rewarding good
behavior and academic performance in schools. Furthermore, the study's findings are expected to assist head teachers in providing a clear picture of the extent to which head teachers influence teachers' and students' performance in the effort to achieve quality results in the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) by maintaining discipline.

The findings are expected to raise awareness among teachers in areas they have failed to deliver on teaching duties. By preparing lessons well and incorporating relevant and interesting learning activities, students can be engaged maximally. Also teachers’ use of constructive feedback when counseling students can motivate learners to improve their behavior and adopt appropriate leadership styles for managing emerging students' deviant behavior in their classes.

Parents may be informed and enlightened on the underlying causes of their children’s indiscipline in schools. Through participative leadership, they can give constructive suggestions on mitigating strategies for reducing incidences of indiscipline. Parents may be equipped with skills for counseling their children at home before they report to school. This may instill discipline and develop a desirable behavior to become responsible and good citizens in school, society, and the country at large.

The study's findings may benefit students in recognizing the destructive consequences of engaging in bad behavior. They can commit themselves to studying to improve their academic performance. This may also enable them to act as role models for their peers who would aspire to emulate their hard work.

The findings may benefit the community surrounding the school by living in a peaceful atmosphere due to the eradication of strikes. This may create good school-community relations as they will participate in school activities of prize-giving days and graduation ceremonies. This is the way the community can foster a positive relationship, and develop ownership and pride for
their schools. They can concentrate on vegetable farming to supply the school with foodstuffs to get income to support their families. Finally, the findings may serve as a great reference point for future research and generalizations to other fields. Other researchers could benefit from using the findings as the foundation for their research problems as they try to fill in the gaps left by this study.

1.6 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to 17 public secondary schools in Mulanje District, which is located in the southern part of Malawi and is one of the most affected districts by students’ unrest and indiscipline problems compared to other districts. The study focused on the Head Teachers autocratic, democratic, and transformational Leadership Styles on students’ discipline in public secondary school in Mulanje District, Malawi. The justification for the selection of the three mentioned styles out of the myriad among others because, autocratic leadership style helps to maintain students’ discipline during crisis by commanding students to obey school rules and regulations. Democratic leadership style allows room for administrators to involve students in decision making and they feel that they are part of the school management in solving students’ disciplinary issues, hence discipline is maintained. While transformational leadership style brings positive change in students’ behavior and academics performance by using the four elements of transformational leadership (4 Is, thus Idealized Influence, Intellectual Influence, Inspirational Motivation and Individual Consideration). However, both three styles have positive and negative influence on students’ discipline depending how they are applied by head teachers on students’ discipline.

Further, the study sought to determine status of students’ discipline, challenges head teachers encountered in maintaining discipline, and strategies for mitigation measure. The
participants of the study comprised head teachers and their deputies, teachers, students, and District Education managers because they had firsthand knowledge or in-depth-understanding experiences of discipline problems in their schools. They were deemed to have the relevant information needed for the study.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework, according to Selvam (2017, is a systematic structure that can hold or support the validity of a research study's theory. It outlines and introduces the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists. Leadership theories give possible critical explanations of how leadership behavior and styles develop (Bass, 1990). Even though this study focused to the extent on how head teachers’ leadership styles influence students’ discipline, it is critical to show whether leadership styles are strictly based on theory.

The study, therefore, was anchored on the Contingency Theory of Leadership, developed by Fielder in 2007 cited in Wakibi (2018). Fiedler’s CT, claims that there is no one best way of leadership style applicable in all situations; it depends on the situation factors. Successful leadership depends upon several factors, such as the leader’s ability to lead including the leader’s preferred style, the capabilities, the behavior of followers, and various other situational factors in the organization. In early studies of leadership theory according to Northouse (2013) researchers tended to focus on the traits and behavior of leaders that were common to all. Leadership styles that might vary from school system to school system were infrequently mentioned.

Additional leadership research looked at leaders as people who possessed certain personality features that defined their ability to lead. Fiedler developed the CT of leadership by researching the styles of a variety of leaders who operated in a variety of settings, especially military organizations. As a result, he was able to establish scientifically supported generalizations
about which leadership styles were best and which were worse for a particular organizational situation. This implies that in a school context, the head teacher should vary leadership styles that could fit in the management of the school to maintain students’ discipline at large.

Fiedler (2007) categorized leadership as task-motivated and relationship-motivated. Relationship-motivated leaders are generally concerned with creating intimate interpersonal ties, whereas task-motivated leaders are mostly concerned with achieving a goal. Fielder’s contingency theory was used and helped to determine a leader’s position of power and leadership styles applied to students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. Kiprob (2015) asserts that Fiedler’s contingency theory produces practical application for school leaders. It is believed that understanding contingency theory would help school leaders in several ways.

1.7.1 Strengths of Fielder’s Contingency Theory of Leadership

Firstly, it matches leadership styles with the needs of the school and takes into account the personalities and attitudes of teachers and students. Therefore, it's a leader-matching theory that aims to match leaders with appropriate situations. Secondly, Fiedler’s CT pays more attention to the situations that surround the leader. Furthermore, it contributes to the understanding of leadership studies that there is no one best way to lead; it all depends on the situation. In this regard, leaders should keep in mind that a leadership style that works in one situation might not work in another. Therefore, the type of leadership required is determined by leadership styles and the situation of a particular school.

Thirdly, the theory predicts who might be a good leader in a given situation, as it recognizes that different situations arouse different demands, which are what determine whether or not a particular leadership style is effective or not. All that is required is an understanding of the situation and the leader's leadership styles. Fourthly, Contingent Theory (CT) conforms to the
researcher’s target population in selecting head teachers, deputy head teachers, teachers, and students who had been in a school for at least four years. As the entire teaching and learning population would be able to form opinions about the leadership style and how it influences students’ discipline in schools. According to a contingency theory, leadership effectiveness is influenced by a variety of variables (Northouse, 2016).

According to Miner (2015) the one of the strengths is that Fiedler believes that the greatest contribution of the theory is “the conceptualization of leadership effectiveness as the product of an interaction between personality and situational factors and empirical support for this proposition” (Fiedler, 2015, pp.503). In this current study Fiedler’s contingency theory is relevant because in a school setting a leader should interact with students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders effectively for the smooth running of the school in order to maintain discipline of the school and reduce students’ unrest.

1.7.2 Weaknesses of Fielder’s Contingency Theory of Leadership

Firstly, it claims that a given trait in one situation makes a leader effective, and the same trait in another situation makes a leader ineffective. It does not provide opportunities to improve leaders, as there are no defined attributes to develop and instead focus on the situation, making it difficult to groom leaders. It also provides specific styles which some leaders are expected to fall under in their respective schools. Secondly, it has been questioned by several researchers because it does not specify what a leader needs to become effective in terms of behavior. As a result, it is ineffective in terms of offering training and advice on how to become a more effective leader. In this regard, contingency theory is dependent on the situation to be handled by a leader who employs different leadership styles such as authoritarian, democratic, and transformational leadership styles.
There is significant research to support this theory, however, one of the weaknesses of Fiedler’s Contingency Theory of Leadership is that, it has been found to be difficulty to implement in the field, particularly when the leader does not fit the situation as the theory does not provide explanation of how to handle that type of circumstance or situation (Northouse, 2016) cited in (Hansman et al, 2017, p: 13). This means that in a school setting if the head teacher is not competent and conversant with leadership styles he/she will experience problems how to manage discipline of students in a school.

**1.7.3 Application of Fielder’s Contingency Theory of Leadership**

The application of Fiedler’s Contingency Theory to this study is that it assists head teachers in using an autocratic leadership style in times of crisis by enforcing rules and regulations that students should follow to maintain school discipline. Though autocratic leadership can be harsh and dictatorial at times, it helps to maintain discipline in schools and achieve good results. Students who break rules and regulations receive punishment to correct their behavior. Though there is no consultation in decision-making, a leader may decide on his or her own if there is an urgent need. As a result, implementing an autocratic leadership style encourages students to modify their bad behavior because they are afraid of being punished if they don't change their behavior. The autocratic leadership style helps in the improvement of both students’ behavior and school performance. Poor performance results from a lack of student discipline.

Using Fielder's CT on democratic leadership style, on the other hand, would assist head teachers in improving school performance and students' behavior by incorporating them in decision-making to maintain students’ discipline. Contact and dialogue are predicted to triumph by resolving students' discipline problems and creating a conducive environment in schools for effective teaching and learning. When students are involved in decision-making, they feel valued,
and valued members of the school community, especially when they are included in disciplinary committees where they can voice their concerns to the management team and be heard. To minimize student indiscipline in schools, head teachers should learn to work as a team with students, teachers, parents, and even the community around the school.

To instill discipline in schools, Fiedler's CT, in conjunction with a transformational leadership style, would assist head teachers in motivating students in any achievement made in terms of academics and behavior. The theory manages indiscipline behavior in schools and transformational leadership goes hand in hand with Fiedler's CT. Head teachers are role models who lead by example; therefore, the theory is expected to assist students in imitating acceptable behavior from their head teachers. In this regard, CT is relevant to this study because leadership style is influenced by the situations that arise in the institutions. Leaders should not depend on a single style, but rather mix and match styles depending on the needs of the school. According to Fiedler's Contingency Theory of Leadership, leaders should use a different style depending on the situation. Therefore, Fielder's CT was one of the theories which supported the study based on head teachers' leadership styles on student discipline in public secondary schools.

Finally, Fielder's CT was relevant to this study because it intended to assist head teachers in improving school performance and students' behavior through the application of transformational leadership style, which has the potential to transform schools' and students’ behavior. The head teacher would be able to sell or share with students and even teachers how they might effectively run smoothly schools to achieve their goals and maintain discipline. The head teachers are also expected to encourage students to work hard in their studies and to treat everyone equally to avoid student’ discipline problems in schools and also provide a conducive learning environment.
1.8 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework refers to the diagrammatical representation of the independent and dependent variables of the researcher's research study. The independent variable is the head teachers’ leadership styles comprising autocratic, democratic, and transformational leadership styles. The dependent variable is students’ discipline. This conceptual framework was based on the concept that head teachers’ leadership styles influence students’ discipline positively or negatively in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi.

Figure 1 illustrates the interaction between independent intervening and dependent variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Intervening Variables</th>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>i. Autocratic Leadership Style</em></td>
<td>• No communication</td>
<td>• Commitment to study.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Makes most decision alone</td>
<td>• Improved interactions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Guidance and Counseling not done</td>
<td>• Reduction of students’ unrests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Makes rules &amp; regulations without others views, etc.</td>
<td>• Better MSCE results.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>ii. Democratic Leadership Style</em></td>
<td>• Allows students to give their views concerning discipline.</td>
<td>• Change of behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Incorporates others’ views, etc.</td>
<td>• Improved transition rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>iii. Transformational Leadership Style</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Idealized Influence</td>
<td>• Political influence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>• Peer pressure influence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Inspirational Motivation</td>
<td>• Community influence</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Individual Consideration</td>
<td>• Teachers’ influence</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>iv. Challenges of Head Teachers</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Poor communication.</td>
<td>• Increase or decrease</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Lack of cooperation.</td>
<td>• Common indiscipline problems</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Negative peer influence.</td>
<td>• Causes and remedies of students’ unrests</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Inadequate resources.</td>
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<td><em>v. Intervention Strategies</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Effective communication skills.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Constructive feedback on raised issues.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Constructive feedback on raised issues.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Proper guidance and counseling.</td>
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</table>

**Figure 1**: A Conceptual Framework showing the interaction among variables.
Figure 1 is a conceptual framework showing the interaction between independent and dependent variables including intervening variables. Independent variables are head teachers’ leadership styles which comprise autocratic leadership style, democratic leadership style, and transformational leadership style, when utilized appropriately by head teachers in diverse situations positively influence students’ discipline. They are accompanied by effective communication, effective decision-making skills, guidance, counseling, and adherence to rules and regulations. The dependent variable is students’ discipline. The interaction between the two variables is that in a school setting, the leadership styles of head teachers interact with the dependent variable, which is students’ discipline. Intervening variables, such as political influence or interference, might have had an impact on head teachers' leadership styles. For example, students’ discipline might be disturbed or influenced by non-governmental organizations by giving a talk to students about their human rights. As a result, students get disorganized about their behavior and begin to demonstrate or rebel against the school authorities. As a result, head teachers' leadership styles are rendered ineffective and unable to control them.

Peer influence had contributed to or rather dragged students to drug and substance abuse resulting in poor school performance. The majority of head teachers are not on good terms with the community, particularly parents when it comes to disciplinary issues with their children. They often defend their children, insisting that they should not be punished. As a result, head teachers are accused and proven to be wrong, weakening their power as school leaders. Furthermore, some head teachers complained that most of the time, students misbehave because teachers mobilize them to rebel against authorities due to misunderstanding of their likes or needs. Finally, inadequate teaching and learning materials, such as textbooks and other school materials, had an impact on head teachers' leadership styles. Students' behavior, which is a dependent variable, has
a positive or negative impact on head teachers' leadership styles, resulting in acceptable and unacceptable student behavior in schools. Each head teacher has his or her leadership style in dealing with teachers, students, parents, and other school stakeholders. Inadequate teaching and learning materials can hinder the delivery of services; the leadership styles could be distracted by intervening variables resulting in the indiscipline of students in schools. Therefore, Fielder’s Contingency Theory of Leadership was applicable to this current study because for the head teacher to manage all the challenges mentioned above it depends on the situations to vary different styles of leadership by interacting with students, teachers and other stakeholders.
1.9 Operational Definitions of Key Terms

**Autocratic leadership style refers** to where power and authority are in the management. The head is dictatorial and makes all school decisions without consulting anyone.

**Democratic leadership style refers to** an approach that recognizes democratic principles of governance and head teacher involves staff, students, and parents in the process of decision-making.

**Discipline** refers to how the student controls himself/herself at school for the development of desirable attitudes according to school rules and regulations.

**District** refers to an area where population (people), schools, and other public and private offices are allocated. In terms of education, it has one District Education Manager who deals with Primary Schools only in that particular district in Malawi.

**Division** in terms of education refers like an umbrella which covers a number of districts in a country in which schools are allocated. It has one Education Division Manager who deals with Public and Private Secondary Schools only in the particular division in Malawi.

**Head Teacher refers to** a secondary school teacher who is appointed by the Teachers’ Service Commission (TSC) being responsible for the smooth running of the school and maintaining students’ discipline in Malawi.

**Indiscipline** is used to refer to unruliness or unwillingness to make any effort required to achieve certain predetermined organizational goals and objectives.

**Idealized Influence refers** to the extent to which the head teacher acts in a charismatic way or in a benevolent way and shows beliefs and takes standpoints, which make students want to associate with him/her.
**Intellectual Stimulation** refers to the extent to which the head teacher challenges the norms, and encourages and inspires students through the provision of enough materials, e.g. textbooks for different subjects.

**Inspirational Motivation** refers to the extent to which the head teacher delivers a vision that appeals to and inspires students by encouraging them to uphold good behavior.

**Individualized Consideration** refers to the extent to which the head teacher treats each student equally according to their needs.

**Leadership styles** refer to a particular behavior such as discipline applied by a head teacher to motivate students to achieve their goals in school.

**Public Secondary School** refers to a post-primary higher education institution funded by government and community stakeholders.

**Student** refers to a secondary school learner who has been selected from primary to secondary school to attend education for four years at a particular selected school.

**Students’ discipline** refers to how the students control themselves at school for the development of desirable behavior according to school rules and regulations.

**Students’ unrest** refers to rebellious activities like riots and destruction of property that may interfere with fine smooth running of an educational institution in this case a secondary school.

**Status** as used in this study refers to the category of participants namely teachers, deputy head teachers, students and schools

**Transformational leadership** as used in this study refers to a type of style of leadership used by head teachers inspire positive change among students and the staff with an aim of making every member succeed.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviewed the literature on some previous empirical studies related to the current study. The chapter is organized into two main parts which include: a critical review of two theories that supported the study and empirical studies from global, regional, and local in line with the research questions. Lastly, it also gives a summary of reviewed empirical studies and identification of knowledge and methodology gaps.

2.2 Critical Review of Theories Related to the Study

This section deals with a critical review of two theories of leadership related to the study; namely; Robert’s House Path-Goal theory of leadership and James’s Macgregor Burns Transformational theory of leadership. The theories are important and applicable to the study because they helped the researcher to predict, interpret and apply the phenomena under study.

2.2.1 Path-Goal Theory of Leadership

According to Murage (2014) as cited in Gathura (2021, pp. 37-38) the Path-Goal Theory of leadership, which was developed by Robert House in 1971, focused on studying the effect of a leader’s behavior. House was focused on the leader’s behavior specifically supportive, directive, achievement-oriented, and participative behavior on subordinates’ motivation and performance based on the leader-follower concept. According to the theory, a leader's behavior is contingent on employee satisfaction, employee motivation, and employee performance. The theory focuses on how the leader’s behavior motivates the followers by influencing their views of what may occur based on their different levels of effort on the job. To put it another way, the path-goal theory of leadership defines how leaders motivate and assist their followers in achieving the organization's
goals and objectives. This is accomplished by clearing a road for followers to choose which way to walk, removing impediments, and rewarding good performance (Henkel, & Bourdeau, 2018, p.8).

According to the theory, a leader's style or behavior can be identified to achieve a goal that is acceptable to the employee and work environment (House, 1971 Clerk, 2013). It is based on Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory, which asserts that an individual's behavior is driven by the individual's expectation of a given outcome and the attractiveness of that outcome (Clerk, 2013). This means that students can be encouraged to behave accordingly if they are convinced that doing so could add value to their lives, particularly in passing examinations. The theory can be thought of as a process in which leaders select specific behaviors that are best suited to the demands of their employees and the working environment to best direct them along their path to achieving their goal.

The theory emphasizes the following basic steps: identify employee and environmental characteristics, select leadership style, and concentrate on motivational aspects that should assist employees to succeed. This implies that for schools to achieve good discipline, leaders must provide direction in the form of set goals and how to get there. This is why most schools strive to produce good citizens who are responsible and disciplined. For this to be achieved, head teachers must provide directions and support to the students to achieve their goals. Effective leadership is a function of the interaction between leader behavior and situational or contingency variables of subordinate traits and environmental factors, according to the path-goal theory. Employee attitudes and behavior are influenced by these contingency factors, which interact with leader behavior. Employee attitudes and behavior may be influenced by a variety of factors (Okumbe, 1998) as cited in Odhiambo (2016).
This implies that the head teacher can influence the attitude and behavior of students by interacting with situational aspects in the school environment. According to Murage et al (2017), the theory claims that a leader's behavior is influenced by the satisfaction, motivation, and performance of his or her subordinates. For the followers to comprehend the policies, the leader defines goals, clarifies the objective, and removes obstacles. In expounding the set procedures, they may be commanded or misleading. In increasing rewards, they may give occasional encouragement or pave the way.

The leadership styles comprise supportive, directive, achievement-oriented, and participative. The Path-Goal Theory indicates that effective leadership encompasses the identification of the most suitable leadership behavior in various situations. The theory emphasizes the following procedures: finding out the condition under which the employees are working; using a management approach that inspires followers or subordinates to attain goals. This implies that for good discipline to be achieved in schools head teachers must provide direction through set goals and how to get there to achieve goals.

According to Clerk (2016), the path-goal theory states that the leader participates in behaviors that complement and compensate for the subordinate's abilities. In a school system, the head teacher is typically considered a role model who guides and encourages pupils in choosing the best paths to fulfill their objectives. The theory was applicable to help head teachers to direct students’ behavior by organizing motivational talks, and providing guidance and counseling in schools to equip students with knowledge and skills of correcting their deviant behavior. For the society to be transformed in terms of development it needs people who are educated with good morals and of standards behavior who can transform the lives of people in the society.
Mutune, et al (2019) asserts that, in essence, the path-goal theory is a contingency leadership theory designed to explain how leaders would help followers along a path to goals by selecting specific leadership behaviors that are most appropriate to the followers’ needs and to the situation in which the followers are working. In a school context, therefore the path-goal theory of leadership was applicable to head teachers to direct students to reach their goals by setting school rules and regulations to be followed to maintain discipline in schools. By implementing rules and regulations by being obedient to the authorities they would achieve their expected goals efficiently and effectively with the guidance and support of their head teachers. Miriti (2020) cited in Clerk(2013), contends that Path-Goal theory reinforces that a leadership approach must align with the workforce concerns and the job surrounding so as to reach the desired goals. This means that learners may be inspired to conduct themselves properly in case they desire education to be a great value addition utility. According to Northouse (2013), the Path-Goal Theory of Leadership has its strengths and weaknesses.

2.2.2 Strengths of Path-Goals Theory of Leadership

Firstly, it provides a framework for a leader’s performance of leadership functions by removing any workplace obstacle that hinders goal attainment. Therefore, in a school setup, the head teacher in each particular school should direct students and teachers to reach their goals by assisting them in the activities though they face difficulties in solving problems. Secondly, a leader’s behavior is acceptable and satisfying to subordinates to the extent that they view it as either an immediate source of satisfaction or as an instrument to some future satisfaction. Head teachers act as role models to students and teachers; therefore, they must satisfy individual’s needs to create a conducive environment without any discrimination to maintain discipline in schools and achieve students’ goals.
Thirdly, it is grounded on the fact that a leader’s actions have a direct influence on followers’ job satisfaction and performance of assigned duties and responsibilities. In this case in a school set up students are influenced by their head teachers’ leadership styles by directing them to achieve their goals, because upon admission to a new school they are not aware of anything in the place. Therefore, students need direction or orientation about the rules and regulations of the school at large to achieve their goals and be disciplined. Northouse (2016) outlined some of the weaknesses of the path-goal theory of leadership.

2.2.3 Weaknesses of Path-Goal Theory of Leadership.

Path –Goal theory has been criticized by different researchers firstly for putting too much emphasis on leadership and blamed for promoting a culture of dependency among followers. That it has failed to recognize the ability of followers and for being too cumbersome for use in training people in leadership styles. Secondly, few people would be able to remember all of the contingencies and the appropriate leadership styles for each of them. To mitigate these weaknesses, head teachers should share responsibilities equally amongst their staff members. Some difficult tasks require those head teachers conduct a workshop to train teachers on how to employ different leadership styles of authoritarian, democratic, and transformational leadership styles, depending on the school's environment. This should be done to maintain students' discipline in schools and create a better change environment.

Despite the weaknesses, the path-goal theory is relevant for the current study because it allowed the researcher to recognize the school leaders (head teachers) who are the most influential people in schools. It has also been stated that the leader should provide directive leadership to students and even teachers by guiding and providing a clear vision and steps followed to achieve that vision. Students in a school setting require guidance and direction when they first arrive at a
new institution because they are unfamiliar with the school’s rules and regulations, as well as the school culture; hence, orientation is required. According to Mutune (2019), head teachers provide such leadership by defining school rules and regulations and clarifying the path on which students should go. They also remove obstacles and provide guidance and support to students, especially newly recruited teachers. Further, they select appropriate leadership styles for the smooth running of the school, while focusing on students’ discipline and school performance for better results.

2.2.4 Transformational Theory of Leadership

Another theory which supported the study was transformational theory of leadership conceptualized by James Macgregor Burns in 2003. According to Burns, the transforming approach creates significant change in the life of people and organization. It is not grounded on “give and take” association, but on the leader's disposition, qualities and the aptitude to make a change through illustrations, vocalization of energizing vision and inspiring goals. The term transformational leadership was first used by Downtown (1973) and later taken up by Burns (1978), who noted that transformational leadership engages both leaders and followers in helping one another achieve personal growth. This means, therefore, that Visionary and enthusiastic leaders can inspire workers to change their perceptions, attitudes, and expectations and work towards the attainment of desired goals. This leadership style is based on a leader’s attributes and ability to articulate and influence change through an exemplary life.

Bass (1985), proposed the transformational theory of leadership, which belongs to the contingency school of thought. It describes the leader’s participation in transforming the employee’s perception in order to raise their devotion in the institution. The school of thought gives much attention to how individual relates at place of work and the exact leadership style being employed. Here the leader understands the feelings and emotions of his / her staff. The leader also
does some minimal supervision, thus, in the process motivates the staff to work harder. The staff on the other hand take him / her as a source of motivation and therefore pledges their devotion and commitment.

The theory was later expanded by Bass (1990), who found transactional leadership too limited to deal with the complexities of organizational dynamics. Bass believed that the success of transformational leaders was based on their ability to influence and change their followers. Transformational leadership rests on the assumption that employees are likely to take an idea if the leader can enthusiastically inspire them (Northouse, 2016). A leader who can inspire his/her team demonstrates the passion he/she has in what he /she wants to be done. Bass expanded the transformational leadership theory to have four main components, namely; individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, idealized influence, and intellectual stimulation (Northouse, 2016).

(a) Individualized Consideration: The leader’s ability to respect the uniqueness of each employee and attend to their needs.

(b) Inspirational Motivation: The leader’s ability to articulate an appealing vision that inspires and motivates others to perform beyond expectations.

(c) Idealized Influence: The act of being a role model by engaging in high standards of moral and ethical behavior. The leader’s way of life should match his/her mode of operating.

(d) Intellectual Stimulation: The extent to which the leader encourages creativity and innovation among employees. The leader should encourage critical thinking and thought processing in the formulation and implementation of organizational vision and goals (Verye, 2020, p. 29-31)
According to the theory, the transformational approach claims or creates a significant change in the lives of people who work in the organization. It is a leadership paradigm (theory) that identifies the need for change and then transforms individuals in organizations and educational institutions. Burn's theory was adopted by the researcher because it deals with change in people's lives in society, organizations, and education. It creates an environment in which people may live in peace and work as a team to achieve their goals by communicating with one another. Therefore, in a school setting, students and even teacher's work as a team to achieve their desired goals by maintaining school discipline, changing students' unacceptable behavior, and improving school results.

Transformational leadership theory, according to Margin et al (2014), creates a vision to guide the change through inspiration and implements the change with the group's commitment. It also creates by transforming organizations that are adaptable, innovative, and dynamic. The theory is based on "vision and mission," which states that a leader's personality, traits, and ability may affect change in an organization or educational institution. Four characteristics of transformational leadership are used by leaders to bring change in organizations and educational institutions. They include Idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspiring motivation, and individual consideration (4 "I"s). In a school setting, transformational leadership theory motivates and rewards students to change their unwanted behavior and improve their performance.

2.2.5 Strengths of Transformational Leadership Theory

Various studies that applied the transformational leadership theory attested to its effectiveness in transforming low-performing organizations into high-performing institutions and changing people's misbehavior. Zadeghi and Pihie (2012) studied on leadership styles of heads of academic departments and their relationship with leadership effectiveness at Malaysian Research
Universities (RUs). The findings indicated that lecturers’ perceptions of department heads demonstrated a combination of transformative, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership approaches. In regression study, contingent reward, idealized influence (attribute), inspiring motivation, individualized consideration, laissez-faire, intellectual stimulation, and management-by-exception active all emerged as important predictors of leadership success.

Transformational leaders are known to create an atmosphere of trust and motivate employees to work for the organization beyond their self-interests (Khorshid & Pashazade, 2014, p. 7). Sometimes hardships occur within institution; to deal with such uncertain environment and continuous changes, strong transformational leaders are needed. The transformational leadership actions will enable institutions to improve their performance in a turbulent and unpredictable environment. Under such situations, transformational leaders create and manage change. For school and brands to evolve, they must be willing to change, improve, and expand over time. When new initiatives are in place, transformational leadership is the best style available to bring others on-board to the vision being introduced.

Transformational leadership often focuses on individual needs. The transformational leader seeks diversity because more opinions and experiences lead to more innovation. To encourage diversity, transformational leaders encourage followers to pursue vocational enhancement opportunities. This may include seminars, workshops, focus groups, or even formal classes. The needs of individuals are often the focus of the leader instead of the needs of the team, which means one team member tends to receive more attention than others in this area. That leads to a lack of trust from affected team members, which ultimately affects the levels of productivity that are achievable.
Transformational leadership helps and encourages followers to increase their creativity and self-actualization level to encourage team, group, and organizational interests. A transformational leader induces change in the whole organization and creates a perspective for both managers and staff (Arabiun et al., 2014, pp. 57-5). Transformational leaders are attractive because they always believe in employees, are change agents and always pay attention to improving the working capacity of employees in the organization, and organize the learning process so that the organization can cope with complexity as well as being very proactive in building an atmosphere of job satisfaction and engagement to leadership performance (Agarwal & Gupta, 2021). The transformational leadership theory requires people in leadership positions to be highly influential and to directly shape how their employees think. Employees adoption of the shared mind set to promote an institutions success make it difficult to raise any concerns.

Head teachers should also encourage students to work hard as a team in their academics to attain their personal and school goals. The school requires a head teacher who is capable of communicating the school's vision with clarity, allowing everyone to grasp it. Transformational leaders, according to Bass (1985), are proactive in enhancing followers' awareness of transcendent common goals and enabling them in accomplishing remarkable goals. In this study, the transformational leadership theory is important because it stresses students' overall behavior.

2.2.6 Weaknesses of Transformational Leadership Theory to the Study

Transformational leadership theory's weaknesses are depending on how the study is used. Ndinga (2017) noted that four components of transformational leadership (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) could not be considered separate. The current study included all the four elements that comprised the theory. The transformational leadership theory's weaknesses in this study include: that it puts an excessive
amount of emphasis on the leader's personality, meaning that the leader must be a perfect person in all aspects. According to Yao et al (2015), there is no situation in which transformative leadership is not beneficial. Transformational leadership has been criticized for misuse of power (Asanoah, 2017). This happens when a transformational leader manipulates followers to question their own judgment; they rely so much on what the leader thinks, thus shunning their creativity. Focusing too much on organizational goals at the expense of their own development.

2.3 Review of Related Conceptual and Empirical Literature

This section reviewed empirical studies related to the study from global, regional, and local perspectives based on research questions. It was organized under the following sub-heading’s themes: status of students’ discipline in schools, the extent to which head teachers’ autocratic leadership style, democratic leadership style, transformational leadership style influences students’ discipline. It further reviews challenges encountered by head teachers and strategies that should be used to mitigate challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools. The last section presents a summary of reviewed literature and identification of knowledge research and methodological gaps.

2.3.1 Status of Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools

Discipline refers to how students control themselves at school for the development of desirable attitudes to school rules and regulations. Students’ discipline is acceptable behaviors of students demonstrated in schools. Indicators of the status of students’ discipline include: students obeying school rules and regulations, dressing code (wearing school uniform), better results in internal and external examinations, respect for authorities, and good behavior. In the school context, head teachers play critical roles to instill the discipline of students in schools to achieve their expected goals.
However, students’ discipline problems are experienced globally, regionally, and locally. Indicators of school indiscipline include: students’ unacceptable behaviors, poor performance in the school especially in national examinations, disrespect of authorities, use of drugs and substance abuse, absenteeism, lateness, punishment, suspension from school by the ministry of education and among others (MoEST, 2014, p. 29).

In the United States of America (USA), students’ discipline problems had been experienced in the past years. For instance, a longitudinal survey report was carried out by Kemp et al (2015-16) on crime and violence in USA public secondary schools. The purpose of the study was to find out from public secondary school principals about the prevalence of violent and serious violent crimes in their schools. It also focused on the level of students’ increased problems, disciplinary problems, and actions for solving the problems in schools. Using a longitudinal survey design, a stratified random sampling technique was used to select 3,553 public secondary schools in the USA. Principals' questionnaires were used to collect data. A total of 2,092 public primary, middle, high, and combined schools completed the surveys, resulting in a response rate of around 63.0%.

According to the poll, the rate of violent occurrences per 1,000 students was 27.0% greater in middle schools than in high schools (16 incidents), and 15% higher in primary schools during the 2015-16 school year. It was reported that in schools with a student enrollment size of 1,000 or more during the 2015-16 school year, 27.0% reported cyberbullying among students daily or at least once a week. The percentage was higher in schools with high enrolment than in schools with lower enrolment. The study also showed that 37.0% of disciplinary actions taken by schools suspended a student who was involved in the use or possession of a weapon. Other disruptive students were either transferred to other specialized schools or discontinued from school.
However, the reliability and validity of research tools were not indicated which might have raised concern of the accuracy of the collected. Although the questionnaire collected data from many people, it has limitations of poor, incomplete or indefinite responses due to lack of clarifications. The research tool is also prone to illegibility, incomplete entries and inadequate detailed information. The use of principals as the only respondents and excluding students’ views who are key stakeholders might have generated biased data including authenticity and generalizability of the findings. The current study filled the gaps mentioned by use of several data collection instruments comprising of questionnaire, interview guides, document analysis guides, and observation guides for triangulation purposes. Their validity was determined with the help of experts in educational administration and research. Students, teachers and deputy head teachers were incorporated among the target groups to obtain divergent views to minimize information biasness.

A similar study was conducted in Rwanda by Murava (2018) on guidance and counseling practice and students’ discipline in secondary schools in Rwanda: a case study of Kamonyi District. A descriptive survey design was employed with a total target population of 92 students, teacher counselors, and head teachers. Out of 92 targeted populations, 75 respondents were sampled using simple random and purposive sampling techniques respectively. Data were collected by the use of questionnaires and document reviews for teachers, students, and school administrators. Quantitative data from questionnaires were analyzed and interpreted. The findings were presented in frequencies and percentages in the form of tables and graphs using mean scores and tests by the use of the statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) version 22.0.

Key findings showed a poor practice of career guidance in schools and students’ discipline was not very good. The coefficient of multiple regression $R$ was 0.177 and its percentage chi-
square was 3.1% implying that there was a positive relationship but a very weak relationship between career guidance practices at the school and students’ discipline. Career guidance is attributed to just 3.1% of the overall students’ discipline in the sampled schools in Kamponyi District, Rwanda. This denotes that guidance and counseling were rarely practiced in secondary schools in Rwanda. The study recommended that head teachers, teachers, parents, and other official stakeholders in the country should take the initiative and responsibility to counsel students in schools to shape their behaviors. However, Kampoyi’s reviewed study did not indicate how validity and reliability of the research instruments were determined which raises concern on accuracy of data collected. The sample was too small for survey designs such that the results from the study could not be generalized to other areas. Data analysis techniques and analyses of data from interviews were not indicated. He also did not indicate observation of any research ethics in the entire research process. All these flaws raise the accuracy and generalizability of the study findings. The current study ensured validation of the instruments through the expertise of researchers and educational administration who ensured they adequately covered the content of the concept under study thus increasing the authenticity of the collected data.

Yegan (2014) carried out a study on the analysis of head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline in selected public secondary schools in Koibatek, Baringo County-Kenya. The study utilized a descriptive survey design with the use of questionnaires, interviews, and documentation as instruments for data collection. Purposive sampling techniques and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 6 secondary schools and 30 students from each school respectively. The study included six (6) head teachers from the examined schools, as well as 30 pupils from each school, for a total sample size of 180 respondents. While the 6 head teachers were questioned, students were handed self-administered questionnaires. The data was coded and
descriptively evaluated using frequencies and percentages, then presented in tables. Indiscipline instances were still a prevalent occurrence in public secondary schools in Koibatek, Baringo County, Kenya, according to the study's findings.

Though most of the head teachers stated that they adopted the democratic leadership style in their school, the students were not in agreement with the statement. Therefore, the study revealed that the autocratic leadership style was still evident in schools. Further, it revealed that there was a significant relationship between head teachers’ age and gender in students’ discipline. This implies that the autocratic leadership style was still practiced in schools and students were hardly involved in decision-making. However, head teachers’ leadership had a direct relationship with students’ discipline. However, the reviewed study neither showed how the research tools were validated nor their reliability determined and it had a small sample size of 180 participants, while the current study had a large sample size of 469 participants in the study.

Another study by Rotich (2015) investigated the head teachers’ leadership styles and their effects on students’ discipline. One of the objectives of the study was to find out the level of students’ discipline in selected public secondary schools in Baringo County, Kenya. The study used a mixed-method that adopted the descriptive survey research design. The target population included head teachers, teachers, and students from public secondary schools in the County. A random sampling technique was utilized to select 41 schools and 240 students from public secondary schools. The purposive sampling technique was used to select 41 head teachers and 57 teachers. The study used questionnaires and interview schedules as instruments for data collection. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques which included frequencies, percentages, and means. The hypothesis was tested using chi-square, and data were presented in frequency tables.
The study's findings revealed that the kids' discipline was below average. The head teachers used a variety of leadership styles in their leadership, which they applied to various contexts and situations in which they were used. Furthermore, the study discovered that there was a link between leadership styles and secondary school students' discipline. Even though, the majority of the respondents stated that some parents do not cooperate when dealing with the discipline of their children in school. In addition, teaching and non-teaching staff do not support the administration in enhancing discipline cases in schools. This implies that there is no cooperation among the administration and members of staff which makes maintenance of discipline difficult. The reviewed study used a mixed-method that adopted the descriptive survey research design, however, did not mention the type of mixed-method, while the current study employed a Convergent Parallel Mixed Methods Design a combination of quantitative and qualitative data.

Tembo (2015) did a similar study called Exploratory of mob students' damage in secondary schools: perspectives of students in Malawi's northern education division. The study was conducted to uncover and analyze circumstances that lead to vandalism from the perspectives of students in secondary schools in northern Malawi. The study adopted an exploratory qualitative design. Data were collected by the use of photo voice, focus group discussion interviews, one-to-one interviews, and reviewing of school records (document analysis guide) as instruments of the study. The study found that secondary school vandalism was caused as a result of the fury that students accumulated at the school as they undergo unusual and unexpected experiences by either school authorities or teachers in general.

An in-depth analysis interview further revealed that unprofessional conduct on the part of teachers and poor management, misunderstanding between the administration and students’ grievances due to poor diet (eating rotten beans daily), teachers’ late attendance to classes, and
absconding classes due to watching football in the staff room and among others were the main contributing factors to vandalism in northern Malawi. Finally, findings from the school records had little information on the causes of vandalism. For instance, the date of vandalism, statement of the causes (like students refused to take supper and resorted to vandalism, list of the students to be suspended, and others contributed to vandalism in public secondary schools in northern Malawi. This implies that ineffective leadership contributed to causes of vandalism in schools. The reviewed study did not indicate the target population of the study such as participants, reliability, and validity of the instruments was not explained as to how they were done which the current study addressed.

Another study by Kachepa (2015) focused on the factors that contribute to student indiscipline in Malawi’s boarding secondary schools: a case study of selected secondary schools in the Central West Education Division. The study employed a sequential explanatory design which involved the use of a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase. The division has 7 co-educational boarding secondary schools. Out of 7 co-education boarding secondary schools, 3 boarding secondary schools were selected using simple random sampling techniques from the three districts of the Central West Education Division in Malawi. From the three boarding secondary schools, 60 students and 30 teachers were selected using a simple random sampling technique making a total sample size of 90 participants to participate in the study. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from students and teachers. While semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion interviews were used to collect qualitative data from both groups of students and teachers using a tape recorder. Quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis which was coded depending on the data and presented in narrative form.
The study revealed that home factors due to lack of attention and guidance on student’s behavior, poor relationship between parents and their children, the influence of the media at home, parents not providing desired school resources for students/children, and parental ways of managing misbehavior were factors related to parents in contributing to student’s indiscipline in schools. Further, the study revealed factors related to students due to lack of student interest in school, students’ relationships with the opposite sex, use of drugs and alcohol, misunderstanding of indiscipline as a right, and peer pressure, which were factors related to students as contributing to students' indiscipline. In terms of teachers, the study established that teachers’ lack of professional delivery of work and poor management of indiscipline in the classroom during teaching activities or elsewhere, were factors related to teachers contributing to students’ indiscipline.

Finally, factors related to administration were due to the administration’s inability to address students’ complaints and the way how the administration manages indiscipline cases were factors which contributed to student indiscipline in the three boarding secondary schools in the Central West Education Division in Malawi. The findings above, it implies that students’ indiscipline in schools is caused by different angles such as parents, teachers, students, administrators, and others. Therefore, all the stakeholders have the responsibility of guiding and counseling students to shape their behaviors to be responsible in the societies. The 2 studies differ in a context whereby they investigated factors contributing to student’s indiscipline in boarding secondary schools in Central West Education Division whereas the current study focused on head teachers’ leadership styles and students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, in Shire Highlands Education Division (SHED), Malawi.
2.3.2 Influence of Head Teachers’ Autocratic Leadership Style on Students’ Discipline

Autocratic leadership style refers to where power and authority are in the management. In the school context, the head teacher is dictatorial and makes all school decisions without consulting anyone. Rules and regulations are enforced to be obeyed by students to maintain discipline in schools to achieve the intended goals. However, students obey with fear, fearing punishment administered by the head teachers, teachers, and even prefects. There is no proper communication between the head teacher towards students and teachers. However, the autocratic leadership style when applied appropriately can positively influence students’ discipline. Available literature several studies have been conducted worldwide on students’ discipline.

For instance, Jerome (2017) investigated the leadership styles of principals and violence in rural schools of the current state of education in the Caribbean, Jamaica. The purpose was to determine whether there was a relationship between the leadership styles of the head teachers and violence in secondary schools in rural and urban schools in Jamaica. Based on a correlation design survey of 414 teachers from 61 public secondary schools in five Parishes, seven leadership styles were correlated with the amount of violence at each Parish school.

The study revealed a statistically significant positive correlation (r=0.88) at the p<.05 level of significance observed in autocratic leadership in the Parish school of St. Ann. A moderate significant correlation was recorded in St. Catherine in democratic leadership (r= -.52) at the level of p< 0.01. This implies head teachers utilized an autocratic leadership style in the management of discipline by enforcing rules and regulations to be obeyed by students in schools. This reduced violence in Parish schools.

However, Jerome’s study omitted the following important aspects in his study; he did not indicate the technique he used to sample the participants which could have justified the sample
size of the teachers. Data collection tools, their validation, and reliability were not mentioned hence not able to determine the appropriateness of the collected data and the conclusions of the study. All of these were addressed in the current study to ensure correct data was obtained. For instance, content validity was scrutinized by experts in research and administration, and instruments were pilot tested to remove any errors and ambiguities. All these improved the clarity of the question items which collected appropriate and relevant data from which conclusions were drawn. Finally, although the two studies focused on leadership styles, they were conducted in quite different contexts.

A similar study was carried out by Mohammed (2017) on the Perspective of students’ behavior management in high schools in Ghana. A qualitative case study guided the study. Data collection tools were semi-structured interviews, observation, and document analysis guides which were appropriate; their credibility was determined through member checking. A sample of 28 respondents, 20 head teachers, and 8 students voluntarily participated in the study. The findings revealed that students were not allowed to defend themselves when accused of committing offenses, but the opportunity was given after completing the punishment. That could imply that the authoritarian leadership style was practiced because students were not accorded any chance to explain themselves; also due cause process was not followed.

The study has a methodological gap; although qualitative studies use small sample sizes to obtain detailed information, their findings lack generalizability because they are not statistically representative of the target group. The identified flaw was mitigated by the use of a mixed approach, the convergent parallel design that addressed both qualitative and quantitative aspects; the use of several data collection tools ensured triangulation of information. Also, the use of large
sample sizes enhanced representativeness, and the findings and conclusions were generalized to the target population.

Wanja (2018) evaluated the impact of principals’ autocratic leadership style on students' performance in public schools in the Lari sub-county, Kiambu County, Kenya, for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education. The goal of the study was to gather evidence that would aid in determining if authoritarian leadership has an impact on student performance. The objectives of the study were to: establish the influence of the principals’ ways of consulting during decision-making on students’ performance; determine principals’ use of interpersonal skills on students’ performance; the influence of principals’ delegation of duties on students’ performance and examine the relationship between the principals’ domineering behavior on students’ performance. The researcher used an ex-post-facto survey design. The target population comprised 40 principals, 521 teachers, and 2520 form students. A simple random sampling technique was used to obtain a sample size of 20 principals, 60 teachers, and 252 students. The sampling technique was not appropriate because the target population was heterogeneous in terms of experience, gender academic, and professional qualifications which could have influenced the participants’ responses. Three sets of questionnaires were used to collect data which was analyzed through descriptive and inferential statics. The use of a single instrument has limitations on the non-response rate, leaving black spaces due to lack of clarity and no room for consultation which might have affected the quality of data collected. The current study mitigated the flaws by using several data collection instruments to triangulate information thus improving the accuracy of data.

Key findings showed that the majority of principals used an autocratic leadership style. The methods of decision-making did not influence students’ academic performance. Communication skills were important and to a large extent influenced students’ performance. The
delegation of duties and the principals’ domineering behavior produced mixed results among study participants. Teachers reported a negative influence on student performance, while students indicated no influence at all. From the finding, students’ academic performance was predicted by the activities each was involved in. The study concluded that the principals’ autocratic leadership style influences students’ performance.

Odhiambo (2016) did a similar study on the impact of principals' leadership styles on student discipline in public secondary schools in Kenya's Kikuyu Sub-County. The study used a descriptive research design and a stratified random sample technique to collect data from 230 instructors and 28 principals utilizing questionnaires. Reliability was determined through the test-retest method and calculated using Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient value of 0.8 for teachers’ questionnaires and 0.9 for principals’ questionnaires. Validity was ensured through discussion with the experts and using questions framed less ambiguously. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics assisted by SPSS and presented in frequency distribution tables and graphs.

The findings revealed the existence of a positive relationship between the principal’s leadership style and students’ discipline. That the practice of the authoritarian style of leadership influenced both positive and negative aspects of students’ discipline. Most principals choose when and when not to involve members in decision-making, resulting in a democratic form of leadership that was partially implemented. The implementation of a democratic leadership style had a favorable impact on student discipline, and as a result, it should be reinforced. Further, the study revealed that various aspects of transformational leadership style such as charisma, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individual consideration were being practiced and these had a positive bearing on the discipline of students, especially on the application of guidance and
counseling. The study also found that principals applied a transactional leadership style in schools where punishments and rewards were being used to reinforce discipline.

Students’ discipline was also found to be favorably influenced by this technique, particularly when students were urged to obey and comply with school rules and regulations. The researcher recommended that: the Board of Management of schools should hold regular meetings with students to listen to their grievances. The Ministry of Education should also hold seminars and workshops to raise teacher awareness of transformational leadership, which emphasizes student guidance and counseling, and to train principals on the importance of transactional leadership, which emphasizes adherence to school rules and regulations. Sub-County Directors of Education should host workshops for teachers emphasizing the need for school administrators to act on students’ needs and aspirations to prevent irresponsible behavior. Teacher training institutions and management training institutions like KEMI should modify their curriculum to include leadership aspects to equip leaders with skills for managing students’ deviant behavior.

Njeru (2017) carried out a study on the influence of principals’ leadership styles on students’ discipline in selected public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The study was carried out in Njoro Sub-County in five administrative divisions namely Njoro Central, Lare, Kihingo, Mauche, and Mau-Narok. The target population was 10,855 students in all 38 selected public secondary schools. A stratified random sampling procedure was used to sample 154 students from the study population. Data were collected using interview schedules and questionnaires. The reliability of the instruments was estimated using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient formulae and was found to be 0.819. This was an indication that the instruments attained a reliability coefficient above the required threshold and were therefore deemed acceptable and suitable. Data obtained were analyzed using descriptive
statistics and inferential statistics using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were used to describe the principals’ extent of use of participative, task-oriented, laissez-faire, and transformational leadership styles as well as levels of students’ discipline.

Ordered logistic regression and Pearson’s correlation coefficient analysis were used to determine the influence of principals’ participative, task-oriented, laissez-faire, and transformational leadership styles on students’ discipline in Njoro Sub-County. The study results revealed that participative, laissez-faire and transformational leadership styles have a significant positive influence on students’ discipline while task-oriented leadership styles have a significant and negative influence on students’ discipline. The more participative, non-interfering, and transformational the principals’ leadership style is, the better the students’ discipline. The study recommended that principals should embrace the use of participative, laissez-faire, and transformational leadership styles in their bid to instill more discipline in students. Principals should, however, endeavor to reduce the use of task-oriented leadership style since the leadership style has a significant negative influence on students’ discipline.

Similarly, Chigenda (2015) in a study on nurturing deliberative democracy in public secondary schools in Malawi: school governance and pedagogies dissertation. The study examined issues shaping the current discourse on student participation in school governance in Malawi, to understand current challenges and opportunities for students’ active participation and democratic engagement in schools. A parallel mixed methods research design was adopted based on the nature of the research questions as well as data triangulation to validate the study’s findings. Data were collected from four types of secondary schools: national boarding, district boarding, and government day and community day secondary schools in South East Education Division in Zomba District, Malawi.
Using a multi-stage cluster sampling procedure, a total of 332 students from 17 schools were selected to participate in a survey study. Purposive sampling was used to sample 17 schools and data were collected through observation and focus group interviews with teachers and students. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to understand opportunities for participation across school types. Qualitative data were analyzed using preselected themes such as student consultation and participation in decision making and among others. The study revealed that public secondary schools in Malawi hardly provided opportunities for students’ active participation in any significant decision-making processes in schools. Further, the study also found that a lack of clear guidelines on students’ role in decision-making, and poor attitudes among teachers regarding student participation were found to be factors explaining students’ exclusion from governance participation. From the above findings, most schools are perceived by students as authoritarian in their governance practices, offering limited opportunities for accommodating students’ views and voices in decision-making.

This implies that the authoritarian style of leadership marginalized students’ voices and narrowed their participation space in school matters causing unrest. From the study findings, it was evident that the head teachers’ leadership styles have a great impact on many factors in the schools among the student academic performance and discipline because without discipline students cannot perform well in their studies. Even though the reviewed study used a parallel mixed methods research design, it did not include a questionnaire for data collection, and how reliability was tested, while the current study had included all to fill the research gap.
2.3.3 Influence of Head Teachers' Democratic Leadership Style on Students’ Discipline

Democratic leadership style refers to an approach that recognizes democratic principles of governance and involves people in the process of decision-making. In a school setup, a democratic head teacher involves students in selecting their leaders, holds meeting with students to discuss discipline issues, allows students to give their views concerning discipline, involves student leaders in decision making, discusses students’ discipline issues with parents, consult discipline committee before administering punishment, involve form teachers to manage discipline issues in their classes, involve students in the formulation of rules and regulations, encourages students to work hard as a team in their studies by participating in a group discussion or study circles and encourages class prefects to manage discipline by controlling noise in classes. Democratic leaders work as a team and encourage followers to achieve their goals, and in a school context, head teachers encourage students to work hard to achieve their expected goals by maintaining discipline as already articulated.

Nandomuri and Rao (2011) investigated leadership and school principals: a study of secondary school administration methods in Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh, India. More than 75% of school administrators supported a democratic leadership style, according to the research. Private unassisted principals had a high positive tendency for all five qualities tested. Other school leaders excelled just in one trait: motivation, which directly reinforced their desire for a democratic mode of operation. This implies that democratic leadership was mostly preferred by principals for managing schools in terms of discipline, followed by transformational leadership style which was preferred by other school heads for motivating people.

The latter study used a stratified sampling technique to draw a sample of 557 secondary schools in the Krishna district that operate under four different forms of administration. A stratified
selection strategy was used to choose a sample of 188 secondary schools in the Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, India, which represents about 34% of the population. The primary data was gathered from principals of chosen secondary schools using a self-designed questionnaire and interview schedules. However, the researcher noted that the latter study did not explain how the validity and reliability of the research tools were tested and that the study only used two instruments, namely a questionnaire and interview schedules. While this study has explained how validity and reliability were done and has four main instruments namely; questionnaires, interviews guide, documents analysis guide, and observation guide, not a questionnaire and interview schedule only.

Rundassa (2017) conducted a similar study on school leadership practices and problems: the case of some chosen secondary schools in Addis Ababa City, Ethiopia. The research used a descriptive survey design. Five secondary schools were chosen to participate in the study out of a total of 32. Data were collected from 108 teachers, 19 school principals, 18 supervisors, and 55 department heads using a questionnaire, interview guide, and document analysis guide instrument. Data were analyzed using five rating scales in frequencies and percentages. Schools and teachers were selected using random sampling techniques, while principals, supervisors, and department heads were purposively or automatically selected to participate in the study. The study revealed that all school leaders in the selected secondary schools were not qualified with principalship and training in the area of educational leadership. Those principals did not actively involve parents in the school’s decision-making. This implies that principals lacked a democratic style of leadership to involve parents in decision-making. The researcher observed that the reviewed study did not explain how quantitative and qualitative data research instruments were validated and measured in terms of reliability, while the current study did it by filling the methodology gap.
In another study, Kolawale, et al (2018) investigated the influence of principals’ sex, experience, and age on their choice of leadership styles in managing students’ indiscipline in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design with a population of 184 principals of public secondary schools using only a questionnaire for data collection. The study revealed that principals adopted three leadership styles namely; democratic leadership style, autocratic leadership style, and laissez-faire leadership style in managing students’ indiscipline. Out of the three styles of leadership, the democratic leadership style was the most effective style used by principals in managing students’ indiscipline. The reviewed study used only a questionnaire but this study included a questionnaire, interview guides, document analysis guides, and observation guides rather than using only a questionnaire to fill the methodology gap. Further, the reviewed study focused on the influence of principals’ sex, experience, and age on their choice of leadership styles in managing students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Edo North Senatorial District, Nigeria. While this study focused on head teachers’ administrative leadership styles on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi

Okoth, Ogweno, and Kalai (2016) conducted a study on determining the influence of the principals’ use of democratic decision-making on the status of students’ discipline in secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey design using questionnaires and interview schedules for data collection. Findings from the study revealed that schools that had democratic decision-making practices had fewer cases of indiscipline 65.97% as compared to schools that did not 68.87%. That schools that did not use class meetings and suggestion boxes had higher cases of indiscipline (70.7%). However, the reviewed study did not include the target population, sampling techniques, and the sample size of the study participants.
The researcher also neither determined the reliability nor validity of the research instrument as well as data analysis. The omission of all these aspects of research raises the authenticity of the findings of that study. The current study filled the methodological gap to improve the credibility of the study findings.

M’Muyuri, Kibaara, and Severina (2021) carried out a study on democratization of student leaders’ elections and its effect on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Meru County, Kenya. The study sought to determine the effect of involving students in electing their leaders on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Meru County. The study applied a descriptive survey research design to select ten principals, 196 deputy principals, and 384 student leaders. Schools were stratified into categories, before a systematic sampling technique was applied in each stratum. Both the principals and the deputy principals were purposively selected, while simple random sampling was used in selecting students’ leaders. Questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis were utilized in collecting data, while factor analysis, frequencies, percentages and means were computed with the help of SPSS. Ordinal logistical regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis, while the thematic technique was used to analyze the qualitative data. Cases of indiscipline were prevalent in most public secondary schools in Meru County.

The study found out that only 52% of schools allowed students to elect their leaders, while 48% had students’ leaders appointed by teachers. Many schools lacked elaborate electoral processes and a profound orientation program for students’ leaders. Students' involvement in electing their leaders was statistically significant in affecting secondary schools' discipline. The study recommended the Ministry of Education to liaise with principals of secondary schools in streamlining the electoral processes, develop student leadership electoral policy, and devise holistic involvement mechanisms to ensure free and fair elections of students’ leaders. Further, the
study recommended that principals should educate students on electoral processes and train the elected leaders on effective leadership. The latter study focused on democratization of student leaders’ elections and its effect on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Meru County, Kenya. It did not explain how validity and reliability of the instruments were subjected to the experts. While the current study focused on head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. Validity and reliability of the instruments were subjected to the experts.

Another study by Namphande, Clark, Farren, and McCully (2017) examined on education for democratic citizenship in Malawian secondary schools: balancing students’ voices and adult privilege. A multiple case study design was employed in the study. The design was preferred because it was an exploratory study and the researcher was the main research instrument. Three co-educational secondary schools were selected purposively representing the three different kinds of secondary schools to explore students’ participation in school affairs. Data were collected through interviews with head teachers, social studies teachers, and school prefects, and focus group discussions with Form 3 students. In addition, a document analysis guide and direct observation of everyday school practices were made and records were kept in a reflective journal. The observation focused on students’ involvement in committees and other school affairs to validate data collected from other sources.

Emergent themes were used to examine the data, which were then explored using detailed descriptions and direct quotes from the participants. The study revealed that different forms of engagement were encouraged in schools, using a multiple case study approach in three distinct types of secondary schools to evaluate students' participation in school matters. Each school introduced kids to many types of citizenship roles. In contrast, though students were encouraged
to participate in school affairs, there was a conflict between democratic values and the traditional roles of schools leading to new and hybrid school cultures. This means that students were hardly involved in decision-making because of the two cultures’ conflicting one another which prevented students’ citizenship roles participation. The reviewed study did not indicate the total sample size of the participants, while the current study had 469 participants from public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi which filled the methodology gap.

2.3.4 Influence of Head Teachers' Transformational Leadership Style on Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools

The term "transformational leadership" refers to a leadership style that affects both individuals and social systems. Its optimal form results in significant and positive changes in pupils' behavior, with the ultimate goal of growing them into leaders. In this context of students’ discipline; it is a style whereby head teachers reward students in terms of good behavior and academic performance, even teachers with their good behavior or any achievement done in schools. A transformational leader's influence inspires and motivates his/her followers in the organization to achieve their expected goals for the development of the organization or the school culture.

According to Bass (2008), transformational leaders achieve their goals by inspiring and motivating followers and encouraging their initiative. They are therefore able to create a shared vision and a sense of purpose among team members. In a school setup, the transformational leadership style, which involves guidance and counseling, helps to raise the self-esteem of students. Such students appreciate themselves and the problems they face in school. They become problem solvers other than problem multipliers. However, many head teachers do not understand or apply the transformational leadership style, but there is a need for capacity building for the head
teachers to create a conducive environment for learning. The school is headed by a transformational head teacher, head teacher, and students use the term “our school” about the school ensuring that there is a sense of ownership, responsibility, accountability, and transparency at every stage of decision making (Bass, 2008).

Nooruding and Baig (2014) conducted a study on students’ behavior management and school leaders in the eyes of teachers and students in Karachi, Pakistan in Asia. In a secondary school in Karachi, Pakistan, the study was designed to investigate the perspectives and viewpoints of teachers and students concerning the influence of the head teachers and senior leadership team on students' behavior management in the form of policies, procedures, and support mechanisms. In the study, two surveys were created and used. One for the complete teaching staff (N=43) and another for a random sample of 120 pupils. Teachers were sampled using purposeful sampling, while pupils were sampled using simple random sampling. According to the data, school leadership influences students' behavior management through policies and procedures, according to 97.0 percent of teachers and 83.0 percent of students. The majority of teachers were of the view that sharing personal experiences with school leadership, supporting staff members, and the leader’s visibility in the school context helped them understand and cope with the behavioral issues of the students. This implies that transformational leaders share a vision and mission with their followers and work as a team in instilling discipline among students.

Further, the study revealed that 95.0% of teachers and 86.0% of students felt that school leadership influenced students’ behavior management by providing awards to the students for good behavior. Awards were considered a positive means of strategy(s) of influencing students’ good behavior. However, the reviewed study neither showed how data were collected and analyzed nor how the reliability and validity of the instruments were determined. It raises the credibility of the
findings. The current study addressed the flaws by subjecting the instruments to content and criterion validity by the use of experts from research and educational administration. Also, the study did not focus on head teachers’ administrative style which the current study addressed.

In Cameroon, Wirba (2014) researched on leadership styles of secondary school principals in both private and public schools in terms of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. A qualitative approach, using a semi-structured interview was adopted for data collection. The purposive sampling technique was used to select 10 principals, 10 teachers, and 10 students to participate in the study. The study revealed that principals had no formal training in leadership before they were appointed principals. They were all trained as teachers in their various fields of studies and, in some cases, some of them served as deputy principals or discipline masters as well as heads of various departments. It also established that all principals perceived themselves as transformational leaders.

Further, almost all teachers’ best described their principals as transformational leaders; only one teacher in a public secondary school described his principal as a transactional and democratic leader. All students interviewed best described their principals as being honest, trustworthy, and parental care meaning that was the transformational leader a role models to the students.

It is not clear how the qualitative data was validated, analyzed, and reported; the use of a single semi-structured interview guide had limitations of not generalizing the findings to the target group. The flaws were mitigated by using several research instruments comprising questionnaires, interview guides, document analysis, and observation guides for data collection. Triangulation of information obtained improved qualitative data credibility and dependability. Qualitative data were validated through member checking and experts in research and administration. Data were
analyzed by transcribing, grouped, and categorized into similar themes and presented in narrative form and direct quotes.

Furthermore, even though principals claimed themselves as transformational leaders, they did not show how they inspired and motivated their teachers and students through the four dimensions of idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration. The participants could have shown how they were influenced by their principals’ transformational leadership which the current study addressed.

Narain (2015) did research in South Africa on the role of management and leadership in resolving learner discipline: a case study of three secondary schools in the Pine Town Education District, Kwa Zulu-Natal, and Durban. Positive discipline and whole-school discipline on the one hand, and transformative and distributed instructional leadership on the other, served as the foundation for the research. The study took an interpretivism philosophical stance, which dictated the qualitative research design and techniques of investigation. It involved a multi-case study that documented discipline issues in three South African schools: a township, a suburban, and a rural school. Three separate schools from one town in Kwa Zulu-Natal (KZN), South Africa, were chosen using a purposeful sampling technique. Students were chosen to participate in the study, which targeted administrators, teachers, and deputy heads of departments, representative council leaders, and students. Data was collected using semi-structured in-depth interviews (individuals and focus groups), a document analysis guide, and unobtrusive observation devices.

The study found out that the principals’ leadership of school discipline was influenced by their vision, drives, psycho-social make-up, histories, and knowledge, and was constantly in fluid juxta-positioning. In addition, synergy-making with the parent community bounced in and out of the policy as the practicality of the situation arose in the three schools. Further, it showed that the
principals and their capacity, moral commitment, and charismatic stance affected the discipline at schools greatly. Students’ discipline and causes of indiscipline cannot simply be reduced to any causal relationship due to the multi-faceted nature of the school components, but the role of the school leaders plays especially the principals in school, and their interactions with the wider context make a difference for positive change. Nevertheless, leaders are challenged with differing school contexts.

The study implies that the transformational leadership style was also practiced in the secondary schools in Pine Town District, Kwa Zulu-Natal, and Durban, South Africa. The reviewed study focused on the role of management and leadership in addressing students’ discipline: a case of three secondary schools in Pine town education district, Kwa Zulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa. The researcher did not indicate the total sample size of the participants; the omission of validation of the instruments could mean it was not done hence the data collected might have had flaws. The current study mentioned a total sample size of 469 participants and mentioned four research instruments used for data collection which improved the information sought.

Kendi (2018) conducted a study on the influence of principals’ leadership styles on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Igembe Sub-County, Kenya. In particular, the study focused on 4 leadership styles; democratic, transactional, transformational, and authoritarian leadership style of principals. The study applied a descriptive survey design employing simple random sampling techniques which were not appropriate for all study participants. The study sampled 40 teachers, 18 principals, and 220 students using questionnaires for data collection. Reliability was determined through the test-retest method and calculated using Pearson’s correlation coefficient resulting in a coefficient value of 0.7 for teachers’ questionnaires and 0.8
for principals’ questionnaires. Validity was ensured through discussion with the experts using questions framed unambiguously. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics assisted by the statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) and presented in tables.

Key findings showed a positive relationship between the principals’ leadership style and students’ discipline. That the 4 elements of transformational leadership style comprising intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individual consideration were being practiced in schools, and had a positive bearing on the discipline of students, especially on the application of guidance and counseling.

The use of questionnaires only as a data collection tool had limitations of obtaining dishonest answers since there was no room for clarifications leaving blank spaces. Not explaining how sampling was done could have raised concerns about sampling biases or error; the current study mitigated the flaws, by explaining clearly the sampling techniques employed and the procedure followed in selecting the sample sizes to fill the methodology gaps.

Miriti (2020) looked at the impact of principals' leadership styles on student discipline in public secondary schools in Kenya's Imenti South Constituency. The study's goal was to see how principals' democratic, authoritarian, and laissez-faire leadership styles affected students' behavior in public secondary schools. The research was conducted using a descriptive survey research approach. The target population in Imenti South Sub-County included school principals, teaching staff, and preprimary students in public secondary schools. 19 public secondary schools were sampled using purposeful sampling, whereas 19 head teachers were sampled using census sampling. Simple random sampling was used to sample 151 teaching staff, which was ineffective because the teaching staff differed in terms of experience, length of service with principals in schools, professional qualifications, and responsibilities held in school, all of which could have
influenced their responses to questionnaire items. The current study considered this by stratifying the teaching staff into various categories to ensure representativeness.

The use of purposive sampling to sample 333 form 3 and 2 students to participate in the study was wrong. First, the sample size was large for a qualitative study; secondly, the students answered a questionnaire which is a tool for collecting quantitative data; they were not interviewed. In determining instrument validity, it was done by supervisors, then instrument reliability was achieved by applying the test-retest approach by piloting to one school not included in the main study which was appropriate. Quantitative data were analyzed with the aid of the statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) version 23.0. Descriptive statistics involving the use of the mean, frequencies, and percentages were used to summarize data and presented in frequency distribution tables. Qualitative data collected from the interviews guide were analyzed by transcribing data, grouping and categorizing it into similar themes, and interpreting and presented in narrative forms and direct quotes. The analyses were appropriate and adopted in the current study.

From the analysis it was established that majority, 106(90.0%) of form 3 students affirmed that school principals included the teaching staff in forming disciplinary programs in the institution. Secondly, the majority of 106(90.0%) of form 2 students reported that the school principal neglected the teaching staff's input in disciplinary actions. Although 66(56.0%) of the teaching staff affirmed that school principals act as mentors, a similar proportion within the teaching fraternity affirmed that principals rarely included the teaching staff during the creation of rules regarding learners’ discipline. Equally, 90(76.0%) of the teaching staff affirmed the principal has increased the confidence levels and trust of his staff and students.
In terms of the influence of the principal’s laissez-faire style of leadership on learners’ discipline, 118(100.0%) of the teaching staff opined that the school principals neglected the chain of command within schools. The study concluded democratic leadership approach was implemented partially when school principals engaged students during the creation of rules. School principals preferred a transformational leadership style in managing institutions. Also, that the bad behavior of the students could be linked to the inefficiency of the leadership features that weaken good discipline. The current study adopted similar leadership styles since the studies were conducted in different contexts in Malawi and Kenya.

2.3.5 Challenges Encountered by Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles in Influencing Positive Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools

Head teachers have encountered challenges in students’ discipline which prevent them to perform their duties in school effectively due to unacceptable student behavior. In a school context, challenges are obstacles encountered by a head teacher which prevent him/her from the smooth running of a school. These obstacles can be caused either by students, teachers, parents, school administrators (head teachers), and other stakeholders leading to students’ indiscipline in schools. In Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Adams, and Muthiah (2019) conducted a systematic review article research on school principals and 21st Century leadership problems. The goal was to review the available literature on the leadership issues that school principals face in the twenty-first century. In terms of technique, the researcher followed PRISMA (preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analysis) criteria for data collection. Two major databases, Web of Science and Scopus, were used to conduct a systematic review. There were three essential parts to the process: keyword identification, article screening, and article determination. As a consequence, a final database of 16 documents was created. The materials were analyzed and three themes emerged: personal challenges and two subthemes, such as the principals' lack of knowledge and abilities.
The difficulties in the educational context were split into three subthemes: a lack of trained people, insufficient facilities, and resources. Negative attitudes of parents and interventions from the Ministry of Education in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia were two subthemes for stakeholders' challenges.

The results signify that challenges encountered by head teachers are caused by different angles. They include head teachers themselves due to lack of knowledge or experience in their job as heads of schools, which would lead to ineffective leadership. Other challenges are caused by the school context due to a lack of trained teachers which translates to poor quality education. Inadequate facilities and resources would lead to poor performance of students as well as the school in national examinations. Two subthemes of stakeholders’ challenges were identified as follows; negative attitudes of parents toward the school leadership can cause indiscipline. Similarly lack clear of interventions from the Ministry of Education in terms of the guidelines of rules and regulations are not clear, students can rebel against the rules. The study also highlighted discipline and social problems as challenges encountered by the school. However, the study did not include peer pressure, teachers’ influence, community influence, democracy in terms of human rights, political influence, drug and substance abuse, or teachers influencing students’ violence in schools which the current study addressed.

Benewaah (2017) looked into the discipline difficulties of students at Ghana’s Obuasi Secondary Technical School. The study looked into the causes of disciplinary issues, their consequences, and the coping mechanisms used by school administrators to address them. The study adopted an explanatory sequential mixed-method design. A sample size of 341 students and 44 teachers was selected using a simple random sampling technique for students and a stratified sampling technique for 44 teachers. The purposive sampling technique was used to sample Obuasi
Secondary Technical School in Ghana. Data were collected sequentially using a questionnaire and interview guide. Simple descriptive analysis was used to analyze quantitative data collected from the questionnaire while qualitative data from the interview guide were analyzed thematically. The validity and reliability of the data collection instruments were ascertained to ensure that the instruments were suitable or appropriate for the study.

The study revealed that truancy was common in schools. Teachers highlighted insubordination to school authority and dress code violation, lateness, and absenteeism among day students as students’ disciplinary challenges experienced in school. The issues had several effects on teachers, students, and school administration. The schools addressed the disciplinary issues by giving culprits the following punishments: packing dining hall bowls, clearing school premises, sweeping their classrooms, internal suspension, and external suspensions. This implied that guidance and counseling were not practiced in schools to assist students to correct their behaviors. In addition, the findings imply that teachers and students were not involved in decision-making by the administration as a result lack of cooperation existed among themselves.

In Tanzania, Chilimba (2015) studied leadership challenges in public secondary schools: implication for female heads of school in Mtwara Municipality. The study deployed a cross-sectional survey design where a mixed approach with a dominantly qualitative guided the operation of the study. The purposive sampling technique was used to select 6 secondary schools, (6) female head teachers, 8 members of the school board, and 3 Municipal Education Officers to participate in the study but the type of purposeful sampling was not indicated. On the other hand, twelve (12) teachers were selected using stratified random techniques. A total sample size of 29 participants was selected to participate in the study.
Data collection instruments were interview guide and document analysis guide; their validation and reliability were determined to make them suitable for data collection which was appropriate. The study, however, had flaws, in that the researcher omitted the use of questionnaires to collect data since a mixed approach guided the study. This might have affected the credibility and reliability of the findings. The current study addressed the flaws by incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research instruments to collect data for triangulation purposes.

The data were analyzed using a structured analysis strategy that consisted of three stages: data reduction, data display, and research conclusion verification. Cultural reasons, an unsupportive work environment, an inferiority complex, a lack of confidence, political participation in educational leadership, and insufficient resources were among the obstacles faced by female head teachers in schools, according to the study. All these negated their leadership roles. This could be the reason behind indiscipline cases encountered by head teachers. It becomes difficult to manage discipline since it needs teamwork.

2.3.6 Strategies which should be used to Mitigate Challenges Encountered by Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles in Influencing Positive Students’ Discipline

Strategies are ways that educational leaders use to solve discipline issues effectively in educational institutions to maintain discipline. Research studies indicate that several studies have been done in this area. For instance, Chanda, Songolo, and Mutekenya (2015) studied the management of students’ discipline in Norway: a case study of Signal Municipality. The study adopted a qualitative design that targeted teachers, school administrators, and parents. The purposive sampling technique was used to select a total sample size of 7 participants. They comprised 2 class teachers, one male career and guidance counselor, one subject teacher, 2 school administrators, and one parent from Peri-Urban School in Norway. Data were collected using an
in-depth-interview guide and observation guide which was appropriate for qualitative studies. Data were analyzed by categorizing them into similar themes and reported in form of narratives.

From the findings, it was established that in Norway the Ministry of Education and Research recognizes guidance and counseling as one of the strategies for managing students’ discipline in schools, which involves teachers, school administrators (Principals), and parents. The researcher observed that the reviewed study had a small sample size of 7 participants and was a qualitative study.

Another study by Bourne, Christian, Sharpe, Davis, and Francis (2015) looked into school violence prevention measures, specifically the perceived effectiveness of conflict management strategies employed by educators in reducing student conflicts. The research was conducted in two primary and junior high schools in St. Andrew, Jamaica. The study used a mixed techniques approach, which included a descriptive cross-sectional survey. The study targeted all teachers, students, principals, and deputy principals. Quantitative data were collected using questionnaires, while qualitative data were collected using an interview guide. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in form of frequencies and percentages and presented in tables. While qualitative data were analyzed thematically and presented in a form of narratives.

According to the findings, school administrators believed that the conflict management tactics they used were based on the kind, severity, and frequency of the students' social deviant behavior. For instance, 75.0% of the people used avoidance as an approach for conflict management resolution. Other strategies include teaching social skills, a dispute resolution foundation, counseling, and accommodation. For problematic students and infrequently used for social deviance, include parental conferencing, retention, and counseling, use of guidance
counselors. This implies that the majority of educational leadership employed the dispute resolution foundation in addressing conflict in their educational institutions.

However, the study did not indicate whether the instruments were validated or pilot tested. This could imply that errors or omissions, and ambiguity in question items were not corrected before data collection hence questioning the accuracy or trustworthiness of the findings. The flaws were mitigated in the current study by seeking the help of experts in research and administration to validate. Pilot testing was conducted in one of the secondary schools which were excluded from the actual study. This ensured the questionnaire items were accurate and collected the required relevant data.

A similar study was done by Jinot and Munirah (2021) on discipline strategies practiced in early childhood settings in Mauritius. A qualitative design was adopted using a case study. A purposive sampling procedure was used to select 5 early childhood teachers and 30 toddlers from a private early childhood center. Data were collected using a semi-structured interview schedule and non-participant observation from the toddlers based on the practice of discipline strategies by the teachers. However, the study did not indicate how the research instruments were validated and tested for reliability which may have negated the quality of the research and the findings. Validity and reliability were considered in the current study which improved the accuracy of the findings.

It was found that early childhood education teachers were adopting positive discipline to prevent behavior problems. Strategies adopted included guidance and counseling, autonomy, creating positive relationships, effective planning of the learning environment, and emotion coaching. The two studies differed in the environment where they were conducted; the one in Mauritius was among early childhood education teachers whereas that in Malawi was on head teacher’s leadership styles influence discipline in secondary schools.
Apolline (2015) investigated principals' motivational tactics in the management of selected secondary schools in the Fako Division of Cameroon's South West Region. A total of 178 teachers, 20 principals, and 20 deputy principals were randomly selected from the workforce of Fako Division’s four main government secondary schools. Using questionnaires for principals, deputy principals, and teachers, a descriptive survey methodology was employed to collect data from a representative sample of the population. Means and standard deviation were used to examine the data, which were then presented in tables and histograms. The study's findings suggested that the motivational tactics of principals in the management of selected secondary schools in Fako Division, Cameroon, were sympathetic, supportive, caring about academic and disciplinary concerns, good leadership behaviors, and transformational leadership style.

Further, the findings revealed that motivation was significant in the teaching and learning process and was positively related to teaching and learning with a mean score of (3.57). Finally, the economic state of the nation, the character of the school administrator, the school’s physical environment, the political image of the nation, the school location, and the financial status of the school were some of the factors that influenced staff motivation in secondary schools. Teachers need to be motivated as well as students to perform their work effectively by being provided with adequate materials for teaching and learning in schools. The reviewed study used questionnaires only, and Apolline did not explain how validity and reliability were done. This current study included questionnaires, interview guides observation guides, and document analysis guides and not questionnaires only.

In Ethiopia, Asfaw (2016), investigated the role of counseling in improving students’ disciplinary problems: the case of some selected high schools in Nifas Silk Lofto Sub-City in Addis Ababa. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach for data collection and analysis. The target
population was 393 which comprised 358 students, 12 principals, 20 teachers, and 3 school counselors all drawn from 3 schools. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select 358 students and 20 teachers to participate in the study. Purposive sampling was used to select 3 principals and 3 counselors. A questionnaire and interview schedule were used for data collection. However, the researcher did not indicate how the research instruments were validated or whether reliability was determined. This could mean that poorly designed items could have collected inaccurate data that led to inaccurate conclusions. All of these were alleviated in the current study whereby experts in research and administration were asked to scrutinize the items to ensure they adequately covered the content of the concepts under study. They were also pilot tested to remove ambiguous items, which improved their reliability. In addition, the use of an observation guide enabled the researcher to observe student discipline directly to get accurate and reliable data. The researcher was able to corroborate information obtained from written records with other relevant data.

Descriptive statistics in form of frequencies and percentages analyzed quantitative data with the help of Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software version 20.0. Qualitative data from the interview guide were transcribed and organized into themes, categories, and sub-categories as they emerged from the data. These were analyzed thematically, interpreted, and presented in narrative forms. The study concluded that counseling services did not adequately contribute to students’ disciplinary problems. This was due to the inadequate facilities, high teachers’ workload, lack of counseling room/office, and lack of cooperation among staff members for providing counseling services. It also concluded that punishments, especially corporal and physical punishment were widely used to solve disciplinary cases in all schools. Such punishments are outlawed and criticized in the contemporary world as measures of instilling discipline; they’re
against human rights. Instead, guidance and counseling are advocated for assisting students with deviant behaviors. This implies that school leadership should invite motivational speakers to counsel students if the schools did not have time to do so.

Ofoyuru and Too-Okema (2011) conducted another study in Gulu District, Uganda, on ways for regulating student discipline in secondary schools. The study used a cross-sectional parallel sample survey design with both quantitative and qualitative orientations. The target population consisted of head teachers, teachers, and students. Using convenient and stratified random sampling techniques, 259 students, 90 teachers, and 28 head teachers were selected making the total sample size of 377 respondents to participate in the study. Interview guides and questionnaires as research instruments were used for data collection respectively. Content validity was used by three experts who were asked to rate the items on a scale of 1-4 Likert scale. Chronbach’s alpha coefficient reliability of 0.75 was obtained for the students’ questionnaire and 0.86 for the teachers’ questionnaire. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0. Qualitative data from the interview guide were analyzed into themes and transcribed in a narrative form.

The study revealed that rewards, punishments, effective communication, and counseling students, were strategies for improving students’ discipline in Gulu District, Uganda. This reviewed study rushed to enumerate the strategies that have been used and failed in most schools. However, the findings did not show how such strategies had improved the discipline of students in certain schools. It would have shown a positive change in behavior like obeying the rules and regulations of the school. Again, the reviewed study did not include document analysis guides and observation guides as research instruments, while the current study included them. Further, it did not include the validity and reliability of the instruments which means faulty instruments might
have collected wrong information. This is because it was not validated by experts and pilot tested for accuracy before the actual study.

Barongo (2016) conducted a study on the investigation of school strategies influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Kisii Central District, Kenya. The study revealed that 50.0% of the principals used a democratic leadership style as one of the strategies influencing students’ discipline by encouraging an open-door policy where students are free to see the head of the school to explain their problems. Further, the study revealed that principals’ means of spelled written communication through official letters, circulars, notices, printouts, suggestion boxes, school magazines and handbooks, and prefects’ body involvement in decision-making were the strategies of influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Kisii Central District, Kenya. This implies that democratic leadership styles were preferred by most principals in public secondary schools by encouraging students to meet with their head teachers when they have problems. The head teachers also allowed students to participate in decision-making by using democratic leadership. Barongo’s findings signify that there was effective communication between the head teachers and students in schools because the prefects’ bodies were involved in decision-making and counted as part of the management team for the smooth running of the school.

Godfrey (2016) conducted a study in Tanzania on the techniques of heads of schools to regulate secondary school students' discipline: the case of Korogwe Town Council. The goal of the study was to evaluate the tactics utilized by school administrators and the issues they face while dealing with student discipline. It used a qualitative study design to collect data, which included interviews with school principals. The study discovered that heads of schools in Korogwe Town Council, Tanzania, were able to share their experience with different disciplinary difficulties in their separate schools as one of the ways of managing secondary school students' discipline.
Furthermore, the findings revealed that, depending on the kind and type of discipline issues they faced, school leaders used a variety of tactics. The majority of school principals transferred the duty of maintaining student discipline to other members of staff. It was determined that, although having adequate awareness of Ministry of Education laws about student discipline management, they did not receive any official training after their hiring. Because of a lack of collaboration from other stakeholders or intervention from higher authorities, the majority of people thought policies were impossible to implement.

In addition, some of the heads failed to provide good relationships and created differences among other staff leading to a sense of mistrust and power struggle. This implies that the majority of the head teachers practiced laissez-faire because they were delegating the task of maintaining students’ discipline to other staff members. Further, there was no good relationship among themselves. It also means that head teachers did not have experience in maintaining students’ discipline in schools because they were not trained as heads of schools. The reviewed study used one instrument only and did not explain how it was validated and measured for testing reliability by piloting and how the head teachers were sampled. It did not indicate sampling technique, sample sizes, and data analysis. While the current study used four instruments namely; questionnaires, interview guides, documents analysis guides, and observation guides. Validity and reliability were done through experts such as my supervisors and pilot test to measure the reliability of the instruments if they were valid and reliable for the study.

Safi (2014) did a similar study at Ilala Municipal Council in Dar es Salam, Tanzania, to investigate the relationship between school administrations and student protests. The study followed a descriptive research strategy. Purposive sampling was used to choose a sample of four secondary school principals, 28 teachers, and 32 pupils. In Ilala Municipal Council, the study
discovered a strong link between school management and student protests. In this aspect, it was shown that students’ protests happen when there is a poor administrative reaction to students’ complaints and poor classroom teaching and learning. Based on the findings of the research; strengthening in-services courses on conflict management, increasing the school budget to enable an effective running of school activities, having regular meetings with school stakeholders, and involving the student’s representative council were strategies identified to overcome the problems. According to Safi’s findings, students’ indiscipline is sometimes caused due to lack of attention by the head teachers to students, resulting in unacceptable behavior.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2014) released the common guidelines for disciplinary actions for mitigating challenges encountered by head teachers in Malawi include: warnings, e.g. verbal and non-verbal issued with a letter, physical punishment, mediation, demotion,(e.g.) prefects, monitors, support staff, teachers, heads of department, deputy head teachers, and head teacher, offering guidance and counseling to students, rustication and suspension/expulsion are some of the strategies for mitigating challenges encountered by head teachers on students’ discipline in Malawi. It is the responsibility of head teachers, teachers, deputy head teachers, parents, and other stakeholders to correct students’ behavior s to be accepted in society. Offering guidance and counseling is the best way of correcting students’ behavior in schools. An effective head teacher organizes workshops and seminars for counseling students by inviting motivational speakers to talk to students to shape their behavior.

A study on school counseling in Malawi: an international partnership in the Warm Heart of Africa was published by Guth, Kimberly, Chazema, and Donna (2017). Malawi is one of the African countries in the South engaging in the process of professionalizing school counseling, according to the report. The authors discussed school counseling in Malawi as an international
collaborative effort designed to enhance guidance and counseling services in several schools in Malawi for maintaining discipline. This is one of the disciplinary measures/strategies for mitigating challenges encountered by head teachers on students’ discipline in public secondary schools. This signifies that guidance and counseling services are the most preferred tool for correcting students’ behavior in schools.

2.4 Summary of Reviewed Empirical Studies and Identification of Research Gaps

Reviewed studies indicate research has been conducted on head teachers’ leadership styles and how they positively or negatively students’ discipline in different globally, regionally, and very locally. For instance, Jerome (2017) focused on principals’ leadership styles and violence in rural public secondary schools in Jamaica. Other studies by Afullo and Bodovski (2010-2013) were on the challenges of high crime rates and students’ discipline in the United States of America, Britain, and Canada. Findings revealed violence against teachers, head teachers and vandalism of school properties were due to ineffective leadership styles practiced by head teachers. Others were caused by indiscipline students under the influence of drug and substance abuse, peer pressure as well as the community around the school. A study by Bourne, Christian, Sharpe, Davis, and Francis (2015) focused on strategies for dealing with violence in schools. Findings indicated that avoidance, teaching social skills, dispute resolution foundations, counseling, and accommodation were utilized in resolving conflicts. The study, however, did not focus on or relate the strategies to leadership styles that the current study addressed.

The majority of studies in the region focused on disciplinary issues and their causes. Jinot (2018), for example, investigated the causes of a lack of discipline among secondary school students in Mauritius. The erosion of learners’ discipline was discovered to be caused by parents, learners' attitudes toward education and schooling, educators' attitudes, and the community.
Murava (2018) studied guidance and counseling procedures as well as student discipline in Rwandan secondary schools. It was discovered that there was a lack of career counseling in schools and that student discipline was low. Mohammed (2017) study on students’ behavior management in high schools in Ghana revealed that the authoritarian leadership style was preferred by head teachers whereas, in Nigeria, Kolawale and Ahmed (2018) study revealed that the democratic leadership style was the most effective style used by principals in managing students’ indiscipline. These studies, however, were done in countries that are quite different in context and culture from the current study.

From a local perspective examined research demonstrates that studies in Malawi focused on a variety of topics. Chigenda's (2015) dissertation, for example, focused on cultivating deliberative democracy in Malawi’s public secondary schools: school governance and pedagogies. It also found that a lack of clear guidelines on students’ role in decision-making, and poor attitudes among teachers regarding student participation excluded students from governance. Other studies by Kachepa and Tembo (2015) focused on factors contributing to students’ indiscipline in boarding secondary schools in Malawi but did not relate them to the influence of head teachers’ leadership styles and students’ discipline in public secondary schools that the current study addressed.

In terms of methodology, concerning designs some adopted a correlation survey design and failed to indicate sampling techniques used to select study participants. Others used only longitudinal survey designs and descriptive survey designs that have limitations. Although some studies adopted a mixed approach, they failed to indicate the specific design under each paradigm which raises the credibility of the findings. Other studies used either quantitative or qualitative designs only which have limitations on the information. For example, qualitative researches have limitations of results neither being verifiable nor statistically representative, hence cannot be
generalized to the study population. Quantitative research instruments are vulnerable to errors in measurement and flawed sampling techniques. The current study mitigated the mentioned flaws by employing a mixed approach, particularly convergent parallel mixed-methods design, which combined both quantitative and qualitative designs for data collection and analysis. The design capitalizes strengths and weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative types of research while offsetting the drawbacks of each method. The design enabled the researcher to gather more information from different participants' experiences about the phenomenon under study.

Some researchers did not capture the target population which could have helped determine whether data was collected from the right group. In some studies, sampling techniques were not mentioned which the current study incorporated to improve the authenticity of the findings. Proportionate stratified random sampling, simple random sampling, and purposive sampling techniques for the selection of participants for the study.

In terms of research instruments, some studies used questionnaires only, which have limitations of unanswered questions, dishonest answers, and subjectivity of the participants since there is no room for clarifications. These flaws were mitigated in the current study by utilizing several data collection instruments comprising the questionnaires, interviews guide, documents analysis guide, and observation guide for triangulating information. In addition, the majority of the reviewed studies did not capture important aspects of validity and reliability of the research instruments which might have compromised the study findings. These errors were addressed by subjecting the instruments to face, content, and constructive validity to improve the accuracy of the results.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the procedures that were used to carry out the study. It describes the study locale, research design, target population, sample, and sampling procedures. It further describes the data collection instruments and their validation, piloting, and how the reliability of research instruments was determined. It also explains data collection as well as data analysis procedures. Finally, ethical considerations adhered to during the entire research process are presented detailing how it was done.

3.2 Description of the Locale of the Study

Malawi has six education divisions namely; South East Education Division, South West Education Division, Shire Highlands Education Division, Central East Education Division, Central West Education Division and Northern Education Division. Each division has a Division Manager and District Managers. The division under study covers five districts namely; Chiradzulu, Mulanje, Phalombe, Thyolo and Zomba. It is one of the fourth divisions out of six (6) divisions in the country. It has 96 public secondary schools. Specifically, the study was carried out in public secondary schools, in Mulanje District, in Shire Highlands Education Division (SHED), in the Southern Region of Malawi. In terms of management, the Division is under the jurisdiction of the District Council (Education Division Office in Mulanje District, 2021).

Geographically, Mulanje district shares the borders with Mozambique to the East. The district has an estimated population of 950,675 Census distribution in the area covering 4,345 square kilometers (Malawi Housing Population Office, 2021). Commercial farming is the main source of income in Mulanje District, people grow tea and coffee because it is a hilly area that
receives high rainfall of 750mm annually. The area has also favorable soil that supports agriculture. Therefore, in this hilly area, some crops grown are maize, groundnuts, beans, sweet potatoes, cassava, and other fruit trees such as bananas, pineapples, and avocado pears.

According to the Education Division Office’s report (2021), Mulanje District has twenty-eight (28) public secondary schools divided into four categories namely; One (1) National Boarding Girls Secondary School, three (3) Boarding and Day District Mixed, two (2) District Day Secondary School Mixed, and twenty-two (22) Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSS) Mixed. The justification for choosing this district is because it is one of the districts most affected by students’ unrest in public secondary schools compared with other districts in the Division. The district was also appropriate for the study because it has all categories of public secondary schools in Malawi and had experienced incidents of students ‘unrests and indiscipline over the past four years, from 2017 to 2020.

3.3 Research Design

Research design according to Creswell and Clark (2018) refers to a procedure for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data in research. Other researchers such as Creswell and Creswell (2018) explain a research design as types of inquiries within qualitative, quantitative and mixed approaches that provide direction for specific procedures in the study. This study used a mixed approach particularly Convergent Parallel Mixed Methods Design which the researcher converges or merges quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem under study. The design was preferred because it allowed the researcher to conduct the study by collecting different but complementary data on the research problem, developing a comprehensive account, and best understanding the research (Creswell, 2014).
Figure 2 shows a Convergent Parallel Mixed Methods Design.

**Figure 2: Convergent Parallel Mixed Methods Design**

**Source: Adapted from Creswell (2014, p.220)**

Under this convergent parallel mixed-methods design, quantitative and qualitative data were collected at the same time or simultaneously, the researcher analyzed each of them separately, and then merged them during the interpretation of data. The quantitative approach used a cross-sectional survey design which enabled the researcher to collect information from different characteristics of participants at one point in time but from groups of different ages, sex, or at different stages of development (Kothari, 2014). In the same opinion, Kothari adds that cross-sectional survey design has been identified as being the most popular method of research studies.
in humanities and social science, including educational studies on a problem under study. The design was preferred because it allowed the researcher to collect data from students, teachers, and deputy's head teachers from each of the sampled public secondary schools at the same time.

In qualitative data, the researcher used phenomenology design specifically, descriptive phenomenology for qualitative data collection. Phenomenology is a qualitative design in which the researcher collects information from several individuals’ lived experiences in an attempt to understand a particular phenomenon under study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2014). Descriptive or transcendental phenomenology looks at how to understand individual experiences by reducing the reported experiences from individuals into patterns and themes to identify similar or common patterns (Boejies, 2010). The design was preferred because it allowed the researcher to collect qualitative data through interviews guide from head teachers and the Education Division Manager of the district concerning the head teachers’ administrative leadership styles on students’ discipline in public secondary schools. The major strength of the phenomenology design is the use of scientific inquiry or physical and concrete human situations and experiences. Its major weakness is that it is time-consuming specifically in interviews between the researcher and participants and obtaining information from professional documents analysis guides and observation guides.

3.4 Target Population

The target population according to Creswell (2018) refers to a group of persons or individuals having common characteristics in their natural setting. In this population, a researcher is interested in gaining relevant information upon which generalization and conclusions are drawn subsequently. Johnson (2014) refers to a target population as an entire group that has at least one thing in common. Johnson adds that it is the real number of a society or objects which a researcher uses to generalize the results of an undertaken study.
The target population for this study comprised 28 public secondary schools, 28 head teachers, 28 deputy head teachers, 9,950 students, 450 teachers from public secondary schools and 1 Education Division Manager in Mulanje District, Malawi (Education Division Office Report, 2021). According to the Education Division Office report in Mulanje District for the year of 2021, there are 28 public secondary schools in the district. There are four (4) categories of public secondary schools based on the status of the school and gender of students. They are categorized as national girls’ boarding, district boarding and day mixed, district day mixed and community day secondary schools mixed (EDO, 2021). Table 2 presents the target population of the study.

Table 2

Target Population of the Study per Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Category</th>
<th>Population Size (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>9,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Head Teachers</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Division Manager</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Education Division Office in Mulanje District (2021)

The public secondary schools were targeted because, in Mulanje District, students’ unrest is highly manifested in schools. This unrest had resulted in the loss of destruction of school property worth millions of Malawian Kwacha and learning had dwindled in the affected schools (Government of Malawi, 2018). This also affected the quality of education provided in the affected schools leading to the poor academic performance of students as well as the schools in the examinations. For instance, in the year 2019 Malawi Secondary School Certificate examinations
results, the lowest school by average scored 31% for the whole district in Mulanje due to student unrest. Although the Ministry of Education Science and Technology in Malawi requires that all secondary schools head teachers maintain discipline, in reality, it is not the case. The rationale being there have been so many student unrests experienced in public secondary schools in the country. Table 3 presents the number of public secondary schools by category in Mulanje District, Malawi.

**Table 3**

*Number of Public Secondary Schools per Category in Mulanje District, Malawi.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Category</th>
<th>Number of Schools (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Girls Boarding</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Boarding and Day Secondary Schools Mixed</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Day Secondary Schools Mixed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Day Secondary Schools Mixed</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Education Division Office, 2021*

From Table 3, there were 28 public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi which are in different categories based on the school type. The district had only one (1) national girls’ boarding secondary school, three (3) district boarding and day secondary schools mixed, two (2) district day secondary schools mixed and twenty two (22) community day secondary schools mixed. The majority of the schools in Mulanje District are community day secondary schools mixed. According to the Education Division Office report in Mulanje District for the year of 2021, there were 9,950 students, 450 teachers, 28 deputy head teachers, 28 head teachers, from public
secondary schools and one Education Division Manager of Shire Highlands Education Division in Mulanje district (Education Division Office Report, 2021).

The study targeted students because they interact with their school heads on daily basis and hence have knowledge about their leadership styles in managing their schools. In this regard they were mature in decision making to give the right information about their head teachers how the manage discipline in schools. Further, they were also targeted because discipline is a matter that directly touches on students in schools where they are required to adhere to the set of rules and regulations to ensure the smooth running of the school programs and activities (Kamuri, 2014).

Teachers were targeted because they had been working together with their head teachers for a long time and were considered to have a lot of knowledge about their head teachers’ leadership styles in managing discipline. On the other hand, teachers were targeted because they closely interact with students during in and out of class activities and have a responsibility of managing the students’ discipline in schools. In addition, head teachers were targeted because they are overall and in charge of schools and have experience in the challenges, they encounter in handling discipline issues in schools. Deputy Head teachers are included in the study because they work closely with head teachers and therefore have experience with challenges their head teachers encounter in influencing students’ discipline. The Education Division Manager (EDM) of the district was targeted because she is in charge of secondary schools and head teachers report to her on various aspects of school enrolment, indiscipline, and school performance among others. On the other hand, the EDM was targeted as a representative of the Ministry of Education Science and Technology Officers’ in-charge of all aspects of education. She was considered to have adequate knowledge of discipline challenges encountered by head teachers (MoEST, 2014). Table 4 presents the population of the participants for each of the categories.
### Table 4

**Population of Participants per Category**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants’ Category</th>
<th>Population Size (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>9,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Head Teachers</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Division Manager</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,457</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Education Division Office’s Report, 2021

#### 3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Sampling refers to the process of taking a portion of the target population, making observations on the smaller group, and then generalizing the findings to the target population from which the sample was drawn (Kumar, 2014). A sample is described as a subset or a small portion of a target population that is representative of the larger population under study from which data is obtained for the study (Kothari & Garg, 2019). A sample must be representative to be able to generalize the research findings from the sample to the target population from which it was selected with reasonable confidence. According to Taherdoost (2017), the researcher should select an adequate sample size for each category of participants through sampling. Sampling was done during the study to select a representative sample size from the target population to participate in the study.
Thus, both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used to select the study participants. Kombo and Tromp (2013) contend that in probability sampling participants have a known probability or equal chance of being selected, while in non-probability sampling participants are not selected by chance but based on some considerations best known to the researcher. Under the probability sampling, the researcher employed stratified random sampling, simple random sampling, and proportionate stratified sampling techniques students, and teachers to participate in the study. Under the non-probability sampling technique, purposive in particular Extreme Case Sampling technique was used to select schools to participate in the study. Deputy Head teachers, head teachers, and the Education Division Manager of the District were automatically included to participate in the study. According to Kombo and Tromp (2016) in non-probability sampling, participants are not selected by chance but based on some considerations best known to the researcher.

3.5.1 Sampling of Schools.

Statistics from the Education Office report (2021) indicate that there are 28 public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. The schools are divided into four (4) categories; One (1) National Girls Boarding School, three (3) Day and Boarding District Secondary Schools, two (2) District Day Secondary Schools, and twenty-two (22) Community Day Secondary Schools. Extreme case sampling technique was used to select public secondary schools to participate in the study. Extreme case sampling is a type of purposeful sampling technique that is used to focus on cases that are unusual or special types in the sense they highlight notable failures or outcomes.

According to Kombo and Tromp (2016) extreme case sampling focuses on cases that are rich in information because they are unusual and used to select schools to participate in the study. The technique was used to gather information from cases that are either enlightening or
troublesome. The public secondary schools in Mulanje District were extreme case sampled based on the status of the school, gender of the students, and category of the school. The public secondary schools were first categorized based on the status of the school as National Girls’ Boarding Secondary School one (1) District Day and Boarding Secondary Schools Mixed three (3) District Day Secondary Schools Mixed Two (2) and Community Day Secondary Schools Mixed twenty two (22). To observe anonymity of the schools and their identity the ‘Trouble Free’ institutions were identified by numerals with three digits 001 till 017 schools where students’ unrests were rampant using extreme case purposive sampling out of 28 public secondary schools. Table 5 presents extreme case purposive sampling of Schools.

Table 5

**Extreme Case Purposive Sampling of Schools**

n=17(Sch)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Category</th>
<th>Number of Schools (N)</th>
<th>Sample Size (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Girls Boarding Secondary School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Day and Boarding Sec.Sch. Mixed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Day Secondary School Mixed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Day Secondary School Mixed</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Field Data (Education Division Office, 2021) in Mulanje District, Malawi.
3.5.2 Sampling of Students

A sample size of 340 students was selected by using the statistical table of determining the sample size of a known population (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). This statistical table was preferred when sampling students as it is an effective method of determining the sample needed to be representative of a given finite population. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) came up with the statistical table of determining the sample size (See Appendix 7). To simplify the procedure of calculating the sample size for a known population by use of the following formula:

\[ S = X^2NP(1-P) \div d^2(N-1) + X^2P(1-P) \]

Where:

\( S = \) Required Sample Size

\( X = \) Z value (e.g. 1.96 for 95% confidence level)

\( N = \) Population Size

\( P = \) Population proportion (expressed as decimal & assumed to be 0.5 (50%) since this would provide the maximum sample size).

\( d = \) Degree of accuracy (5%), expressed as a proportion (.05); it is margin of error.

Proportionate stratified random sampling was used to sample Form 3 and 4 students from each school. The justification for targeting Form3 and 4 students was because they had stayed in the school for a longer duration and had a clear understanding of the operation of the head teachers how they manage the school. Further, they were mature to give necessary information on students’ discipline and had common characteristics and experiences of discipline issues in schools than Form 1 and 2.
Proportionate stratified sampling is a method of stratified sampling where the number of elements from each stratum in relation to its proportion in the total population is selected. The method was preferred to ensure that the number of students from each stratum in relation to its proportion was selected (Gall & Borg, 2007). Using class or stream registers, the students in each school were placed in different strata. In single-sex school (Girls boarding school), the form 3 and 4 students in a large school the students were stratified based on the streams for each form level. In mixed schools, the students were stratified according to the gender where each gender formed a stratum.

Using proportionate stratified sampling, 10% of students in form 3 and 4 in each school were selected. The number of students selected from each stratum was determined by dividing the number of students from each stratum with the total number of students in form 3 and 4, multiplied by the sample size of the students (10% of students in form 3 and 4). Then simple random sampling technique through the lottery method was used to select students from each stratum. The researcher obtained the list of all form three and four students from the head teachers’ office and thereafter wrote yes and no on pieces of paper with a number, then folded them and put in a basket, and then mixed them. The papers were picked randomly by each student without looking them until the required number of students was selected and those who picked yes were selected. Using this sampling technique, a total sample size of 340 students was selected to participate in the study. Table 6 presents proportionate stratification and sample size of Form 3 and 4 students from each school.
Table 6

Proportionate Stratification and Sample Size of Form 3 and 4 Students from each school.

n=24(NGB); 48(DDBM); 48(DDSSM) and 220 (CDSS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Category</th>
<th>Number of Form 3 &amp; 4 Students (N)</th>
<th>Sample Size (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Girls’ Boarding</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Day and Boarding Mixed</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Day Secondary School Mixed</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Day Secondary Schools Mixed</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1428</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data 2021

3.5.3 Sampling of Teachers

According to Education Division Office’s report (2021), there were 450 secondary school teachers in the district of which 90 were females and 360 male teachers. To ensure that certain sub-groups in each population were equally represented in the sample, a stratified random sampling technique used for sampling teachers. In the large schools where there were many teachers, a stratified random sampling technique was adopted where the researcher categorized teachers into gender and departments where they belonged. The researcher obtained a list of teachers from the head teachers’ office from each sampled school and wrote yes and noon pieces of paper with a number, then folded them and put in a basket, and then mixed them. The papers were picked randomly by each teacher, those who picked yes were selected as participants of the
study. A stratified random sampling technique was preferred because it enabled the researcher to obtain the desired representation from various school-type categories.

3.5.4 Sampling of Deputy Head Teachers

Deputy Head teachers were automatically included in the study from 17 public secondary schools that were selected to participate in the study. The deputy head teachers were included in this study because they are also managers of schools and had the experience to give more detailed information on how their head teachers manage the discipline of students in schools. They work closely as a team with their head teachers, they are in charge of discipline and are chairpersons of the disciplinary committee. They were able to give more reliable information about discipline issues and the challenges the head teachers encounter in maintaining students' discipline as well as strategies for mitigating them.

3.5.5 Sampling of Head Teachers

Head teachers were automatically included because they are in charge of the schools, and they handle all issues about their schools. Head teachers were included because they execute discipline issues and therefore had rich information, experience to give more detailed information on how they manage the discipline of students in schools. Furthermore, they were able to give more information on challenges they encounter with students, and strategies of mitigating them for better improvement of behavior of students and their performance.

3.5.6 Sampling of Education Division Manager

The Education Division Manager (EDM) was automatically included in the study. This is because she is in charge of education in the district. She supervises the head teachers' performance of their duties and receives reports on various aspects of school returns on students’ enrolment, number of teachers, Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) examinations results, and
discipline issues. Therefore, was deemed possess adequate knowledge and information discipline issues needed for the study. Table 7 shows the sample matrix, a summary of the sampling techniques used, and the percentages of schools, students, teachers, deputy head teachers, head teachers, and Education Division Manager of the District.

Table 7

Sampling Matrix

n=17(Sch); 340(S); 204(T); 17(D/HT); 17(HT) and 1(EDM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Category</th>
<th>Total Population (N)</th>
<th>Sample Size (n)</th>
<th>Sample % of total</th>
<th>Sampling Technique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>61.00</td>
<td>Extreme case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>9,950</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>Prop. Stratified Random</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>45.33</td>
<td>Stratified Random</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy /HT</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>61.00</td>
<td>Automatic inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teachers</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>61.00</td>
<td>Automatic inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Manager</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>Automatic inclusive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

%=Percentage

Source: Field Data, 2021

3.6 Description of Data Collection Instruments

Self-administered questionnaires, a semi-structured interview guide, a document analysis guide, and an observation guide were used for quantitative and qualitative data collection since the study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design. The questionnaires were used to collect primary data from students, teachers, and deputy's head teachers. On the other hand, interview guides were used to collect data from head teachers and the Education Division Manager.
of the district. The documents analysis guide and observation guide were used to collect secondary data from public documents such as punishment books, guidance and counseling records books, schemes and records of work, and other documents with the permission of head teachers of the sampled schools.

By using four main instruments, the researcher sought to gather adequate data to answer research questions and test hypotheses. The main reason for using such triangulations according to Creswell (2014) was to obtain a variety of information based on head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline to achieve a higher degree of validity and reliability. On the other hand, questionnaires were also preferred for data collection to gather more detailed information in a reasonably quick space-time (Laddy-Owen, 2016, Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). Questionnaires that had structured closed-ended Likert-scale type items integrated with some open-ended questions were preferred to facilitate collecting both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time (Creswell, 2014).

3.6.1 Questionnaire for Students

The questionnaire for students consisted of seven (7) main sections, labelled as sections A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. Section A focused on demographic information of students and was comprised of 4 items on gender, age, form/class type of school and responsibilities in schools.

Section B solicited information on the status of students’ discipline in public secondary schools. Students were asked to rate the status of students’ discipline in their schools whether it was increasing, decreasing, do occur and not certain. Students were also asked to list down the common problems experienced and the main causes of problems or indiscipline in their schools. The section was comprised of one closed-ended question whereby respondents were asked to
respond whether their school had experienced problems in the previous years and one open-ended question with 3 items to explain the causes of the problems.

Section C focused on the extent to which head teachers’ autocratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. It sought information from students on how their head teachers as autocratic/authoritarian head teachers perform their duties in schools by the use of communication, decision making, guidance and counseling, and rules and regulations of the school. The section had 10 closed-ended structured statements questions and 1 open-ended question with 3 items. The open-ended questions were used to allow respondents to express their opinions on whether head teachers’ autocratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in their schools.

Section D addressed on the extent to which head teachers’ democratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. It sought to gather information from students on how their head teachers as democratic heads perform their duties in schools whether they allow students to give their views on discipline issues, incorporating students in decision making, involve students to select their leaders, and involve students in the formulation of rules and regulations of the school. The section had 10 closed-ended structured statements questions and 1 open-ended question with 3 items. The open-ended questions were used to allow respondents to express their opinions on whether head teachers’ democratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in their schools.

Section E examined on the extent to which head teachers’ transformational leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. It sought to gather information from students on whether head teachers’ transformational leadership style influences students’ discipline in the use of idealized influence, intellectual stimulation,
inspirational motivation, and individual consideration. The section comprised 12 closed-ended structured statements questions and 1 open-ended question with 3 items. These structured statement questions were measured on a 5 Point Likert’s Scale ranging from 1= Agree (A); 2= Strongly Agree (SA); 3= Undecided (UD); 4=Strongly Disagree (SD); and 5= Disagree (D) respectively.

Section F focused on challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing positive students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. It sought information from student-leaders to explain challenges encountered by their head teachers, in influencing students’ discipline in their schools. The part had one open-ended question with parts A&B. Section G sought strategies that can be used for mitigating challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing positive students’ discipline in public secondary schools.

3.6.2 Questionnaire for Teachers

The teachers’ questionnaire consisted of both closed-ended and open-ended questions. They comprised seven main sections, ranging from sections A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. Section A solicited demographic information of teachers regarding gender, age, marital status, teaching experience, and level of education. Section B solicited information on the status of students’ discipline in public secondary schools. Students were asked to rate the status of students’ discipline in their schools whether it was increasing, decreasing, do occur and not certain. Teachers were also asked to list down the common problems experienced and the main causes of problems or indiscipline in their schools. The section was comprised of one closed-ended question whereby respondents were asked to respond whether their school had experienced problems in the previous years and one open-ended question with 3 items to explain the causes of the problems.
Section C focused on the extent to which head teachers’ autocratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. It sought information from students on how their head teachers as autocratic/authoritarian head teachers perform their duties in schools by the use of communication, decision making, guidance and counseling, and rules and regulations of the school. The section had 10 closed-ended structured statements questions and 1 open-ended question with 3 items. The open-ended questions were used to allow respondents to express their opinions on whether head teachers’ autocratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in their schools.

Section D focused on the extent to which head teachers’ democratic leadership style influences students’ discipline. It sought to gather information from students on how their head teachers as democratic heads perform their duties in schools whether they allow students to give their views or opinions concerning discipline, whether they involve students in selecting their leaders, and whether they hold meetings with students to discuss discipline issues and among others. The section had 10 closed-ended structured statements questions and 1 open-ended question with 3 items. The open-ended questions were used to allow respondents to express their opinions on whether head teachers’ democratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in their schools.

Section E examined the head teachers’ transformational leadership style on students’ discipline. It sought to gather information from students on whether head teachers’ transformational leadership styles influence students’ discipline in the use of idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individual consideration. The section comprised 12 closed-ended structured statements questions and 1 open-ended question with 3 items. These structured statement questions were measured on a 5 Point Likert’s Scale ranging
Section F focused on challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing positive students’ discipline in public secondary schools. It sought information from student-leaders to explain challenges encountered by their head teachers, in influencing students’ discipline in their schools. The part had one open-ended question with parts a & b. Section G sought strategies that can be used for mitigating challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools.

3.6.3 Questionnaire for Deputy Head Teachers

Deputy Head teachers’ questionnaire was also similar to those administered to students and teachers and was structured statements with closed-ended and open-ended questions. The questionnaire consisted of seven main sections that ranged from sections A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. Section A focused on demographic information of deputy head teachers and was comprised of 5 items, such as gender, age, marital status, teaching experience, and level of education. Section B, C, D, E, F, and G like those of the students’ and teachers’ questionnaires respectively based on the influence of head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi.

3.6.4 Interview Guide for Head Teachers

An interview guide was used to collect qualitative data by conducting face-to-face interviews with the head teachers. Interviews involve interactions between the interviewer and respondent based on interview questions and it is a conversation through the sequence of questions. A face-to-face interview is an individual interview, which is a conversation between the participant and interviewer (Kortjens, 2017). The semi-structured interview guide was preferred to conduct
the interviews to standardize the interview situation so that the researcher remained focused and was able to ask the same questions similarly.

An interview guide for the head teachers was preferred because it is a social encounter and participants are usually more willing to respond or talk than to write. It gives a higher response rate in a natural setting and it enabled the researcher to probe respondents to express their views freely and openly without fear or hiding any information from the interviewer (Kortjens, 2017). The interview guide was divided into 2 main sections.

Section A, sought information on demographic information, comprising of gender, age, marital status, level of education, and duration of service as head teachers in their respective schools. The section had 5 items of closed-ended questions. Section B sought information about head teachers’ opinions on leadership styles, such as; autocratic, democratic, and transformational styles on students’ discipline in public secondary schools. It captured data on challenges head teachers encounter in managing students’ discipline. It also sought information from the head teachers on strategies that could be used to mitigate the challenges they encounter in influencing students’ discipline in their schools. In total there were 20 items consisting of closed-ended and open-ended semi-structured questions with probing and were done in a face-to-face interview using a tape recorder.

3.6.5 Interview Guide for Education Division Manager

The interview guide for the Education Division Manager was also similar to the one that interviewed the head teachers in terms of demographic information. However, slightly different probing questions depending on the position in the Division. It comprised 2 main sections, A and B. Section A, focused on demographic information regarding gender, age, marital status, level of education, location of Mulanje District, number of public secondary schools in the district, and
duration of service by years as a Division Manager of SHED in the Mulanje District. It consisted of 7 items of closed-ended questions.

Section B focused on head teachers’ leadership styles applied to students’ discipline in public secondary schools in the district. In this section, the researcher probed to solicit information from the EDM on the leadership styles such as autocratic, democratic, and transformational leadership styles and among others applied by head teachers whether they had an impact to influence students’ discipline in the district. Furthermore, the researcher sought information from the EDM on whether she receives complaints/problems or comments from students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders concerning how head teachers are managing the discipline of students and performance in schools. The researcher also sought information from the EDM on the status of students’ discipline or general discipline issues in public secondary schools, whether they are increasing(high), decreasing(low) do occur and not certain.

In the same vein, the researcher sought information from the EDM on common problems experienced in schools and their main causes in the school, a program she had for motivating students to maintain discipline and improve performance in public secondary schools in the district. Further, the researcher sought information from EDM on challenges encountered by head teachers on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in the district. The EDM was responsible to answer this question because she is the overall and In-Charge of all schools in the district as well as the whole division, and is aware of what goes on in every school concerning discipline. Finally, the researcher sought information from the EDM on strategies to mitigate challenges encountered by head teachers regarding the discipline of students in public secondary schools, and suggestions and recommendations put forward for improving the discipline of
students and school performance in Mulanje District, Malawi. In total, the EDM’s interview guide had 15 items of closed-ended and open-ended semi-structured questions.

3.6.6 Documents Analysis Guide

According to Gall and Borg (2012), defined document as a record of past events that are recorded or printed and preserved for future reference. A document analysis refers to scrutinizing materials and written documents. For Best & Kahn (2010), these documents include the punishment book, attendance registers, scholastic file records (academicians records), letters, minutes of meeting book, guidance and counseling records, schemes and records of work, and lesson plans. The researcher reviewed schemes and records of work, lesson plans, punishment books, scholastic file records, guidance and counseling records, and class attendance registers. These public documents were obtained from the head teachers’ offices who granted permission for the researcher to review and analyze them. The researcher reviewed schemes of work and records to determine whether teachers adhered to Ministry of Education guidelines of the correct format, with specific objectives that outline the knowledge, skills, and attitudes the students are supposed to acquire at the end of the lesson. Also sought information on whether the teaching and learning activities matched the objectives to keep learners meaningfully engaged in class to minimize chances of indiscipline. The punishment book was reviewed to obtain information on the type of punishments given to mischievous students as well as the student unrests that have occurred in schools for the past four years 2017-2020. Students were attending classes or not which would result in poor performance and indiscipline in class.

From the Scholastic Records File (Academician Records File: the researcher checked Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) results mean score average rate or passing rate records for the last four years 2017-2020 for the school. The purpose was to identify the school
performance in the MSCE examination results at the end of four years course and discover challenges experienced by head teachers in the management of discipline of students in public secondary schools.

The review of guidance and counseling records of all schools was done to check whether there was a committee for guidance and counseling in place. And whether the schools invited motivational speakers to line the ‘Mother group’ to talk to students to cope with challenges they encountered in their daily lives. The attendance register was also checked to find out those students who are always absent from school and the rationale behind their absence. The information obtained enabled the researcher to propose remedial measures.

3.6.7 Observation Guide

An observation guide is a method of data collection for gathering primary data by the researcher’s direct observation of relevant people, actions, and situations without asking the respondents (Maina, 2012). According to Oso and Onen (2011), an observation guide is the use of all senses to perceive and understand the experiences of interest to the researcher. The purpose of the observation guide is to help researchers to see what people are doing rather than what they say and do. It helps in bridging the gap between what people do and what they do (Boeiji, 2010). There are different forms of observation which according to Kombo and Trump include participant observation, non-participant, unstructured observation, and structured observation. The researcher is unobtrusive and watches the phenomena from outside. To do so, the researcher must gain access and be accepted by the individual or individuals being observed. In this study, the researcher drafted a structured observation guide and employed a non-participant method to observe the followings:
Firstly, dressing code: such as; school uniform, students’ punctuality to class after break, and students’ interaction. The finding showed that in most schools, students had put on school uniforms, while a few did not. Students’ punctuality to class after break and their interaction were good in most schools. Secondly, a notice board for students’ communication: such as displaying rules and regulations, and circulars from the Ministry of Education among others. Thirdly, school plant or premises: such as sanitation of the school, specifically the surroundings on availability of boreholes, tree plantation and among others.

Fourthly, teaching resources: such as textbooks, desks, tables, chairs, computers, and laboratories and among others. The study determined whether resources were adequate or not and the right size for the students to sit comfortably and study. The study sought to establish the condition of other facilities on they were in good condition. They included school infrastructure/facilities: such as classrooms, toilets/washrooms, dining hall, library, and dormitories were observed. It enabled the researcher to gain firsthand experience on the phenomenon under study whether the inadequate facilities made students uncomfortable and triggered students’ indiscipline.

3.7 Validity, Pilot Testing, and Reliability of the Research Instruments

Before going to the field for data collection, the validity and reliability of the research instruments were ascertained to ensure improved and research findings. This section presents how validity, pilot testing, and reliability of the research instruments were ensured in the current study. Validity was ensured through discussion with the experts and using questions framed less ambiguously of questionnaires, and reliability was ensured for both quantitative and qualitative instruments. Pilot testing was done to one of the public secondary schools not involved in the main
study in order to check the reliability of the questionnaires (Research instruments) if they were reliable for the study.

3.7.1 Validity of the Research Instruments

Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Burton & Mazerolle, 2011). The latter identified four common types of validity comprising face validity, content validity, construct validity, and criterion validity. In this study, the researcher subjected the instruments to all these types of validity except for criterion validity. The extent to which items adequately measure or represent the substance of the attribute or trait that the researcher wishes to test is referred to as content validity. After constructing the questionnaire and interview guides, the researcher sought assistance from experts in educational administration and planning and research in CUEA to validate the research instruments. They were asked to read and judge or determine whether they contained in-depth content coverage of the concept being measured. They scrutinized, gave comments, made corrections, deleted unnecessary content, and added some content. These were incorporated into the questionnaire items thus validating them before data collection.

According to Cronbach (2014), face validity deals with how the instruments appear relating to the study. Construct validity is a measure of the degree to which data obtained from instruments accurately reflects theoretical concepts such as head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline in public secondary schools. To determine the construct validity, experts assisted the researcher in critiquing each item constructed by modifying them and giving suggestions that were implemented and changed where necessary to obtain valid and reliable data from the field under investigation study. Since this was a mixed-methods study, the researcher also employed data triangulation of research tools such as questionnaires, in-depth interviews guide, document
analysis guide, and observation guide for data collection. This ensured accuracy of the information collected in the study.

According to McDonald et al (2019) methodological triangulation involves the use of multiple qualitative and quantitative methods to study a phenomenon for example results from surveys, interviews, document analysis, and observation guides. The technique is also applied when the researcher uses two or more methods of data collection to measure variables. This is where questionnaires (quantitative data) could be supplemented with in-depth interviews, document analysis guides of existing records, and observation guides (qualitative data).

The researcher employed these methods to check the validity of the research instruments. Further, the researcher used data or source triangulation to determine the validity of the research instruments. It involves using different information to increase the validity of a study. The data or source triangulation technique is utilized when comparing the information which is given by the source at different times and in different situations (McDonald et al, 2019). Here, the researcher compared information obtained from students, teachers, and deputy's head teachers through questionnaires. Information was obtained from head teachers and Education Division Manager through interviews and information from document analysis and observation guides.

3.7.2 Pilot Testing of the Research Instruments

Pilot testing refers to trying out the research tools or instruments such as questionnaires before actual use in the field with members of similar populations but not included in the main study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019). The researcher conducted a pilot study to test the research instruments in one of the public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. The sampled school had similar characteristics to the phenomenon under study but was not included in the actual study. About 50 forms three and four students, 20 teachers, and 1 deputy head teacher participated
in the pilot study. They were asked to comment on the clarity of items, identify any omissions, and add or delete where appropriate. The responses of the participants enabled the researcher to discover vague questions, ambiguous words, and unclear instructions or questions in the questionnaires. The vague and ambiguous items were removed from the questionnaires, while others were modified or improved.

3.7.3 Description of Reliability of Quantitative Data.

Reliability refers to the consistency or repeatability of a test or measurement in a research instrument (Burton & Mazerolle, 2011). It is a measurement of the degree to which research yields consistent results after repeated trials. According to Flanagan (2016), an instrument is reliable to the degree that it supplies consistent results after a trial. Therefore, reliability is the degree to which measures are free from error and yield consistent results. Reliability of an instrument is of two types, namely; reliability as equivalence and reliability as internal consistency.

The Cronbach alpha coefficient method was used to determine the internal consistency of the pilot-tested questionnaires by calculating Cronbach’s Alpha (α) using the statistical package of social science software (SPSS) version 25.0. Cohen et al (2018) describe the Cronbach alpha coefficient of reliability as a coefficient of correlation of each item with the sum of all the other relevant items in a questionnaire which is useful for calculating the reliability of multiple-item scales as a measure of the internal consistency among the items. The Cronbach Alpha technique is generally the most commonly appropriate test of internal reliability for survey research and other questionnaires, which use more than two choices, such as the Likert scale (Kothari & Garg, 2014). Cronbach alpha Coefficient method was preferred to determine the reliability of the questionnaires used in the study as they mostly comprised multiple Likert-type items.
To ensure the reliability of the questionnaires and data collected from this study, a pilot study was performed by the researcher in one of the public secondary schools in Mulanje District, but was not included in the main study. The questionnaires were distributed to the 50 forms three and four students, 20 teachers and 1 deputy head teachers from the sampled school. The quantitative data obtained from questionnaires were analyzed independently to ensure that the variables were being responded to as intended. It was way pilot study since convergent parallel mixed methods design is a one-phase study (Creswell & Clark, 2014). It was done until the researcher was comfortable that the data collected and analyzed through questionnaires were valid and reliable. Based on pilot study feedback, the questionnaires were amended until the research obtained a final version for use in collecting data for the study.

The researcher used Cronbach Alpha or Coefficient Alpha ($\alpha$) which is a commonly known measure of internal consistency. The Cronbach Alpha indicates the extent to which the reliability of a set of test items is used to measure a single independent variable to ascertain the reliability of the instruments of the study (Cronbach, 1951). This ensures that all questionnaires mean the same to all respondents. Table 8 presents reliability statistics of the Cronbach’s alpha index for students, teachers, and deputy's head teachers which determined the reliability of quantitative data obtained from questionnaires.
Table 8

*Reliability Statistics for Students, Teachers, and Deputy Head Teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>No. of case</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
<th>No. of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>0.739</td>
<td>0.767</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>0.781</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D/Heads</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.781</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 8 indicates that the reliability alpha coefficient value for students’ questionnaires was between 0.739 and 0.767 with 37 items. The reliability alpha coefficient value for the teachers’ questionnaire was between 0.781 and 0.846 with 38 items. The reliability alpha coefficient for deputy head teachers’ questionnaire was between 0.781 and 0.846 with 38 items respectively, both based on head teachers’ administrative leadership styles on students’ discipline in public secondary schools. According to Singh (2017), Cronbach’s Alpha (α) reliability coefficient is normally expressed as a number between 0 and 1, with acceptable values of alpha, ranging from 0.70 to 0.95.

The Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of students’ questionnaire, teachers’ questionnaire, and deputy head teachers’ questionnaire ranged from 0.74 to 0.94, 0.78 to 0.85, and 0.78 to 0.85 respectively. Therefore, an alpha of 0.7 or 0.70 and above is considered acceptable, while below 0.7 is unacceptable (Singh, 2017). Since alphas of students, teachers, and deputy's head teachers were above 0.74, 0.78, and 0.78 respectively, the researcher, therefore, considered the questionnaires to be reliable for data collection in the field.
3.7.4 Trustworthiness of Qualitative Data

Credibility and dependability describe the ability of a qualitative instrument to measure what it is expected to measure and the consistency of the instrument (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2018). This entails the depth, the accurate construction of question items as well as interpersonal contact with the participants (Kortjens, 2017). The researcher ensured that the developed semi-structured interview guide had the same format and correct sequencing of words and questions for each interviewee. The researcher also established a good rapport with each interviewee to gather detailed required data. Member checking and prolonged engagement in the field with participants were done to gather rich and adequate data on each research question.

The reliability of the interview guide, document analysis guide, and observation guide was determined in the terms of credibility and dependability. In terms of credibility, after the interviews, the researcher opened the tape recorder to the participants and listened to what had been recorded to confirm whether their views or voices were accurately captured. For dependability, the researcher used source triangulation as recommended by Creswell (2014), whereby, different data collection instruments comprising of questionnaires, interview guides, documents analysis guides, and observation guides were used to collect data from students, teachers, deputy head teachers, head teachers, and Education Division Manager of the district. These reliability methods enabled the researcher to generate findings, which were consistent, credible, and dependable.

For the documents analysis guide, the researcher reviewed different public documents in the sampled school to collect the required data. To ensure the credibility and dependability of the interview guide, documents analysis guide, and observation guide during the transcription of qualitative data, the researcher thoroughly checked the transcripts to make sure that they were free
from obvious mistakes made during transcription. Some professional experts were requested to cross-check the codes used and remarked on the consistency of coding with the research questions or themes.

3.8 Description of Data Collection Procedures

Permission to carry out the research and authorization letter of introduction was obtained from the Department of Post Graduate Studies in Education at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA). With a permit letter of introduction, the researcher then reported to Shire Highlands Education Division in Mulanje District, Malawi, and got a research permit from them. The permit was used to get permission from the head teachers’ office of the sampled public secondary schools in the district. This is an obligatory requirement before one carries out research. With the clearance to conduct the study from relevant authorities, the researcher first made an appointment with the selected head teachers and visited the sampled public secondary schools.

The researcher introduced herself personally to the head teachers who had been contacted for the appointment before this visitation on the date agreed upon. The researcher established a working relationship with all selected participants and this gave her room to explain in detail the purpose of the study after which the participants signed the consent form. The researcher then commenced the data collection using questionnaires, in-depth interview guides, document analysis, and observation guides. Since the study adopted convergent parallel mixed methods research design, the researcher collected quantitative and qualitative data on the same day from each public secondary school (Creswell, 2014).

3.8.1 Quantitative Data Collection Procedures

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2019), a questionnaire is the primary method of data collection for a survey study. Thus, in this study, the quantitative data were collected through a
cross-sectional survey design using a questionnaire based on head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline. This was done to solicit more information from the participants such as; students, teachers, and deputy's head teachers from 17 public secondary schools in Mulanje District. The justification for using quantitative data through a questionnaire to the participants was to enable them to express themselves freely by writing and providing relevant information under study. Furthermore, these participants had experienced their head teachers staying more than four years in school and how discipline issues were being handled. Quantitative data gathering approaches, according to Kothari (2014), rely on random sampling and standardized data collection tools that fit various experiences into predetermined response categories. They generate outcomes that are simple to summarize, compare, and generalize. Checklists, assessments, and rating scales are frequently used in questionnaires. These gadgets aid in quantifying people's actions, knowledge, attitudes, views, and experiences related to the topic under investigation (Leddy Owen (2016).

Questionnaires were administered to students, teachers, and deputy's head teachers by two research assistants who had been inducted by the researcher. The administration of the questionnaires took one and a half hours to complete the exercise, and was done during break time and continued to the lesson period with permission from the head teacher and subject teacher. Before the commencement of data collection from the respondents, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the participants, assuring them of the confidentiality of the information gathered. Further, they were also informed by the researcher that their involvement in the study was strictly voluntary. They were notified that they were under no obligation for involvement in the study and that participation was completely anonymous. The researcher encouraged the participants to read and sign the informed consent form that was attached to the questionnaires.
3.8.2 Qualitative Data Collection Procedures

According to Kang’ethe (2013), qualitative data collection methods play an important role in research in that they provide information useful for the in-depth understanding of people’s perceptions about the meaning or phenomena they attach to natural events. These methods have the following characteristics: they are open-ended and have fewer rigid protocols; they rely largely on interactive tactics, and they use triangulation to boost the credibility of their findings. Thus, in this study, the researcher employed interview guides, document analysis guides, and observation guides for qualitative data collection. Face-to-face in-depth interviews were conducted with the head teachers and Education Division Manager of the District in SHED, Malawi.

Before the interviews, an appointment was made to agree on the date of the interview and place. The researcher used semi-structured questions of closed and open-ended questions by probing the respondents and recording the respondents’ views using a recorder. The researcher interviewed the participants personally in their offices or outside the offices where there was no noise or other disturbances. Each interview section was planned to take 45 minutes. Before the commencement of the interviews, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the interviewees, assuring them of the confidentiality of the information gathered. Participants were informed that their involvement was voluntary as well as completely anonymous. The researcher encouraged participants (head teachers and EDM) to read and sign the informed consent form before the interview commenced.

Further, the researcher requested permission from head teachers to get their official documents for review. They included schemes and records of work, lesson plans, attendance registers, scholastic records, and guidance and counseling records. The researcher also observed the school plant such as sanitation of the school, for instance, playground, availability of boreholes,
tapes, and tree plantation for shelter. Furthermore, the researcher observed infrastructures, for instance, classrooms, toilets/washrooms, dining halls dormitories, whether they were available or not available, and their status of conditions. Other items observed were teaching resources such as textbooks, desks, chairs, tables, computers, and laboratories, whether they were available or not, and their status of conditions. The researcher also checked the notice board, where rules and regulations were displayed, and other communication to students and teachers among others. Finally, the researcher observed the dressing code, whether students were in full uniform as part of discipline in schools, punctuality to class after the break as well as students’ interaction.

3.9 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis according to Kothari (2014) is the process of transforming raw data into usable information often presented in the form of investigative articles so that value can be added to the statistical output. In other words, data analysis is the process of analyzing raw data collected from the field through the participants and other sources, such as document analysis guides and observation guides. Since the study adopted a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, quantitative and qualitative data analyses were done separately. Therefore, the current study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches to process, analyze and interpret data. Thus, the researcher analyzed quantitative data first, followed by qualitative data, then merged or mixed both quantitative and qualitative results during the interpretation of the data. This helped the researcher to explain in detail any contradiction or incongruent information in the findings (Creswell, 2014). Data analysis commenced from the field, which involved checking the completeness of the responses, filling in gaps, and verifying what was not clear. This was done in preparation for data entry and data analysis.
3.9.1 Quantitative Data Analysis Techniques

After data collection, quantitative data (questionnaires) obtained from a 5-point Likert’s Scale, were cleaned, checked, and sorted in line with research questions and entered into a computer, and were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 25.0. Descriptive statistics particularly frequencies and percentages were used to analyze or summarize data that were presented in distribution tables of frequencies and pie charts. According to Kothari (2014), descriptive data analysis was necessary for the summarization of the data for easy reading and understanding by other readers.

3.9.2 Qualitative Data Analysis Techniques

Data obtained from interviews, document analysis guides, and observation guides were compared with the questionnaires to identify recurring patterns or themes that cut across the data. The researcher analyzed qualitative data through thematic analysis which involves identification, examination, and interpretations of patterns and themes in textual data and determining how the patterns and themes help to answer the research question. According to Creswell (2018), thematic data in qualitative analysis is developed in six steps as follows: organizing and preparing the data for analysis, reading and looking at all the data, coding at all the data, generating a description and themes, representing the description and themes, and finally interpretation of the findings (Creswell, 2018, p.268-270).

Thus, in this study, qualitative data through interviews guided by head teachers and Education Division Manager were analyzed following the mentioned six steps as identified by Creswell. In the first step, collecting qualitative data from the field were organized and prepared for analysis. This was done by transcribing interviews, typing up field notes, scanning the information, and sorting and categorizing data into different types depending on the information
from participants. In the second step, the researcher read and looked at the data collected from the field and judged the general ideas or responses from the participants. The researcher read the collected qualitative data to familiarize themself with what the participants said in line with the question asked, whether they made sense, their credibility, and the use of the information before she started recording.

The third step was coding which is the process of organizing the data by bracketing chunks (or text or image segments) and writing a word representing a category in the margins (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). It entails gathering text or image data acquired during data collection, segmenting sentences (or paragraphs) or photos into categories, and labeling those categories with a term, which is typically based on the participant's actual language (called an in vivo term). As a result, the researcher's codes were used to discover similar topics. Thereafter, the themes were reviewed to find out if they are matching or corresponded. They were then named according to different contexts. The fourth step was generating a description and themes. Thus, the researcher used the coding process to generate a description of participants as well as categories or themes for analysis. To ensure rigorous analysis of the data, the researcher endeavored to familiarize the self with the data, generated initial codes, and searched for themes.

The fifth step was representing the description and themes. This is how the description and themes are represented in the qualitative narrative according to Crewswell (2018). In the current study, the researcher represented the description and themes through transcribing the data, recording the experiences of participants in form of transcripts, and sorting the codes into themes and subthemes. The researcher defined and named the themes thus means checking clear definitions and names for each theme and then producing results. The sixth step was the interpretation of the qualitative findings. This step is the final step where the researcher asks what
was learned from the findings reports of the study. In the interpretation step, a report was then produced in terms of narratives and direct quotations obtained from the participants.

The secondary data obtained from document analysis and observation guides were analyzed and intergraded in the reporting of the qualitative data according to the themes.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethics refers to the values of human behavior and the rightness and wrongness of human action. Flanagan, 2016,) contends that the ethical issue in research is very important. Therefore, despite the high value of knowledge gained through research, knowledge cannot be pursued at the expense of human dignity. Mugenda and Mugenda (2019) defined an ethical study as one that allows for freedom of purpose from the participants as well as protects their rights. Thus, the major ethical issues in this study were: Obtaining official permission letters from relevant authorities to conduct the research, informed consent of the participants, voluntary participation, confidentiality and anonymity, avoidance of discrimination acts, ensuring privacy and avoidance of harm to the participants, acknowledging all resources used in this study and finally, plagiarism.

Before the collection of data for this current study, the researcher obtained a permit or signed clearance letter from the relevant authority from the Postgraduate Studies in Education Department of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA), Nairobi, Kenya. Thereafter, the researcher made an appointment with the Education Division Manager of Shire Highlands Education Division of Mulanje District, Malawi. The researcher, then submitted a research permit to create an entry point for the study. The Division office gave a research permit to the researcher for data collection in the sampled public secondary schools in the district. Upon being given a research permit letter from the Education Division Manager of SHED in Mulanje District, Malawi, the researcher made
an appointment with head teachers of the sampled schools to agree on the date and time for data collection from the participants.

During data collection, the researcher obtained informed consent from the participants. The informed consent of the participants is one of the ethical considerations in research that the researcher needs to observe. It is an ethical requirement that demands that participants be allowed to choose to participate or not to participate in the research after receiving full information about the possible risks or benefits of participating (Best & Khan, 2011). Thus, the researcher contacted the head teachers of the sampled schools early enough to seek their consent and to communicate to all the participants about the objectives of the study. The researcher explained to the participants of the study the nature of the research and asked them to sign the informed consent form before answering the questionnaires.

Voluntary participation according to Best & Khan (2011) is another ethical aspect that is observed during data collection. The researcher informed the students, teachers, deputy head teachers, head teachers, and Education Division Manager that they were free to withdraw from the research at any stage or time if they felt that they no longer wanted to participate.

Confidentiality was assured to all study participants. According to Creswell (2014) confidentiality implies the researcher’s ethical obligation to keep the participant’s identity and responses private. A participant has the right to have his/her identity remain anonymous. In this study, confidentiality and anonymity were at all times maintained and safeguarded by not asking participants to write their names or the name of the school they belong to on the questionnaires, instead, codes or numbers were used. In the respect of the confidentiality of information and privacy of the participants, the researcher provided the participants with information on the purpose of the study so that they could easily participate in the study. Furthermore, she also
explained how confidentiality information would be protected, and any unforeseen risks or discomforts to the participants.

According to Barasa, et.al (2015) ethical considerations or issues in research should be taken into account concerning the truth and privacy of all participants. This implies that researchers should ensure that participants are not harmed in any way during the research process. In this study, all the participants were treated with care and respect concerning their views and beliefs; the researcher refrained from asking for personal and sensitive information that would cause psychological harm. Since data collection took place during the COVID-19 pandemic era, the researcher respected and cared for participants by observing the Ministry of health containment measures e.g. wearing masks, keeping social distance, and using sanitizers during data collection for the prevention of contracting COVID-19 Pandemic disease.

Concerning the anonymity of data, the researcher removed identity information without distorting the data to the degree which lessens the potential for use (Boeiji, 2010). This was to protect the anonymity of respondents by way of hiding obvious clues to characters, places, or institutions so that they are not evident. On confidentiality trustworthiness for qualitative data was also maintained through triangulation of research instruments. The researcher was open and honest in dealing with the participants or respondents, for instance, as interview guides for the head teachers and Education Division Manager of the district. The researcher created a good rapport with the head teachers and EDM in a quiet place during the interview exercise.

While conducting the research, the researcher was mindful of how other people’s works were paraphrased or quoted by making sure that they were properly cited to avoid any form of plagiarism. According to Gall, Gall, and Borg (2012) plagiarism is defined as the direct lifting of others' words for use in one’s publications. It involves taking undeserved credit for something that
another professional has written posing an ethical issue in research and damaging the profession as a whole. Thus, to avoid this offense, the researcher cited the author of the original words, ideas, or structures by way of paraphrasing as stated earlier. The researcher also avoided any incriminating acts such as falsifying other people’s work and presenting them as their own or fabricating information (Kombo & Tromp, 2013). During the report writing names of participants were not mentioned to provide security. The report acknowledged all sources of information and was subjected to an anti-plagiarism scan to minimize plagiarism.
CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION, AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a detailed description of the analysis and presentation of data generated from the study. The chapter also presents the findings of the study, interpretation, and discussion of the study findings based on research questions and the null hypotheses. The chapter is organized under the following sections: Questionnaires’ return rate; demographic information of the study participants; findings of the study; interpretation; and discussion of the study findings based on each research question and null hypotheses. The findings of the study were supported by recent related empirical studies.

4.2 Questionnaire Return Rate.

Mugenda and Mugenda (2019) describe a questionnaire return rate as the number of participants who returned usable research instruments issued out of the total number of participants sampled during the study. A total of 561 Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to 340 students, 204 teachers, and 17 deputy head teachers. Seventeen (17) head teachers and one (1) Education Division Manager were interviewed using semi-structured interviews questions. Table 9 presents the questionnaire return rate for each category of the participants.
Table 9

*Participants’ Questionnaire Return Rate*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Respondents</th>
<th>Distributed Questionnaires</th>
<th>Questionnaires Returned</th>
<th>Returned Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>95.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D/Head Teachers</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>88.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>80.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: % = Percentage

Source: Field Data, 2021.

Table 9 shows that 326(95.9%) students’ questionnaires, 112(54.9%) teachers’ questionnaires, and 17(88.2%) deputy head teachers’ questionnaires were returned. In total 453 questionnaires were returned out of the 561 questionnaires that were distributed to the participants during the study. This translated to an 80.7% overall questionnaire return rate. Kumar (2014) asserts that a questionnaire return rate above 70% is considered reliable for data analysis and reporting. The overall questionnaire return rate of 80.7% of this study was considered adequate, therefore, the researcher proceeded with data analysis and reporting. However, return rate for teachers’ questionnaires was too low, 112(54.9%) because there was a ‘stay away’ as teachers were on strike because they were not given their risk allowances for COVID-19, an allowance which the Government was providing to front workers in the Civil Service. This was one of the limitation of the questionnaire response rate. Most of the students,’ teachers,’ and deputy head teachers’ questionnaires were administered during tea break and lunchtime in all 15 public secondary schools. The study participants filled the questionnaire with the required information and the researcher collected the filled questionnaire immediately.
Other instruments used for data collection during the study were the semi-structured interviews guide, document analysis guide and observation guide. All 15(100%) head teachers and 1(100%) Education Division Manager interviewed using a semi-structured interviews guide availed themselves for interviews through face-to-face. A document analysis guide was used to gather relevant public documents and records from all 15 (100%) head teachers. Non-participant observation was used by the researcher to collect information of the physical facilities. The return rates are related to the study of Gathura (2021) who revealed that all 38(100%) principals and 1(100%) County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (CQASO) interviewed used a semi-structured interviews guide through face-to-face.

4.3 Demographic Information of Participants

The study sought the views on demographic data of the participating students, teachers, deputy head teachers, head teachers, and the Education Division Manager. They included gender, age, school categories, forms of students, marital status, degree of education, and years of service. These variables were captured in the study to determine whether they had a positive or negative impact on the students' discipline as a result of the head teachers' leadership styles.

According to Connelly (2013), demographic information about the participants is crucial since it educates readers and other researchers about the features of the sampled participants. This informs the readers and scholars to determine whether the participants under study are a representative sample of the large population for purposes of generalization of the study findings. The study findings are presented in the following sections.
4.3.1 Demographic Information of Students

This section introduces the demographic information of students. The study sought to solicit information from students about their gender, school category, age and their forms. The responses are presented in Table 10.

Table 10

Demographic Information for Students by gender, school category, and age.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency(f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Sub total</strong></td>
<td><strong>326</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School category</td>
<td>National Boarding Girls Sec. Sch.</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District Day &amp; Boarding Mixed</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District Day Sec. Sch. Mixed</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Day Sec. Sch. Mixed</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Sub total</strong></td>
<td><strong>326</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (Years)</td>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>68.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above 20 years</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td><strong>325</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.7</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td><strong>326</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2021

Key: F=Frequency and % = Percentage.
Table 10 shows that out of 326 students who participated in the study, 176(54.0%) were girls and 150(46.0%) were boys. A majority were boys. The variable of gender was included in the study to control any bias that could emanate due to gender imbalance opinions. It enabled the researcher to collect representative views from both genders thus avoiding gender bias. If one gender dominates the school setting, there is a likelihood of affecting leadership, especially on matters of students’ discipline. The findings are related to Kiprob’s (2015) study who found that empirical evidence shows that females are better leaders in the field of management.

Kiprob’s findings are strengthened by Basheer’s (2018) study on empowerment of women through education: a special reference to Mahatma Gandhi in India. Basheer’s study findings established that in the contemporary period women’s status has progressed economically, socially and politically. They are fighting to gain equality of gender with regard to empowerment. Malala Yousafza from India is one of the examples as a powerful female in the contemporary world through challenging the person who raised death threat against her for voicing the basic educational rights for female children (Basheer, 2018). This applies that institutions run by female head teachers students’ performance is excellent as well as discipline is maintained compared to male head teachers. Therefore, females are better leaders in the field of management.

The next item collected data on school category. Results indicate that about 150(46.0%) student participants were from Community Day Secondary Schools and 71(21.8%) from Boarding District Mixed School. Another 60(18.4%) students were from District Day Secondary School Mixed while a small proportion of 45(13.8%) were from National Girls Boarding Secondary School. School category was essential to capture the representative opinions of students from all school categories. The findings are confirmed by Gathura (2021) study who found that majority of the students participants were from mixed day and boarding schools in Machakos, Kenya.
Regarding age categories of participants, majority of 223 (68.6%) of students were 16-17 years, 53 (16.3%) were above 20 years. Another 41 (12.6%) were aged 18-20 years while the minority 8 (2.5%) were 14-15 years. The age variable was included to enable the researcher to determine the maturity level of the participants. The ages between 17 and above 20 years show that students were mature in making decisions and experiences about their head teachers’ management of discipline. The age of students can positively or negatively influence head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline. This is because it is a critical stage of adolescence and is difficult to control when it comes to matters of discipline. The findings concur with the study of Kariuki, Kavutha, and Kiprob (2015) who found that the largest proportion of students 56.3% was between the ages of 15 and 20 years. This suggests that most secondary school students’ age gap falls between 15 and 20 years. Therefore, they are mature and able to make the decision and have good experiences with their head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline in schools.

4.3.2 Demographic Information of Teachers and Deputy Head Teachers.

The study sought to establish demographic information of teachers, deputy head teachers, and head teachers by gender, age, marital status, level of education, years of service, and school category. The variables were included to help determine whether they positively or negatively influenced head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline. Table 11 presents their responses.
Table 11: Demographic Information of Teachers and Deputy Head Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th></th>
<th>Deputy Head Teachers</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent (%)</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Category</td>
<td>National Boarding Girls Sch</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boarding &amp; Day District Sch</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District Day Sch.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Day Sec.Sch.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>73.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (Years)</td>
<td>Less than 30 years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46-50</td>
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<td>50 and above</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Education</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>B.Ed</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BA [BSC]</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BA in Agric.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M.Ed.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Service</td>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>6-10 Years</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-15 Years</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>99.1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Missing System</td>
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<td>.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data 2021

Key: F=Frequency and %= Percentage, Teachers’ n=112, Deputy Principals’ n=15,
In terms of gender, results in Table 11, indicate that the majority, 88(78.6%) male teachers while a minority of 24(21.4%) teachers were females. The finding shows that all deputy headship positions were held by male teachers. This indicates a huge imbalance in gender distribution of deputy headship positions in the sampled schools. Studies have shown that one gender domination in school leadership can affect students’ discipline especially in mixed public secondary schools where female students may lack female teachers to role model and address girls emerging issues. The findings of the study concur with Miriti’s (2020) study who found that majority, 66.1% of teachers were males while minorities, 33.9% of teachers were females implying gender imbalance in the distribution of school responsibilities.

**Category of School**

With regard to the school category, a majority of 11(73.3%) deputy head teachers and a minority of 40(35.7%) teachers were from community day secondary schools (CDSS). Another 32(28.5%) teachers and 2(13.3%) deputy head teachers were from boarding and day district secondary schools whereas those from the district day secondary school and national girls’ secondary schools comprised 20(17.9%) teachers and 1(6.7%) deputy head teachers. Inclusion of participants from various categories of schools enabled the researcher to collect varied representative views on head teachers’ leadership styles in managing students discipline issues.

**Age of Participants**

Regarding age of the participants, the results show that 7(6.3%) teachers were less than 30 years of age. Another 46(41.1%) teachers and 1(6.7%) deputy head teachers aged between 31-35 years. Those aged between 36 - 40 years constituted 2(1.8%) teachers and 2(13.3%) deputy head teachers whereas those between 41 - 45 years of age were 27(24.1%) teachers and majority, 12(80.0%) deputy head teachers. The study shows that more teachers 46(41.1%) are between 31 -
35 years and 23(20.5%) teachers were 50 and above years. None of the deputy teachers was above 46 years. A majority of 12 (80.0%) deputy head teachers aged between 41-45 years. This could imply that they are mature, with a good experience of handling student issues together with their head teachers. They are also in charge of discipline hence could respond more accurately.

The findings confirm a study done by Kendi’s (2018) who found that majority of teachers and head teachers (66.7%) were over 40 and 50 years of age and were trusted in discipline issues of the school. The data in Table 11 also indicate that none of the deputy head teachers aged below 30 years was entrusted with responsibility. The findings are confirmed by those of Kiprob’s (2015) study who established that a few teachers between the ages of 30 and 40 years were rarely entrusted with the leadership of a school on disciplinary issues.

**Marital Status of the Participants**

The study sought information on marital status from participants; it enabled the researcher to determine whether it influenced their responses on head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline. The findings indicate that a majority of 90(80.4%) teachers and 13(86.7%) deputy head teachers were married. Another 21(18.8%) of teachers and 2(13.3%) deputy head teachers were single; only 1(.9%) teacher was widowed. Since majority were married; they were considered mature and experienced to guide and counsel students on discipline matters. It is also assumed that being in a marital state, could minimize their extra marital immoral affairs with school girls. The finding is in line with the Ministry of Education policy guidelines that strictly forbid such acts. Teachers involved in immoral behavior are dismissed from duties because it causes indiscipline in schools (Government of Malawi, 2021, p.5-7).
Level of Education of Participants

Data on Table 11 indicate a majority of 9(60.0%) deputy head teachers and a minority of 36(32.1%) teachers were Diploma holders in Education certificates. Another 44(39.3%) of the teachers and 4(26.7%) deputy head teachers were Bachelor's degree holders in education (B.Ed) implying that they are professionally qualified as teachers. Participants with a Bachelor of Arts and Social Sciences (BA [BSC constituted 13(11.6%) of the teachers and 2(13.3%) of the deputy head teachers. Only a small number of 3(2.7%) of teachers hold a Bachelor of Arts in Agriculture (BA in Agriculture). The variable on level of education was included in the study to determine whether it influenced the way participants responded to question items on application on head teachers’ leadership styles in managing discipline. It also enabled the researcher to determine the participants’ level of knowledge on the leadership styles to be able to give correct information on how they are implemented in schools to attain good discipline and quality results in Malawi School Certificate Education (MSCE) Examinations.

The findings of the current study concur to Wakibi (2018) study who found that majority of the head teachers and teachers (53.9%) were B.Ed. Degree holders. Very low percentage of teachers and head teachers had M.Ed. The overall management of students’ discipline and performance in public secondary schools is vested in the hands of teachers and head teachers. It is, therefore, imperative that head teachers and teachers be persons with good education and sufficient practical knowledge in leadership styles in education. They should have a required academic qualification which will allow them to interpret Parliamentary Acts and other policies which relate to leadership and students’ discipline in schools.
**Years of Service of the Participants**

In terms of years of service, about 37 (33.0%) teachers and 3 (20.0%) deputy head teachers had served for 20 years and above. Another 30 (26.8%) teachers and 4 (26.7%) deputy head teachers had served for 6-10 years. Those who had served for 11-15 years constituted 28 (25.0%) teachers, none of the deputy head teachers was in this category. About 16 (14.3%) of teachers and 3 (20.0%) deputy head teachers had served for 1-5 years, only 3 (20.0%) deputy head teachers had serviced for less than 1 year. This means that more teachers 33.0% of teachers had served for 20 years and above, while 4 (26.7%) deputy head teachers had served 6-10 years. This suggests that more teachers and deputy head teachers have more experience with their head teachers’ management of the student body in and how they influence students’ discipline in schools. This variable of years of service of the respondents was very essential because it would be suitable in finding out how experienced they are in dealing with students’ discipline by maintaining order through acceptable student behavior which may require changing school management skills. The study’s findings are similar to Odhiambo (2016) study which indicated that the highest proportion of the teachers (47%) had worked for between 10 and 20 years at the time of study and 84% of the principals had a work experience of over 20 years. This implies that the sampled teachers and principals had undoubted experience to respond to questions on the influence of principal’s leadership styles on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Kikuyu Sub County.

**4.3.3 Demographic Information of Head Teachers**

The head teachers’ demographic information was based on gender, age, marital status, level of education, duration of service/ years of service, school category, and size of the school where they had served as head teachers. The gender and duration/ years of service were considered as essential variables to treat or oxalate opinions of both male and female head teachers who had
served for a different duration in sampled schools. The size and school category were considered very essential to assure that data from all categories/types of public secondary schools were treated or analyzed in the findings. Out of 28 public secondary schools, 15 head teachers participated in the study. Figure 3 presents the gender of head teachers who participated in the study through the interview guide.

**Figure 3: Gender of Head Teachers**

Figure 3 shows that out of 15 head teachers who participated in this study through an interview guide the majority, 9(60.0%) were males and 6(40.0%) were females. Male head teachers dominated female head teachers. However, according to the Education Division’s Office of Mulanje District, most of the public secondary schools are headed by male than female head teachers (Education Division’s Office Staffing Report, 2021). This implies that there was a gender imbalance in the distribution of responsibilities. It is also possible to say that head teachers who participated in this study were representatives of head teachers serving as administrators in public
secondary schools in the same district. One gender imbalance in a school poses a threat to school leadership matters in matters of students’ discipline. The findings concur with that of Miriti (2020) who found that out of 484 respondents (66.1%) were male head teachers, while minorities (33.9%) were female head teachers.

The head teachers’ demographic information on age, marital status, duration of service or years of service, level of education, school category, and size of the school are presented in Table 12.
Table 12
Demographic information of head teachers by age, duration of service, marital status, and level of education, school category

n=15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Less than 40 years</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50 and Above</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of education</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B.Ed.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BA [BSC]</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BA in Agriculture</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M.Ed</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years /duration of Service</td>
<td>Less than 1 Year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-5 Years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 and above years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School category</td>
<td>National Boarding Girls School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boarding &amp; Day District School</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District Day Secondary School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Day Secondary School</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>73.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2021

Key: F=Frequency and %= Percentage
Results in Table 12 show that, out of 15 head teachers who participated in this study, the majority, 12(80.0%) were 50 and above years of age, 2(13.3%) aged 46-50 and 1(6.7%) was aged 41-45 years. The finding shows a majority of head teachers are 50 years and above. This also signifies that they are mature and have good experience, knowledge, and understanding when it comes to issues of leadership and influencing students’ discipline in schools. This was confirmed by the head teacher’s views during interviews where they preferred multiple leadership approaches to handling discipline matters. These include autocratic, democratic, transformational, and situational leadership styles depending on the situation they are experiencing in schools.

**Marital Status of Head Teachers**

Results in Table 12 indicate that all 15(100%) head teachers from public secondary schools, were married. Being parents, they are considered good at managing discipline. This category of teachers is deployed by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) deploys to become heads of schools because they are considered mature and knowledgeable in the management of discipline in schools. The variable of marital status was included in the study as it would positively or negatively affect head teachers’ leadership style. According to the Government of Malawi (2021, p.5-7), a Civil Servant is mandated to behave morally, once any found with immoral behavior with students is penalized immediately from duty because it causes indiscipline in schools.

**Level of Education**

The study sought information on the head teachers’ level of education. Data on Table 13 a majority of 9(60.0%) of the head teachers were B.Ed (Bachelor of Education) degree holders, and a minority of 6(40.0%) were Diploma in Education Certificates holders. This implies that the
majority of head teachers in public secondary schools are qualified professionally and experienced in handling students discipline issues. The variable of the level of education for head teachers was included because the respondents could determine how appropriately varied leadership styles are being implemented in school to attain good discipline and quality results in Malawi School Certificate Education (MSCE) Examinations.

**Duration of Service of Head Teachers**

The study sought information on duration of service of the head teachers to determine whether they had enough experience to manage students’ discipline and create harmonious environment in the school. The findings that majority 8(53.3%) head teachers had served for 11-15 years, while a minority of 4(26.7%) had served for 1-5 years. Another 2(13, 3%) had served between 6-10 years and 1(6.7%) for less than 1 year. This implies that the majority of head teachers had served between 11-15 years. This shows that most head teachers are experienced in their leadership positions, they have interacted with students for long gained management skills for handling student matters.

**Categories of Schools**

In terms of categories of schools, data shows that out of 15 head teachers, the majority, 11(73.3%) were from community day secondary schools, 2(13.3%) from boarding and day district secondary schools. Both district day and national boarding girls secondary schools 1 (6.7) participants each. With regards to school size, majority of 8(53.3%) head teachers had served in four (4) streamed school only while 3(20%) had served in triple streamed schools. Those who served in double and single streamed were 2(13.3%) each. From the findings, it can be deduced that the majority, 8(53.3%) of public secondary schools were served by experienced head teachers who had been in the service for the duration of 11-15 years and above in their schools. This implies
majority have administered large schools gained a lot of experience on management skills to handle discipline matters. For instance, they have interacted with students who hold divergent views and prejudices. They are also aware of sources of conflicts and strategies of managing them.

These heads had gained a lot of experience and are able to maintain students’ discipline in schools. The findings of this study are consistent with Gathura (2021) study whose findings indicated that majority (57.9%) of the public secondary schools were served by men as head teachers who had served for the duration of 4 to 9 (86.9%) years in their schools. The majority (76.3%) of the public secondary schools were categorized as Sub-County schools and had attained 4 streams and above.

4.4 Influence of Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles on Students’ Discipline

The section deals with the findings of all the five research questions that guided the study. Firstly, it presents information on the status of students’ discipline in schools. Secondly, it is followed to the extent how head teachers’ autocratic leadership style influences students’ discipline. Thirdly, to the extent how head teachers’ democratic leadership style influences students’ discipline. Fourthly, to the extent how head teachers ‘transformational leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools. Further, on challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing positive students’ discipline in schools and mitigation measures are addressed. Lastly, it presents strategies that can be used to mitigate challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing positive students’ discipline in public secondary schools. To observe anonymity of the participants and the identity of the schools that participated in the study, these codes were used: schools were given numerals with three digits 001 till 015 and its corresponding head teacher abbreviated as SSHT (Secondary School Head Teacher) refer to appendix 12.
4.4.1 Status of Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools

Research question one sought the views of the participating students, teachers, and deputy’s head teachers on the status of students’ discipline in their schools. They were required to particularly state whether the discipline was increasing (high), decreasing (low), do occur, or not certain in their schools. Participants were also required to state common indiscipline cases and their causes. The information obtained was important as it enabled the researcher to propose appropriate strategies for minimizing the status of indiscipline. Table 13 presents participants’ views.

Table 13

Participants’ views on the Status of Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools

Students n = 326; Teachers n=112; D/Head teacher n= 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status of Students’ Discipline</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>D/Head Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing</td>
<td>70</td>
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<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do occur</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not certain</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>321</strong></td>
<td><strong>98.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>105</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing system</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>326</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>112</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2021

Key: F=Frequency and %=Percentage

Table 13 indicates about 10(66.7%) deputy head teachers, compared to that 154(47.2%) of students and 46(41.1%) of teachers viewed that the status of students’ discipline in public secondary schools was decreasing (low). This implies that students’ discipline in schools was
deteriorating. This implies that head teachers have a great role to play to bring change and transform students’ behavior in their schools. On the other hand, a small proportion, 70(21.5%) of students, 17(15.2%) of teachers, and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers viewed that the status of students’ discipline in public secondary schools was increasing (high), signifying that students’ observed school rules and regulations thus maintained order and harmony within their school environment. Whereby a minority, 22(6.7%) students, 22(19.6%) teachers viewed that the status of students’ discipline does occur, meaning its average and none of the deputy head teachers viewed it. While a small proportion, 75(23.0%) students, 20(17.9%) teachers, and 3(20.0%) deputy head teachers viewed that the status of students’ discipline was not certain, meaning they were not sure or aware of the status of students’ discipline in their schools.

Some respondents viewed that the status of students’ discipline was increasing, meaning that there was a slightly good discipline in some schools. The study findings revealed that in most public secondary schools the status of students’ discipline is decreasing, meaning that discipline is reduced or minimized. This implies that students’ misbehavior was on the increase as manifested in not obeying school rules and regulations and being disrespectful towards authorities and other students’ unrest. The study findings revealed that though the majority of head teachers put more effort into enforcing rules and regulations for students, and trying to utilize autocratic, democratic, and transformational leadership styles, more discipline problems are prevalent in schools. This was confirmed by head teachers during an interview on the status of students’ discipline in their respective schools where some responded that it was decreasing while others responded that it was increasing. One of the head teachers said:
Indeed, the status of students’ discipline is decreasing that means is deteriorating compared to previous years. Students who show indiscipline behavior are reported to their parents, or given punishment by their teachers and prefects. If they persist to continue showing indiscipline behavior, they are given rustication for 3 or 6 weeks depending on the offense committed. Other students are given a suspension by the Ministry of Education depending also on the offense caused. For example, in 2018, ten students were given rustication for six weeks because of teasing a Form One Student (Personal Communication, April 13th, 2021).

The findings of the study are supported by Rotech (2015) who found that the status of students’ discipline was below average at (35.0%), while in the current study the status of students’ discipline was above average decreasing viewed by the majority, 10(66.7%) of the deputy head teachers in public secondary schools. If the head teacher’s disciplinary management includes other students, teachers, and parents, the student’s discipline may improve. Head teachers are tasked with ensuring that students are well-guided in making individual reasonable decisions for the school to run smoothly.

The study sought information from participating students, teachers, and deputy head teachers on whether their schools had experienced students’ discipline problems in the past years, for instance, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020. The majority, 11(73.3%) deputy head teachers, 229(70.2%) students, and 69(61.6%) teachers responded that their school had experienced students’ discipline problems in the past years. As the general oversight for school activities implies that head teachers are accountable for creating change in students' discipline in their schools to make sure that there is a conducive environment for effective teaching and learning. In an interview guide with the head teachers, the majority of them responded that their schools have
experienced student unrest for the past four years. For example, in 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020, due to poor diet specifically in boarding schools, lack of science teachers, and others. One of the head teachers said:

Indeed, in the year 2018, students did demonstrations and matched to the Education Division Office because the school had no science teacher. Fortunately, a science teacher was posted to this school on the same day. Furthermore, the school is burdened by a shortage of teaching and learning resources (Personal Communication, April 14th, 2021).

The findings are in line with Katolo’s (2016) study, who states that the quality of an organization’s leadership has a significant impact on its success. If a good leader can operate an institution successfully and efficiently, the school head teacher has the most influence in an educational institution. The head teacher is accountable for creating crucial decisions, facilitating duties, addressing problems, and acting as a change agent. The findings are also supported by Mbogori’s (2012) study, on the statement that head teachers’ leadership style has a significant impact on students’ discipline in schools, though other factors may also play some roles.

The researcher perused through punishment book from the head teachers’ office and Education Division Manager’s Office to check the years, the number of students’ problems or unrest, and the reasons for the causes in the past four years, 2017, and 2018. 2019 and 2020. The findings from documents analysis reviews were analyzed and presented in Table 14.
Table 14

Document Analysis reviews obtained From Head Teacher's and Education Division Manager's Offices on Students’ Unrest in Schools for the Past Four Years, 2017-2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Number of students’ unrest</th>
<th>Reasons for that triggered unrest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Poor diet from boarding schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Lack of science teachers, and T/L resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Delay in solving students’ problems, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not paying attention to students’ concerns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2021

Results in Table 14 indicate that from 2017 to 2020, there were 29 cases of student discipline problems/strikes in the district. These were 10 cases in 2017, followed by 8 cases in 2018, then 9 cases in 2019, and 2 cases in 2020 in different public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. The participants were asked to point out the cause of strikes.

They cited poor diet, particularly in boarding schools, misunderstanding between administrators and students concerning their grievances, delay in resolving their problems, lack of science teachers and teachers’ absenteeism from duty as some of the factors. Other factors included teacher caused misbehavior whereby they colluded and influenced students to go on strike against the head teachers. Parental influence was also cited whereby parents collude with their children not to do punishment, culminating in demonstrations against the head teachers. All these factors
were cited by respondents as reasons for students’ discipline problems or students’ unrest in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi.

The findings revealed that head teachers are struggling with students' unrest in their schools. They are accountable for bringing about change in students' discipline in their schools. To minimize the number of indiscipline cases in schools, they should be good listeners to students' problems or grievances and intervene quickly, if necessary, before students' actions are taken. Furthermore, head teachers have the obligation for improving students' diets so they learn effectively. Head teachers should take initiative, be imaginative, and be resourceful to ensure that there are enough teachers in all subjects in each department, and that teaching and learning resources are available for successful learning in schools. For the school to run smoothly, teachers, students, and parents there should be a positive relationship. The findings concur with Tembo's (2015) study which revealed that poor or ineffective leadership caused students' indiscipline cases to originate from both teachers and administrators, also from a substandard poor diet of rotten beans served to students as meals as well as mishandling of students’ problems which triggered their unrests and protests.

Using open-ended questions, the study sought views from participants by listing down the common discipline problems experienced in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. Respondents’ views were grouped and categorized into similar themes and analyzed in narrative form and direct quotes. Their views are presented in Table 15.
### Table 15

**Student’s, Teacher’s, and Deputy Head Teacher’s Responses on the Common Discipline Problems Experienced in Schools**

Students n =326; Teachers n=112; D/Head teacher n= 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Discipline Problems</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>D/HTs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ rudeness in communication and disrespect of authorities.</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration/hunger strikes, fighting, and threatening of authorities.</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor diet (rotten beans), especially in boarding secondary schools</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor dressing code (not wearing full school uniform).</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate of teaching and learning materials (e.g. textbooks, etc.).</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making noise in class, absenteeism, and lateness to school.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft, stealing of school property (books from the library).</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft, stealing of school property (books from the library).</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of cooperation between teachers and head teachers.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sexual relationship with the opposite sex results in pregnancies</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>326</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>112</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Field Data, 2021.*

*Key: F=Frequency and %=Percentage*

The results in Table 15 indicated that a small proportion, 7(46.7%) deputy head teachers, 106(32.5%) students, and 16(14.3%) teachers said that the common discipline problems experienced in public secondary schools are: students' rudeness in communication and disrespect
of authorities, followed by demonstrations or hunger strikes, fighting and threatening of authorities reported by 96(29.4%) of students, 18(16.1%) teachers, and 2(13.3%) deputy head teachers. This implies that there is no discipline in some public secondary schools, head teachers are not respected by students and their discipline is low, poor communication between students and authorities. The study found that students’ rudeness in communication and disrespect of authorities were some of the common discipline problems experienced in schools resulting in students’ unrest. The findings are related to the study of Kilonzo (2013) who revealed that absenteeism, rudeness to head teachers, teachers, and fighting among students were the prevalent common discipline problems experienced in most schools. Poor relationships between teachers, and students and parental negligence were also cited as the major common discipline problems in the County. This means that absenteeism, rudeness to teachers, fighting among students, and a lack of guidance and counseling were major common discipline problems experienced in schools in Lamu County in Kenya which could correct students’ behavior.

Other common discipline problems experienced in schools are poor diet, especially in boarding schools indicated by 1(6.7%) deputy head teacher, 14(4.3%) students, and 4(3.6%) teachers’ participants. This implies that a poor diet makes students not eat well. Studies have shown that poor diet affects students thinking abilities, health as well as adverse behavior. With decreased energy levels, students become lethargic, and irritable and reduce their concentration in class, all of these negatively affect academic performance. The findings agree with Tembo’s (2015) study who revealed that secondary school vandalism of school property was caused due to poor diet and the management neglecting to address the students’ similar complaints. They were hardly willing to listen to the grievances of students, which triggered students to lead demonstrations in the school. This implies that head teachers not only failed to use effective
communicative skills but also did not employ appropriate leadership skills and styles for curbing vandalism to sustain students' discipline in schools.

Poor dressing code was another common discipline problem experienced in schools as indicated by a minority of 14(12.5%) student participants, 1(6.7%) deputy head teacher, and 5(1.5%) students. Students’ refusal to wear full school uniforms is an indicator of disobedience to the already established rules and regulations, their looking odd disrupts other students. The findings are consistent with the study of Kachepa (2015) who found that some students in boarding secondary schools were not wearing full schools uniform due to disobedience to school rules and regulations as an indicator of the indiscipline of students in schools.

Inadequate teaching and learning materials were another common problem pointed out by 12(3.7%) student participants. This was confirmed by the researcher when she observed that textbooks, chairs and desks, and other materials were inadequate for all students. Lack of learning recourses makes students rely heavily on their teachers' notes which are inadequate to make a student improve academic performance. This has negatively impacted the teaching-learning process whereby students are not able to learn to their full potential by covering the required content at their class level. Sharing of textbooks also triggered inordinate behavior whereby students hid the textbooks denying other students access to information. The findings of the study are supported by Adams, Chilimba, and Muthiah (2019) who found that inadequate teaching resources were some of the common discipline problems experienced in schools that resulted in students’ poor performance.

Other challenges of noise-making, absenteeism, and lateness were pointed out by 23(20.5%) of the teachers, 2(13.3%) deputy head teachers, and 23(7.1%) students. A noisy environment hinders learning as it interferes with students’ concentration, it distracts their hearing
of the content being taught. Only a small proportion, 23(20.5%) teachers, 2(13.3%) deputy head teachers, and 23(7.1%) students said that making noise in class, absenteeism, and lateness to school were some of the common discipline problems experienced in schools. Such students fail to catch up with what is taught in class resulting in poor performance which lowers the mean grade of the school. For academic excellence, students should maintain silence in class, report to school daily, and be punctual in school always. The findings are also supported by MoEST (2014, p.28-29) that making noise in class, lateness, absenteeism, and theft are also some of the common discipline problems experienced in Malawian schools.

Theft and stealing school property such as library books was pointed out by a minority of 23(7.1%) students, 1(6.7%) deputy head teacher, and 6(5.4%) teachers respectively as one of the common discipline problems experienced in schools. This implies that in some schools students are stealing books, especially from the library which is the most common discipline problem worldwide. Students should not steal books because the next generation would like to use them. Those students found stealing should be given stiff punishment or rustication for 3 to 6 weeks at home. Upon reporting back to school should come with their parents for disciplinary discussion. For instance, in an interview guide, one of the head teachers in school 004 said:

In 2019, there was student unrest because students were prohibited use the library. After all, some books were stolen. The school suspected the students that they are the ones stealing. Thieves from outsiders came and stole some books from the library as a result we did not have enough books for students to read resulting in students’ unrest. (SSHT 004, Personal communication, April, 9th 2022).
In the analytical analysis, failure to follow or obey school rules and regulations as indicated by a small proportion of 17(5.2%) students and 5(4.5%) teachers is one of the common discipline problems experienced in schools. This reveals how various discipline problems have an impact on educational outcomes in schools and across the country. Head teachers are role models in their respective institutions, and they are accountable for bringing about change in behavior in students by maintaining school discipline. Thus, being in front to enforce rules and regulations to students, cooperating with teachers by working as a team to enforce discipline in schools. They should also emphasize guidance and counseling to students to mold or shape their behavior to have an interest in learning. From the study findings, there is a deterioration/decline of students’ discipline in some public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi, resulting in poor educational standards. The findings of the study are similar to the study of Kendi (2018) who revealed that disobeying school rules and regulations through head teachers or prefects, drug misuse, and absenteeism are the most common discipline problems in schools. This implies that different discipline problems in schools have had an impact on educational outcomes.

In the same vein, a small proportion of 30(9.2%) students, 1(6.7%) deputy head teacher, and 1(0.9%) teacher pointed out that lack of cooperation between teachers and head teachers was one of the common discipline problems experienced in schools. This means that there is no cooperation between the local community, teachers, and head teachers in some public secondary schools. Cooperation is very important in any institution or organization for the smooth running of the institution or organization. The local community and a school including teachers and head teachers should work as a team for the development of the institution. Failure to do so creates an unconducive environment resulting in students’ unrest in schools. Therefore, there must be cooperation between the local community and the school by involving them in any activities done
in a school such as on graduation day or Parent Teachers’ Association meetings. By involving them they feel happy that they are part of the management of the school.

To strengthen this statement the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (2014, p.8) highlighted that parents or community members are an integral part of the school management system. They play an important role to provide food, shelter, care, and support to the students. In addition, they provide necessary services to enable students effectively and fully participate in education and to make sure that the school is well managed. Furthermore, they are also responsible for the development of the school through the school management committee (SMC) and Parent Teachers’ Association (PTA). What the MoEST is trying to say is that there must be cooperation between the school and community for effecting learning and maintaining discipline in schools. The findings are also similar to the study of Miriti (2012) who found that the major challenges encountered by administrators were lack of cooperation from parents, and students and poor implementation of discipline policy by the government. Thus, the study recommended that the government should get involved in discipline enforcement by empowering school administrators by reviewing discipline-related policies and facilitating awareness meetings for parents on school discipline. This would help head teachers to influence the discipline of students in schools.

Likewise, results in Table 15 shows that 25(22.3%) teachers reported that sexual relationships with the opposite sex resulting in early pregnancies and dropping out from school, is one of the common discipline problems experienced in schools. Another 30(9.2%) students, 1(6.7%) deputy head teacher, and 1(0.9%) teacher pointed out that lack of cooperation between teachers and head teachers is one of the common discipline problems experienced in schools. This implies that in some schools there is immoral behavior practiced by the students resulting in school
dropout due to early pregnancies, especially by girls. In an interview guide, one of the head teachers in school 006 said that:

In this school, out of 90 students, 20 students drop out due to pregnancies because of poverty especially girls due to cultural practices. In some cultures, parents encourage their children to get married while they are young to have more grandsons and daughters. (SSHT 006, Personal communication, April, 17, 2021).

In an open-ended question, the study sought opinions from students, teachers, and deputy's head teachers on the main causes of students’ discipline problems. Their responses were analyzed and categorized into similar themes discussed and reported in narratives and direct quotes. Table 16 presents the views of the participants.
Table 16

Student’s, Teacher’s, and D/head Teacher’s Responses on the Main Causes of Students’ Discipline Problems in Public Secondary Schools in Mulanje District, Malawi.

Students, n = 326; Teachers, n=112; D/Head teacher, n= 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Causes of Unrest.</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>D/Head Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor administration, leadership and management</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of effective communication with students etc.</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of conducting guidance and counseling</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unequal treatment given to students by H/teachers.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor diet, and lack of consultation in decision making</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate of T/L resources and lack of science trs</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of interest in education, bullying and teasing.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of motivation to students and teachers</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of involvement of students in decision making</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer pressure, teachers, and political influence</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2021

Key: F=Frequency and %=Percentage

The finding in Table 16 shows that poor administration, leadership, and management of the school as the main causes of students ‘unrest as reported by 61(54.5%) of the teachers, 4(26.7%) deputy head teachers, and 78(23.9%) students. Poor leadership is characterized by a lack
of integrity, inability to provide clear direction on expectations of the students as well as lack of listening. These create a lot of misunderstandings or errors whereby leaders made ineffective decisions of neglect solving minor issues or address students’ problems timely. This could have hurt students who in turn distrusted, and rebelled against authority and unrests were likely to follow. The study findings confirm those of Tembo (2015) which revealed that unprofessional conduct on the part of teachers and poor management, misunderstanding between the administration and students’ grievances due to poor diet (eating rotten beans daily), teachers’ late attendance to classes, and absconding classes due to watching football in the staff room and among others were the main contributing factors to vandalism in northern Malawi

Further analysis showed that lack of effective communication between students, teachers, and parents was a contributor to students’ discipline problems as reported by 92(28.2%) of the students, 8(7.1%) of teachers, and 1(6.7%) of the deputy head teachers. It was noted that some leaders’ inability to listen to students’ grievances and their lack of transparency and trust in addressing their concerns, particularly on eating rotten beans triggered poor relationship among students, their parents, and school leadership. Their delay to give appropriate feedback may have triggered students’ unruly behaviors.

Another cause of students’ indiscipline was a lack of guidance and counseling of students as confirmed by 25(7.7%) of the students. Most secondary school students are in a turbulent stage of adolescence. Their bodies are undergoing physical changes accompanied by strong sexual desires, dating and relationships, identity crises, and negative peer influence. Students need support and solutions to navigate through this stage successfully. School leadership that did not put in place guidance and support services may have led students to indulge in destructive behaviors of drug abuse, lack of interest in studies, and truancy among others. This confirms that
Kamwachabale & Mwenegamba, (2011) study established that inadequate guidance and counseling by teachers and parents to students is the main cause of students' indiscipline.

Unequal treatment given to students by head teachers was reported as one of the aspects that trigger students’ discipline. This was confirmed by 24(7.4%) of the students, 1(6.7%) of the deputy head teachers, and 1(0.9%) of the teachers. The study found that in some schools head teachers treated students unequally. For instance, when administering punishment, some students are punished when failed to adhere to school rules and regulations while others did similar mistakes but were not. Other students viewed such treatment with suspicions, as favoritism and discrimination that made students respond with deviant behavior.

Poor diet and lack of consultation in decision-making also triggered students’ discipline problems as reported by 38(11.7%) students, 2(13.3%) deputy head teachers, and 2(1.8%) teachers. The study found that some boarding schools' poor diet was served to students which they did not eat. Hungry students cannot concentrate in class, they are not ready to learn and this affects their performance. Many studies have linked diet and behavior as it affects their thinking skills. Hunger, therefore, affects the students' mental health, mood, and learning in that they lack the needed energy levels to perform well. They become stressed and restless, a situation that could have triggered indiscipline.

Inadequate teaching and learning resources such as textbooks, desks, and chairs, and a lack of science teachers were confirmed 14 (4.3%) of the student and 2(1.8%) of the teachers to have caused students’ indiscipline. This means students are not engaged in their studies which leads to poor academic achievement. This confirms Chilimba (2015) finding which revealed that there were insufficient teaching and learning materials in schools deprived both teachers and students of effective teaching and learning.

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The study found that some students lack interest in education, bullying and teasing caused indiscipline as reported by 12(3.7%) of students and 4(3.6%) teachers. The researcher was informed that bullying and teasing especially of new students particularly from ones still existed in some schools. That triggered hatred and violence among students. Other students from poor socio-economic backgrounds found economic burdens at home as parents were unable to pay and hence became disinterested in education.

Further analysis showed that 1(6.7%) deputy head teacher, 9(2.8%) students, and 2(1.8%) teachers reported a lack of motivation among students and teachers as a cause of indiscipline. Demotivation affects teachers’ commitment to their work, there is low morale in lesson preparation which in turn translates to poor service delivery. It could also cause teacher turn over leaving students unattended.

Likewise, results in Table 16 indicated that a minority of 9(2.8%) students and 2(1.8%) teachers said that lack of involvement of students in decision-making was one of the main causes of students’ discipline problems in schools. This implies that autocratic head teachers do not involve students in decision-making in matters affecting their lives resulting in students’ unrest. Students are part and parcel of the management of the school. When they are involved in decision-making concerning discipline issues, they feel happy and able to contribute their ideas which would help in maintaining discipline in schools. The findings of the study are related to the study of Masekoameng (2010) who revealed that students were not involved in decision-making on disciplinary issues and they felt that they are not counted by the school as part and parcel of school management.

Results in Table 16 indicated that a minority of 6(40.0%) deputy head teachers, 28(25.0%) teachers, and 16(4.9%) students reported that the main causes of students’ discipline problems
were peer pressure, teachers' influence, and political influence in schools. This implies that in some schools there is no discipline due to peer pressure. For instance, in some schools students misbehave because of bad companies causing students to discipline problems. Some teachers influence students to go on strike against the head teachers, because of their dislike and likes seeking favor from students. Some politicians influence students when they visit a school to give a talk concerning their Human Rights. Their inaccurate information disorganizes students’ minds resulting in students’ unrest against the school by destructing school properties.

The findings are supported by Kamwachabale & Mwenegamba, (2011) study which revealed that the causes of indiscipline cases in Malosa and Mulunguzi secondary schools in Malawi were caused by students themselves. That students lacked interest in education; peer pressure; misinterpretation of human rights without considering their responsibilities; and lack of self-acceptance (meaning students from poor or broken families do not accept their condition and among other). It also revealed that form3 and 4 students were found to be the main culprits involved in the indiscipline cases. The study found that the main causes of students’ discipline problems emanated from students themselves, administrators, teachers, parents and the school.

4.4.2 Influence of Head Teacher’s Autocratic Leadership Style on Students’ Discipline
This addressed the second research question that sought to establish whether the head teacher’s use of autocratic/authoritarian leadership style influences students’ discipline. Autocratic leadership is where the leader takes control of all decisions without consulting or input from the members. In the school setting, school heads can make their own choices, assign tasks to be performed, and set deadlines to complete these tasks without input from staff or students. The researcher designed Likert scale items on autocratic leadership. Students, teachers, and deputy
head teachers were asked to put a tick (✓) on the appropriate option to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement, and undecided using the following 5-point Likert Scale.

(5=Strongly Agree (SA), 4= Agree (A), 3=Undecided (UD), 2=Disagree (D) and 1=Strongly Disagree (SD) respectively. Their views are presented in Table 17.
**Table 17**

*Students’, Teacher’s, and Deputy Head Teacher’s Responses on Head Teacher’s, Autocratic Leadership Style and Student’s Discipline*

Students, n =326; Teachers, n=112; D/Head teacher, n= 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher does not allow students explain their problems.</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D/HT</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Head teacher rarely communicate to Students when there is a problem</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D/HT</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher does not give students Opportunities in decision making</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D/HT</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Head teacher does not involve Parents in decision making.</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D/HT</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher gets approval on Important matters after decision is Made.</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D/HT</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher rarely organizes Guidance and counseling talks for Students to shape their behavior</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D/HT</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher sends indiscipline Students to the disciplinary committee Of guidance and counseling to them</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D/HT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher enforces rules and regulations to students to maintain</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D/HT</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher punishes students who Break school rules and regulations</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D/HT</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher is very strict on Students’ dressing code</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D/HT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2021.

**KEY:** F=Frequency, % = Percentage, R= Respondents, S =Students (326), T= Teachers (112) and D/HT = Deputy Head Teachers (15)
Analysis in Table 17 shows that a majority of 15(93.3%) deputy head teachers, 90(80.4%) of teachers, and 243(74.6%) of students agreed that an autocratic head teacher does not allow students to explain their problems. This is because such leaders are unconcerned about other people's problems and refuse to listen to their concerns. The findings show that the majority of head teachers utilized autocratic leadership to run their schools. Despite the negative connotations, autocratic leaders when exercised appropriately, offer closer control, and great direction in areas where students are unskilled and need a lot of insight into both curriculum and social life in the school.

Also, the study indicates that another 71(21.8%) of students, 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers and 10(8.9%) of teachers disagreed with the similar statement for various reasons; for instance, they might have felt insecure to disclose the information about their head teachers for fear of being victimized. The findings confirm those of Kendi (2018), which revealed that in institutions where authoritarian leadership is practiced, teachers and students withhold a lot of information about their head teachers and remain fearful and insecure hence, students’ discipline is affected in schools. This shows that there is a relationship between head teachers' leadership style and students’ discipline. That a situation where an authoritarian leadership style is practiced has both positive and negative influence on the discipline.

On whether the head teacher does not communicate to students when there is a problem at school. The finding shows a majority of 14(93.3%) deputy head teachers, 102(91.1%) teachers, and 256(78.5%) students agreed. Non-communication in all its forms is detrimental to the school; it leads to a distortion of messages, causes confusion and misunderstanding, and teachers and students get discontented. It could be the reason for teachers' attrition and students' loss of concentration in studies resulting in poor performance or dropouts due to intolerable situations in
some schools as confirmed by the researcher. The finding also indicates that a small percentage of students, teachers, and deputy head teachers constituting 58(17.8%), 9(8.0%), and 1(6.7%) respectively disagreed with the statement. Only a small percentage of 10(3.1%) students were undecided.

In another statement, participants were asked whether the head teacher does not give students opportunities to participate in decision-making on disciplinary issues in the school. The finding indicates that all deputy head teachers 15(100%), 81(72.3 %) of teachers, and 213(65.3 %) of students agreed. This implies that although students are the key stakeholders and beneficiaries of education, they were not involved in decision-making. This could have demotivated them not to develop a sense of ownership and hence not inclined to abide by the set rules. Autocratic leadership often results in a lack of creative solutions to problems, which can ultimately hurt the group from performing. However, 94(28.8%) of students and 21(18.8%) of teachers disagreed with the statement.

Parents are members of the management of the school through Parents Teachers’ Association (PTA) which improves home-school communication by providing two-way communication and management between parents and teachers. The study sought the views of the participants on whether the head teacher does not involve parents in decision-making. The study revealed that 15(100%) deputy head teachers, 93(83.0 %) of teachers, and 233(71.5 %) of students agreed. This implies that they opined inadequate parental involvement which is detrimental to the success of their children’s education. The findings agree with those of Rundassa (2017), who found that majority of head teachers do not involve parents in decision-making as members of the disciplinary committee in schools to maintain students’ discipline. When parents feel unwelcome or uncomfortable in their children’s school, they tend to be reluctant, complain a lot about the
school and busy themselves elsewhere but do not have supportive involvement in their children’s education. This triggers conflict whereby teachers become negligent and blame parents for the students’ low performance.

Similarly, teachers feel attacked by parents for the poor results; the students lack support and develop violent behaviors. About 68(20.9%) of students and 10(8.9%) of teachers strongly disagreed that parents are not involved in decision making implying that in some situations they were involved in sorting out discipline matters. The study found that in schools where parents were actively involved in their children’s education by attending class conferences, checking their homework, guiding and consoling them, they developed positive self-esteem and became more disciplined. School attendance was regular and academic achievement was equally high.

The study participants were asked to respond as to whether the head teacher rarely organizes guidance and counseling talks for students to shape their behavior. About 12(80.0%) of deputy head teachers, 219(67.2%) of students and 68(60.7%) of teachers confirmed or agreed. It implies in most of the sampled schools it was not done. Students in secondary schools are in a stage of an identity crisis. They encounter problems with relationships with the opposite sex, are anxious, less motivated, and lack concentration in class among others. These students need help to talk to somebody trustworthy about their feeling. When it is not provided in school, they lack guidance and end up involving themselves in destructive activities. Although the majority of the participants agreed with the group comprising 34(30.4%) of teachers, 91(27.9%) of students, and 3(20.0%) of deputy head teachers contradicted by disagreeing with the statement that guidance and counseling were rarely organized for students. The researcher noted that study that some schools had established viable guidance and counseling department. It had organized programs ranging from academic, and social life as well as individual challenges; students experiencing
challenges could go for help. Counselors assisted students in the areas of academic achievement, personal and social integrity, and career and life development as well.

Regarding whether the head teacher sends indiscipline students to the disciplinary committee of guidance and counseling to be disciplined. This indicates that the majority 93(83.0%) of teachers, 11(73.3%) of deputy head teachers, and 208(63.8%) disagreed. This implies head teachers disciplined students themselves and suggests and support the work of the disciplinary committee. Only a small percentage of 95(29.1%) students, 15(13.4%) teachers, and 2(11.3%) deputy head teachers confirmed.

On whether the head teacher enforces rules and regulations on students to maintain discipline, a majority of 13(86.7%) of deputy head teachers, 270(82.8%) of students, and 91(81.3%) of teachers agreed. While a minority of 44(13.5%) of students, 15(13.4%) of teachers, and 2(13.3%) of deputy head teachers strongly disagreed with the statement. The study’s findings are corresponding to those of Kiprob (2015), who said that a head teacher who utilizes an authoritarian leadership style and enforces rules and regulations on students, maintains school discipline.

On whether the head teacher punishes students who break the school’s rules and regulations, a majority of 14(93.3%) deputy head teachers, 287(88.0%) students, and 89(79.5%) teachers agreed. The study found that the schools had well-established rules and regulations with clear procedures before administering punishment. That minimized unnecessary victimization of innocent students by teachers and student leaders. Another 20(17.9%) of teachers, 31(9.5%) of students, and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers disagreed with the statement. The study’s findings confirm those of Kibiwot’s (2014) study autocratic leader makes all decisions concerning what,
when, where, and how things are done and who will do them, and those who fail to carry out the instructions given are severely punished.

Studies have shown that wearing school uniforms have had a positive effect on students’ behavior. For instance, it reduces disparities among students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. The participants of this study were asked to state whether the head teacher is very strict on students' dress code on wearing the school uniform. The findings showed that a majority of 293(89.9%) of students, 13(86.7%) of deputy head teachers, and 87(77.7%) of teachers agreed with the statement. This denotes that wearing schools makes a difference in the learners’ lives, the community around the school, and even nationally. The principal of school 002 concurred with the participants' views when one said:

Here is my school I strictly urge students to wear school uniforms all the time they are within the school premises. This is because it is a requirement, I do explain the importance of wearing a school uniform. For instance, it identifies students in my school with another one. It improves class attendance as we can detect truant students absent from class during school hours. In my opinion school uniforms also reduces the tension that is driven by fashions among students from various socio-economic disparities (SSHT 2, Personal Communication, August 20, 2021)

Another head teacher viewed the wearing of the school uniform as one of the ways of promoting cooperation among the students. They identify themselves as members of the same school; school administration on the other hand can identify truant students who abscond classes, find out their whereabouts, and return them to class. The responses imply that the head teachers’ strict adherence to students wearing school uniforms promotes a team spirit where students care for one another. It improves students’ class attendance as well by minimizing students’ truant behavior as they are
easily identified when loitering on the streets during school days. Their autocratic approach to management in strict adherence to the dress code has maintained discipline within the school environment. In addition, students dressed in school uniform often look smarter, enforces equality among students, improves discipline, and leads to academic success and gains.

However, some participants disagreed with the statement as pointed out by 9(17.0%) of teachers, 2(13.3%) of deputy head teachers, and 26(8.0%) of students. Various researches done worldwide reveal that the wearing of school uniforms impacts positively on students’ behavior in terms of the high discipline levels and excellent academic standards among students. Although many individuals in schools dread autocratic leadership, when it is used appropriately, it results in positive student performance and changes students’ behavior. This was confirmed by one head teacher for school 001 during face-to-face interviews when he said.

I prefer the autocratic style of leadership for maintaining discipline in this school because there is positive feedback. Students obey rules and regulations because of fear hence discipline is maintained. This works well, especially when there is a crisis in this school; I enforce strict rules and regulations to calm down or control students’ unacceptable behavior. For example, in the year 2017, students did a demonstration due to a misunderstanding between the administrations because of the lack of a science teacher. In those moments, I did not give them opportunities to be part and parcel of decision-making concerning disciplinary action for fear of leaking confidential information (SSHT 001, Personal communication, March 25, 2021).

The response the head teacher supports the finding of the research done by Adhiambo (2016) which revealed that schools where autocratic leadership was practiced, exhibited
both positive and negative influences on students' discipline. The findings showed a positive relationship between the head teacher's leadership style and students' discipline.

In an open-ended question, the study participants were asked to give their opinion as to whether head teachers’ autocratic leadership style influenced students’ discipline. The finding indicated that 209 (64.1%) of students, 59 (52.7%) of teachers, and 8(53.3%) of deputy head teachers confirmed a great significant influence. This is because they observed a tremendous positive change in students’ behavior whereby discipline was maintained, and improved students’ academic performance as well as in various school co-curricular activities. The participants also noted an improvement in the observance of school rules and regulations, school authorities were accorded their due respect, and indiscipline cases decreased significantly as a result of utilizing the authoritarian type of approach to managing students.

Despite the positive connotations, another group comprising 51(45.5%) teachers, 110(33.7%) students, and 3(20.0%) deputy head teachers reported that they did not find any effect of the principals' autocratic leadership style on students’ behavior. They noted that despite the head teachers’ firmness to enforce rules and regulations to be adhered to by the students to create a conducive environment for learning, indiscipline cases were on the increase. For instance, they cited frequent cases of student unrest, authorities (head teachers and teachers are not respected by students by being given nasty nicknames in some schools. The findings confirm those of Owiti (2016), who established that tight adherence to protocol is required and that no room for others' opinions is allowed hence creating indiscipline cases in schools.

The study findings indicate that the head teacher’ autocratic leadership style influences students discipline. The researcher tested the hypothesis to determine whether the means of the responses
of the three categories of participants were significantly different using One Way Analysis of Variance.

**Testing of Hypotheses**

**Assumptions of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

The following assumptions were taken into consideration prior to testing the hypothesis

i. The population from which the sample was drawn were normally distributed

ii. The homogeneity of Variance

iii. Random sampling of the participants

**Decision Rules**

If the p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected

\[ p < 0.05 \] reject null hypothesis

If the p –value is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is not rejected

\[ p > 0.05 \] do not reject the hypothesis

All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significance level.

The following hypotheses were tested using One Way Analysis of Variance. It was considered appropriate to testing means of groups of more than 2 independent groups who in this study were teachers, students and deputy head teachers.

**Hypothesis One**

\( H_{01} \): The Head teachers’ autocratic leadership style has no statistically significant influence on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi.

Before testing the hypothesis, the mean of the three categories was determined and are presented in Table 18.
Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Processing Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Included</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHT5 * CATEGORY OF PARTICIPANT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18

*Means of the 3 categories of participants on head teachers’ autocratic leadership style*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MHT5 (For Autocratic Leadership Style)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CATEGORY OF PARTICIPANT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEPUTY HEAD TEACHERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACHERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table 18 the mean of the deputy teachers is 28.400, teachers mean is 29.439 while that of students was 30.077. To determine whether the three means were significantly different,

One Way ANOVA was used to test the hypothesis. The results are shown in Table 19.
Table 19

**One Way ANOVA for means of head teachers’ autocratic style**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>107.341</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53.671</td>
<td>1.581</td>
<td>.207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>14058.203</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>33.957</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14165.544</td>
<td>416</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of testing the hypothesis show that $F(2, 414) = 1.581$ From Table 19, the $p$-value is .207 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. We have no evidence against the null hypothesis, the means are not significant. We, therefore, do not reject the null hypothesis meaning the means are not significantly different. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This means that the head teachers’ autocratic leadership style was not significantly different and it positively and negatively influenced students’ discipline.

The study concludes that autocratic leadership style has both positive and negative influences on students' behavior, and is being practiced by most secondary school head teachers in Malawi hence discipline is maintained. The findings showed a positive relationship between the head teacher's leadership style and students' discipline. This means that there was an interaction between students and head teachers in schools. The current study’s findings are in agreement with those of Jerome (2017) study which revealed that there was a statistically significant positive correlation ($r=0.88$) at the $p<.05$ level of significance observed in autocratic leadership in the Parish school of St. Ann. This implies head teachers utilized an autocratic leadership style in the
management of discipline by enforcing rules and regulations to be obeyed by students in schools. This reduced violence in Parish schools.

4.4.3 Influence of Head Teachers’ Democratic Leadership Style on Students’ Discipline

Democratic leadership style also known as participative leadership is where the leader involves the members of the group to actively participate in decision-making. In a school setting, it requires the head teacher to engage various stakeholders to solicit multiple views and incorporate them appropriately into the management of the school. This is advantageous because it instills ownership and confidence in decisions made, fosters teamwork as well as generates innovative ideas.

This study sought the views of the participating deputy head teachers, teachers, and students on whether the head teacher’s democratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools. They were provided with a questionnaire comprised of democratic items and were asked to put a tick (√) on the appropriate option to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement, and undecided using the following 5-point Likert Scale.

(1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (UD), 4 Agree (A), and 5=Strongly Agree (SA). Their views are presented in Table 20.
Table 20

**Students, Teachers, and Deputy Head Teacher’s Responses on Head Teachers’ Democratic Leadership Style on Student’s Discipline**

Students, n = 326; Teachers, n=112; D/Head teacher, n= 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher allows students to give Their views concerning discipline</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students, n =326; Teachers, n=112; D/HT, n=15)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher involves students in Selecting their leaders</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students, n =326; Teachers, n=112; D/HT, n=15)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher holds meetings with Selecting their leaders</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students, n =326; Teachers, n=112; D/HT, n=15)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher involves student leaders to discuss discipline issues</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students, n =326; Teachers, n=112; D/HT, n=15)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher discusses students with parents</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students, n =326; Teachers, n=112; D/HT, n=15)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher consults discipline prior to administer Punishment</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students, n =326; Teachers, n=112; D/HT, n=15)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher involves Form Teachers To manage discipline issues in their Classes,</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students, n =326; Teachers, n=112; D/HT, n=15)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher involves students in Formulation of rules and regulations</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students, n =326; Teachers, n=112; D/HT, n=15)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher encourages students to Work hard in their studies as a team by studies as a team by Participating</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students, n =326; Teachers, n=112; D/HT, n=15)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher encourages class prefects To manage discipline by controlling Noise makers in classes</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students, n =326; Teachers, n=112; D/HT, n=15)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2021.

**KEY:** F=Frequency, %=Percent, R= Respondents, S =Students, T=Teachers and D/HT = Deputy Head Teachers.
Table 20 indicate various responses of the participants on various items. On whether the head teachers allow students to give their views on discipline, a majority of 252(77.5%) of student participants, 90 (80.4 %) of the teachers, and 14(93.3%) of deputy head teachers agreed. In a school setting when students through their students are allowed to contribute their views on various matters affecting their lives, it encourages them to accept the outcomes of the decisions made. Students feel confident and happy as part of the school management thus creating a conducive environment where they correct one another’s offenses with brotherly and sisterly love. The students’ views were corroborated by one head teachers in school 007 during an interview when one remarked:

I allow students through their leaders to share their views concerning discipline because they can tell you issues that are happening in the school that as a head teacher you are not aware of it. For instance, in 2018 a certain girl was found pregnant and was about to abort. Her fellow students reported the issue directly to my office. The office forwarded the case to the disciplinary committee and parents were called to discuss the issue. After discussion, the girl was sent home for a term of maternity leave and she reported back to school after delivery to proceed with her studies. This was in line with the Human Rights Declaration 1948on the children’s right to education. (SSHT 007, Personal communication, April 9, 2021)

The response of the head teacher shows the power of participative leadership whereby people take personal responsibility to make constructive decisions to support one another. By consulting others, the head teacher was able to discuss the issues to consolidate a comprehensive view of the matter and come to a consensus. Although the situation was traumatic, the girl was counseled to accept her situation and promised to return to school to continue her studies after
getting a baby. That created harmony between the family and the school management as well as the entire student body. The findings concur with those of Mbogori (2012) who revealed that the democratic leadership style had a significant influence on students’ discipline in public secondary schools and enhanced the smooth running of the school.

It is important to note that some participants had different opinions whereby a minority of 63(19.3%) of the students, 12(10.8%) of teachers, and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers disagreed with the head teacher seeking students' views concerning discipline. The findings agree with the study of Odhiambo (2016) study which revealed that the democratic leadership style was partially practiced where most principals chose when or not to involve members in decision making.

On whether the head teacher involves students in selecting their leaders in schools, a majority of 14(93.3%) deputy head teachers, 96(85.7%) teachers, and 247(75.8%) students strongly agreed. Only a minimal number of 9(3’1%) of students and 6(5.4%) of teachers were undecided. This implies that in the sampled schools, head teachers include students to select student leaders of their choice to assist the school administration in the smooth running of the school. Students feel happy and motivated that they are counted as part of the administration. This creates a harmonious environment for both students and teachers in a school, and it also helps to influence discipline in schools. The findings concur with Kiprob (2015) study which revealed that the democratic leadership style has a great influence on students’ discipline in public secondary schools.

Although students are involved in the school electoral process, the final decision on who takes the leadership lies in the hands of the school leadership and the teachers. This applies in situations where the selected student is deemed by the school administration as being unfit for leadership due to their involvement in anti-social activities that may trigger student riots. The
school leadership has the authority to replace that position with a more responsible student. This could be the reason why a minority of 61(18.8%) of students, 11(9.9%) of teachers, and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers disagreed with the statement that the head teacher allows students to select their leaders.

Concerning whether the head teacher holds meetings with students to discuss discipline issues, 201 (61.%) of the students, 69(61.6%) of the teachers, and 12(80%) of the deputy head teachers agreed. The study found that both formal and ad hoc student meetings were held in schools to discuss the welfare of the entire student body. Such meetings were considered important because students had a chance to air their grievances concerning academic issues, teachers’ absenteeism, and inadequate food among others. The schools that utilized student meetings were very constructive and rarely experienced student riots compared with those that did not. The findings confirm Kiprob (2015) study that head teachers hold frequent student meetings to discuss issues pertaining discipline of the school. Conducting frequent student meetings is very essential because students feel cared for, become accountable, and take responsibility for their behavior in observing school rules and regulations.

Some study participants comprising 95(29.1%) students, 31(27.6%) teachers, and 3(20.0%) deputy head teachers pointed out that some of the head teachers never held regular meetings with students by disagreeing with the statement. Students in high school are mostly in the adolescent stage undergoing both emotional and physical stress. In addition, factors such as an overloaded curriculum, too much work from their teachers, lack of fees, and inadequate preparation for examinations can trigger fear of failure among students. If not addressed appropriately through frequent meetings with students to clarify issues; they are likely to trigger mass indiscipline.
Good decision-making and problem-solving encompass teamwork. Decision-making refers to the process of choosing the best alternative from among alternatives. In a school setting students need to be equipped with decision-making skills to enable them to make the correct decisions in various situations they encounter in school. This was indicated in a response given to a statement about whether the head teacher involves the student in decision-making; a majority of 12(80%) of the deputy head teachers, 194(59.5%) of the students, and 69(66.1%) of the teachers agreed. In a school setting, student leaders are part and parcel of the administration and management of the school, and they feel happy when they are involved in decision-making on matters that affect their lives. The researcher found that various approaches were utilized to involve students in decision-making. The common one across all the sampled schools was the election of the student council or leadership. The latter collected other students' concerns and forwarded them to the school administration for remedial action. Other approaches utilized included suggestion boxes to voice their concerns and brainstorming about issues before they agreed on disciplinary action to be taken against the culprits. This was confirmed by one of the head teachers in school 009 during an interview on ways they engage students in decision-making when he said:

During students’ meetings concerning students’ late coming to school, the majority of the students said that those who are coming late to school should be punished to deter such a recurring phenomenon. This has enabled each student to be punctual all the time since it was a decision, they all agreed on. In some instances, those who came late were punished, and others learned from them (SSHT 009, Personal communication, April 12th, 2020).

The participant’s response shows the importance of involving learners to make rules and abide by them. This empowered students with the ability to make the right choices that positively influence
punctuality in their schools as well as their studies. The head teachers’ use of a democratic leadership style by involving students’ leaders in decision-making in schools influenced students’ discipline greatly. The findings are in agreement with Mbogori’s (2012) study which indicated that the democratic leadership style involves students in disciplinary decision-making for school discipline management and has a great influence on students’ discipline.

Despite the positive impact, some participants of the study contradicted the statement when 103(31.6%) of students, 22(20.0%) of teachers and 1(6.7%) deputy head teachers reported that some head teachers do not involve students in decision making in matters that affect them. Lack of involvement created in students a feeling of not only being uncared for or unrecognized by the school but also demoralized their active participation in school activities. It was cited as one of the causes of students’ unrest.

Parents are part of the school management and they deserve to be included in school activities for maintaining the discipline of students. On whether the head teacher discusses students’ discipline with parents, the majority of 13(86.8%) deputy head teachers, 87(77.7%) of teachers, and 235(72.1%) of students agreed. The study found in some schools head teachers organized open days or Parent Teachers’ Association (PTA) meetings where parents come to meet with head teachers and teachers to discuss the welfare of their children. It is here that parents are informed about the progress of their children and encouraged to be involved in guiding and counseling their children to maintain the discipline of the school. The findings confirm Nandomuri and Rao’s (2011) study, which found that the majority (75.0%) of school heads preferred a democratic leadership style in which parents were involved in decision-making concerning discipline issues of their children. On the other hand, some of the study participants
pointed out different opinions whereby 59(18.1%) of students, 10(9.0%) teachers, and 1(6.7%) deputy head teachers disagreed that head teachers involve parents.

In a school, the principal does not work alone, all teachers are endowed with various responsibilities to work as a team to sustain discipline. On whether the head teacher consults the discipline committee before administering punishment, the findings indicated that the majority of 13(86.7%) deputy head teachers and 91(81.2%) teachers agreed. None of the students’ participants commented on this. The study found that every school had established a disciplinary committee to sort out emerging problems amongst students. The offenders were referred to the disciplinary committee for interrogation; they determined the nature of the offense in line with the already established school policies, and the kind of punishment to be administered and gave a report to the head teachers. Analysis of records from punishment books indicated that offenses committed by students comprised misunderstandings among students, fighting, bullying, loss of items, and non-performance of allocated duties among others. Sorting out these issues enables learners’ to be settled, live together harmoniously, and concentrated on their studies. The democratic or rather participative kind of leadership employed by some of the head teachers was significant because the course of action taken was out of a consensus. The findings of this study underpin that of Kendi (2018), which revealed that head teachers interact with discipline committees concerning students’ discipline problems before deciding on punishment.

However, the study found out that not all head teachers consulted school committees as some were termed redundant. This was confirmed by 26(23.2%) teachers and 2(13.3%) deputy head teachers who disagreed that head teachers consulted the discipline committee before administering punishments.
In another statement, study participants were asked to indicate whether the head teacher involves Form teachers to manage discipline issues in their classes. The findings indicated that a majority of 12(80.0%) deputy head teachers, 226(69.3%) of students, and 63(56.3%) of teachers agreed with the statement. This is in line with the Malawian Ministry of Education guidelines. That the Form teachers have the responsibilities of maintaining class discipline and maintaining class records which include class attendance, scholastic, and period registers. They have also the responsibility of participating in the formulation of class rules and routines, compiling test results, participating in disciplinary committee meetings (when required), coordinating with the administration on class-related issues, providing guidance and counseling to students and among others (MoEST, 2014, p.7).

Areas, where form teachers involved students in making rules, included observation of silence in classrooms, reading ahead of teachers, and correct use of class discussion during their free time. In schools that utilized these activities, students were actively engaged in learning and improved in academic performance than in schools where learners practiced individualized learning.

Available literature indicates lack of guidance and counseling for students contributes to students’ indiscipline in schools. The study found that schools, where head teachers involved Form teachers to provide guidance and counseling to students, helped maintain discipline in all aspects of school life. The findings confirm that of Chege, Salgony, and Ngumi (2016), who found that school-based guidance and counseling organized by Form Teachers improved students' academic performance and discipline. However, some respondents had different opinions whereby 33(29.5%) of teachers, 73(22.4%) of students, and 3(20.0%) of deputy head teachers strongly disagreed with the statement.
One of the factors that help in the smooth running of the school is well-established school rules and regulations that create standards of quality teaching and learning. Study participants were requested to state whether the head teacher involves students in the formulation of rules and regulations. The findings indicated that a majority of 92(82.1%) of teachers, 12(80.0%) of deputy head teachers, and 213(65.3%) of students agreed with the statement. The researcher was informed that students’ views were scrutinized by the teachers and approved by the Board of Management before their implementation. The school leadership explained to students all these rules especially in forums and in assembly. The researcher observed that the same rules were displayed in classrooms, laboratories, dining halls, and dormitories to remind students of what is expected of them when they are in each designated area. The involvement of students in the formulation of rules and regulations makes them accountable for their actions and hence acquire self-discipline.

The finding corroborates that of Maingi, Maithya, Mulwa, and Migosi (2017) study on the influence of school rules and regulations on student discipline in Makueni County, Kenya. That the principals’ participative approach to the formulation of rules and regulations make students own the process, obey rules and regulations, and results in high levels of student discipline. However, some participants contradicted this view when they disagreed with the statement that the head teacher involves students in formulating school rules. Those who negated the view comprised 80 (24.5%) of students, 12(10.7%) of teachers, and 3(20%) of deputy head teachers.

On whether the head teacher encourages students to work hard in their studies as a team by participating in study circles (group discussions). The findings indicated that the majority, of 13(86.7%) deputy head teachers, 279(85.6%) of students, and 92(82.1%) teachers agreed. This was confirmed by one of the head teachers ‘schools 011 during an interview when he said:
I encourage students to work hard as a team in their studies by participating in study circles or group discussions. I provide students with past papers on different subjects in the school curriculum to work together to find answers. I also encourage teachers to give students quiz competitions in their classes so that they can improve their academic performance. (SSHT 0110, Personal communication, April 13, 2021).

The response of the head teachers indicates the importance of the students’ cooperative learning. The formation of study groups is beneficial to students because they support one another by sharing innovative study skills. Furthermore, asking questions, seeking clarification, and sharing information makes learning enjoyable because students get new perspectives and incorporate them with their own. The study found that in schools where study groups were functioning effectively, procrastination was eliminated because students agreed to meet at a certain time to discuss academic issues. Students suggested topics they found difficult before the meeting; these were discussed, explained, and illustrated with examples; which enabled students to improve their academic performance more than in schools where learning was more individualistic. It was evident that schools where head teachers utilized the participative leadership style encountered fewer indiscipline cases than schools that did not. The findings are related to those of Kendi’s (2018) study who found that (36.9%) of teachers revealed that head teachers frequently encouraged students to work hard in their studies to improve their performance and behavior-wise by sharing experiences of tolerating one view in terms of discipline.

However, some participants had different opinions whereby a small percentage of 2(13.3%) of deputy head teachers 13(11.6%) of teachers, and 33(10.1%) of students disagreed with the statement. One way of helping students study well is to control noise making in class.
This is because maintaining silence creates a favorable classroom environment for teachers to teach learners without distractions. The students can understand and follow what is being taught. On whether the head teacher encourages class prefects to manage discipline by controlling noise makers in classes. The majority of 295(90.5%) students, 12(80.0%) deputy head teachers, and 85(75.9%) teachers agreed with the statement. In a school setting, there are class prefects whose responsibility is to assist in maintaining discipline by writing down noise makers and forwarding them to their class teachers for disciplinary action. They also act as a bridge between the administration and fellow students in schools.

However, some participants had different views whereby 2(13.3%) of deputy head teachers, 13 (11.6%) of teachers, and 20 (6.1%) of students disagreed that head teachers do not encourage class prefects to manage discipline by controlling noise makers in classes. This category of participants might have misunderstood the statement. All schools have regulations about silence while the classes are in progress. Distractions from unauthorized movement along corridors, constructions near classrooms, and noise-making from nearby classrooms are pervasive. This is because noise impedes students’ ability to learn or comprehend the content being taught. Excessive noise creates conflicts among students who want to study silently and those who want to talk.

The study findings are consistent with those of Kendi (2018), who found that (50.0 %) of teachers revealed that deviant students who make noise in class are punished by their class prefects. Class prefects have the responsibility to punish their fellow students if they are making noise in class without any fear to instill discipline in schools.

In one of the open-ended questions in a questionnaire, the study sought information from participants’ opinions on whether the use of a democratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools. The majority, 264(81.0%) of students, 81(72.3%) of
teachers, and 10 (66.7%) of deputy head teachers confirmed that democratic leadership style influences students' discipline. The rationale is that when the school leadership communicates effectively and involves students, teachers, and parents in decision-making, they accept and own the deliberations and get committed to ensuring their success. The finding supports Akala et al. (2019), who found that the democratic leadership style has a great significant influence on student discipline due to effective communication skills and the involvement of students, teachers, and parents in decision making. Furthermore, they found that schools employing a democratic leadership style had fewer cases of indiscipline (66.0 %) than schools lacking a similar type of leadership style (68.9 %)

Some participants had different opinions whereby 4 (26.7%) of deputy head teachers, 22 (19.6%) of teachers, and 61 (18.7%) of students viewed the head teachers' democratic leadership style as negatively influencing students’ discipline. For instance, students have too much freedom if the head teachers do not use it accordingly. The findings of this study are also in agreement with those of Namphande et al., (2017), who found that although students were encouraged to participate in school activities, there was a conflict between democratic values and traditional school roles, leading to new and hybrid school cultures. A hybrid school and blended learning are the ideal future development and transformation of schools. Such an integrated school system with a democratic leadership style is intercultural, inclusive, and multi-dimensional in mission. Despite the merits some participants found do democratic leadership obnoxious. For instance, the Education Division Manager of the District remarked that:
Though many schools follow a democratic leadership style, it takes time for head teachers to consult with students and teachers. They feel bored because time is squandered for teaching and learning. (EDM, Personal communication, April 22nd, 2021).

The response shows that although democratic leadership is beneficial, if not utilized well. One Way Analysis of Variance was used to test the hypothesis on the head teachers’ democratic leadership.

**Hypothesis two**

$H_{02}$: The head teachers’ democratic leadership style has no statistically significant influence on student discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi.

Analysis of Variance was used to test the hypothesis. Before that, first the means of the three categories of participants was determined, the output is shown in the following Table 21.

Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Processing Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHT6 * CATEGORY OF PARTICIPANT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 21

*Means for the three categories of participants are indicated on Table 21*

MHT6 (For Democratic Leadership Style)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY OF PARTICIPANT</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEPUTY HEAD TEACHERS</td>
<td>41.000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8.61892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACHERS</td>
<td>38.117</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>8.97415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDENTS</td>
<td>37.941</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>7.68738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>38.0926</strong></td>
<td><strong>421</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.05271</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results from the Table 21 show that the means for head teachers’ democratic leadership style from different categories is as follows. The deputy head teachers have a mean of 41.000, the teachers mean is 38.117 and that of students have a mean of 37.941. To determine whether the three means were statistically different, One-Way Analysis of Variance was used to hypothesis. The output is shown in the Table 22.

Table 22

*One Way ANOVA for means of the head teachers’ democratic style*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>133.855</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>66.927</td>
<td>1.032</td>
<td>.357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>27101.533</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>64.836</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>27235.387</strong></td>
<td><strong>420</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above Table 22, the results show that $F(2, 418) = 1.032$, the $p$-value is .357 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. We have no evidence against the null hypothesis, the means are not significant. We, therefore, accept the null hypothesis meaning that the means are not
significantly different. This means that the head teachers’ democratic leadership style was not significantly different and it positively and negatively influenced students’ discipline. The study concludes that democratic leadership style has both positive and negative influences on students’ behavior, and is being practiced by most secondary school head teachers in Malawi hence discipline is maintained. Further, the current study’s findings are related to Jerome (2017) study which revealed that there was a moderate significant correlation which was recorded in St. Catherine in democratic leadership (r= -.52) at the level of p< 0.01.

4.4.4 Influence of Head Teachers’ Transformational Leadership Style on Students’ Discipline

The study sought to investigate whether the head teacher’s transformational leadership style influences students’ discipline. Transformational leaders can influence school outcomes by outlining high-performance expectations, developing both the staff and the students through individual support, building productive relationships, and providing instructional support.

According to Bernard Bass (1978), there are four attributes of transformational leadership identified as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These can be used by transformational school leaders to enhance student’s discipline. The researcher developed items of each attribute and asked the participants of the study to put a tick on the appropriate option to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement, and undecided using the following 5-point Likert Scale. (1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (UD), 4 Agree (A), and 5=Strongly Agree (SA). Their views are illustrated in Table 23.
### Table 23

**Students’, Teachers’, and Deputy Head Teachers’ Responses on Head Teachers’ Transformational Leadership Style and Student Discipline**

Students, n = 326; Teachers, n = 112; D/Head teacher, n = 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>SD 1</th>
<th>D 2</th>
<th>UD 3</th>
<th>A 4</th>
<th>SA 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The head teacher holds students accountable for their behavior</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher provides students with necessary Resources for learning to improve their Performance</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students feel motivated by the way the Head teacher talks and interacts with them</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher inspires students by Encouraging them to uphold good Behaviour</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher rewards students who show good behavior in school</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher rewards students who Perform well in Malawi School Certificate of Education</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher congratulates those Students who work hard in their Studies.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher treats each student equally According to their needs</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher listens carefully to individuals Students and helps them to sort out their Problems.</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Head teacher cares for all students</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Field Data, 2021. **KEY:** F= Frequency, %= Percentage, R= Respondents, S=Students, T= Teachers, and D/HT = Deputy Head Teachers
Table 23 shows various responses given by the study participants on the head teachers’ transformational leadership style and its influence on students’ discipline. When asked whether head teachers hold students accountable for their behavior, the findings revealed that the majority, 14(93.3%) deputy head teachers, 89(79.5%) of teachers, and 230(70.6%) of students agreed with the statement. This implies that the Transformational leadership style which has transactional and reformatory dimensions is central to the successful administration and management of schools. When students' behavior is rectified, they feel empowered to make the right choices to do the right things in this way school discipline is maintained. This was confirmed in an interview with one of the head teachers in school 015 when he said:

As a school, we try to motivate students by rewarding those who show good behavior. For example, one boy was awarded a ‘Certificate of Recognition of good behavior’ and other incentives like exercise books and mathematical instruments. Since then, most students have changed their behavior and discipline is being maintained in this school (SSHT 015, Personal communication, April 15, 2021)

The response implies that the provision of awards for good conduct has a direct influence on students’ behavior.

However, some participants had different opinions whereby 61(18.7%) of students, 11(9.9%) of teachers, and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers disagreed that some head teachers never hold students accountable for their behavior. The practice of transformational leadership style in the use of idealized influence influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools to prevent students’ problems or unrest in schools. The aforementioned study's findings are in agreement with Nooruding and Baig (2014), who found that head teachers' transformational leadership style
influences students' behavior management through policies and procedures by (97.0%) of teachers and (83.0 %) of students in public secondary schools.

On whether the head teacher provides students with the resources they need to improve their performance, the majority, 14(93.3%) of deputy head teachers, 86(76.8%) of teachers and 247(75.8%) of students were confirmative.

However, some respondents had different opinions whereby 68(20.8%) of students, 17(15.2%) of teachers, and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers disagreed that some head teachers never provide students with the resources they need to improve their performance. Failure to provide students with textbooks, reference materials and facilitation of field study trips have need cited as some of the causes of student unrest in schools. The findings of this study collaborate with Miriti (2020), who found that (56.0%) of the teaching staff believed that school head teachers function as mentors by offering teaching and learning materials to teachers and students to help them succeed in their activities of teaching and learning in schools.

One of the important aspects of transformational leadership is idealized influence. This is where the leader serves as a role model for the people, they are leading to emulate. The followers develop trust and respect for their leader thus emulating their ideals. The participants were asked to state whether their head teachers motivate students and whether they feel motivated by the head teacher and the way he/she talks and interacts with them. The majority of 13(86.7%) deputy head teachers, 76(67.9%) teachers, and 194(59.5%) students confirmed the statement. The study found that schools where head teachers role modeled punctuality in all aspects of school life by arriving in the office on time, starting classes on time, commitment to work, and good problem-solving techniques earned them respect worthy of emulation by both students and the staff.
However, some of the participants contradicted the statement when they disagreed that the head teachers motivated and interacted with students well as pointed out by 95(29.2%) of students, 14(12.5%) of teachers, and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers. This implies that some head teachers’ transformational aspect of motivation was not felt by students and teachers. Unmotivated students were disastrous because they are disengaged from good study habits. For instance, their noise-making in a classroom and unauthorized movement not only translate to their poor academic performance but disrupt and disengage other students from their academic work. Failure to motivate students by not interacting with them feel lonely, and isolated and lose concentration in their studies resulting in poor performance. The study’s findings are related to those of Narain's (2015) study which established that the head teachers’ leadership of school discipline was in constant flux, influenced by their vision, drives, psychosocial make-up, histories, and knowledge.

The intellectual aspect of transformational leadership requires leaders who challenge the status quo and encourage creativity and other new ways of doing things. In a school setting, students experience difficulties in learning; they get stressed and overwhelmed with difficult assignments in various subjects in a school curriculum. One statement required study participants' views as to whether students seek guidance from the head teacher when they face difficulties in learning. The findings indicated that majorities of 14(93.3%) deputy head teachers, 84(75.0%) of teachers, and 219(67.2%) of students concurred with the statement. The study finding showed that in a school where teachers and head teachers worked as a team, they helped students to solve their academic problems. For instance, by organizing students in small group discussions, the school leadership created a conducive environment for students to meet and discuss challenging topics during their free time. Sharing of ideas eliminated the phobia as students gained confidence and acquired better study skills which they incorporated with theirs and that improved their academic
performance. This implies that the appropriate use of the intellectual aspect of transformational leadership in directing students on a path to reach their goals had positively impacted students’ discipline in schools.

However, this did not happen in all schools as some participants disagreed that they sought guidance from their head teachers. This was reported by a minority of 82 (25.2%) students, 16 (14.3%) teachers, and 1 (6.7%) deputy head teacher. This implies the failure of students to seek guidance will create mental blocks and will not overcome learning difficulties resulting in poor academic performance. These students tend to get frustrated, develop poor self-esteem, low enthusiasm, and lack interest to the point of not seeing any point in learning.

Adequate and relevant teaching-learning materials are key to the student's successful completion of the study. Good books enable students to read extensively to gain more knowledge and acquire moral values needed in their character formation. Regarding whether the head teacher ensures that students have enough textbooks for different subjects, the majority of 13 (86.7%) deputy head teachers, 83 (74.1%) teachers, and 162 (49.7%) students agreed with the statement. This was confirmed by the researcher when she observed that students had textbooks for different subjects taught in the Malawian secondary school curriculum. In the language department, students had English and Chichewa textbooks whereas the Science department books comprised Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, and Agriculture. On the other hand, humanity department, the following books were available; Geography, History, Life skills, Bible knowledge, Social and Development studies. The findings collaborate with that of Miriti’s (2020) study which revealed that the head teachers acted as a mentor by providing teaching and learning to students and members of staff to improve the performance of the school. These textbooks are considered important tools with credible information students need to learn at various class levels.
It is important to note that 138(42.4%) of students, 15(13.4%) of teachers, and 2(13.3%) of deputy head teachers disagreed that some of the head teachers ensure that students have enough textbooks for different subjects. The study found that although the government of Malawi provided textbooks to schools; they were inadequate. Lack of or inadequate textbooks impacted negatively on students learning in that they did not cover the content adequately. From a document review of national examination results, it was evident that the majority of boarding schools perform better than community day secondary schools. This was confirmed by the researcher when she observed that some school students lacked textbooks. It was cited as one of the causes of indiscipline that triggered students’ engagement in examination malpractices of copying answers to exam questions.

Inspirational motivation has been cited as one of the ways to inculcate discipline. It refers to the ability of a transformational leader to inspire confidence, motivation, and a sense of purpose in the people he/she is leading. In an educational setting, it refers to the ability of the head teacher to build trust and confidence among the students and staff. Commitment to moral values is pertinent to character formation and discipline. The participants were asked to state whether their head teacher inspires students by encouraging them to uphold good behavior. The majority of 14(93.4%) deputy head teachers, 269(82.5%) students, and 91(81.3%) teachers agreed with the statement. The study established that some head teachers inspired students through incentives and inviting motivational speakers to speak on discipline issues. This was confirmed by one of the head teacher 013, during the interview when he said:
As a school, we motivate students who show good behavior by awarding them with a certificate of good behavior and some incentives like mathematical instruments and exercise books. Since then some students started showing good behavior and discipline is well maintained. (SSHT 013, Personal communication, April 16, 2021)

However, some respondents had different opinions whereby a small percentage of 11(9.9%) of teachers, 32 (9.8%) of students, and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers strongly disagreed that some head teachers inspired students by encouraging them to maintain good behavior.

On whether the head teacher rewards students who show good behavior in school. The majority, 12(80.0%) of deputy head teachers, 76(67.9%) of teachers, and 213(65.3%) of students agreed with the statement. In a school setting students need to be motivated if they have done something good whether in academics or behavior-wise. In so doing it helps to encourage others to show good behavior hence reducing the number of students’ unrest. The study found out that in some schools head teachers reward students who show good behavior. The practice of transformational leadership style allowed head teachers to reward students who show good behavior in school. However, some participants had different opinions whereby 86(26.7%) of students, 20(17.9%) of teachers, and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers disagreed that head teachers reward students who show good behavior in schools. The aforementioned study's findings are consistent with those of Nooruding and Baig (2014), who revealed that (95.0%) of teachers and (86.0%) of students felt that rewarding good behavior enhances student behavior management in schools. Awards, which were considered a positive means strategy, enhanced students’ excellent behavior. Therefore, head teachers’ transformational leadership style by the use of inspirational motivation has a great positive influence on students’ discipline in public secondary schools.
In this regard, results in Table 23 show that when respondents were asked whether the head teacher rewards students who perform well in the Malawian School Certificate of Examination (MSCE). The majority, 12(80.0%) of deputy head teachers, 238(73.0%) of students, and 70(62.5%) of teachers agreed with the statement. This implies that in some schools head teachers reward students who perform well in MSCE by the use of inspirational motivation. The practice of transformational leadership style allows head teachers to reward students who perform well in MSCE through Parent Teachers Association (PTA). Furthermore, in an interview guide, one of the head teacher in school 008 said that:

As a school in conjunction with the Parents Teachers Association including the Board of Management we inspire and motivate those students who have performed well in MSCE by organizing a function for those people to reward them. For example, in the year 2019, most students did well in MSCE and were invited by the school to present their gifts, like laptops, mathematical instruments, exercise books, and cash amounting (SSHT 008, Personal communication, April 15, 2021).

However, some respondents had different opinions whereby 24(21.4%) of teachers, 3(21.0%), and 60(18.4%) of students strongly disagreed that head teachers reward students who perform well in the Malawi Secondary School Certificate of Examination (MSCE) results. The findings of the study are consistent with Wirba's (2014) findings, which indicated that almost all students and teachers described their head teachers as transformational leaders, except for one public secondary school teacher who regarded his or her head teacher as a transactional and democratic leader in the school.

The results in Table 23, indicate that when respondents were asked whether the head teacher congratulates students who work hard in school and behave well. The majority, 14(93.4%)
of deputy head teachers, 91(81.3%) of teachers, and 239(73.3%) of students agreed with the statement. This signifies that in some schools head teachers give verbal appreciation by congratulating students who work hard in their studies. In this case, students feel happy indeed when they are appreciated when they have done something good in their life. In an interview one of the head teachers in school 013, said that:

I congratulate students when she/he is in positions 1, 2, & 3 in a class with a verbal appreciation by saying, Congratulations! Excellent! Mary! or John! Keep it up! For performing well in exams. In so doing that students continue working hard in their studies and change their behavior. (SSHT 013, Personal communication, April 12, 2021)

However, some respondents had different opinions whereas, 70(21.5%) students strongly disagree, and 11 (9.8%) teachers strongly disagreed that head teachers give verbal appreciation by congratulating students who work hard in their studies. This study's findings are supported by Nooruding and Baig (2014), who found that (95.0 %) of teachers and (86.0%) of students felt that head teachers’ transformational leadership style influences students' behavior management through rewarding good behavior and attitude. Awards were used to enhance students’ good behavior, and they were seen as a constructive way to inspire and reward students for their hard work and good behavioral patterns.

Also, the study sought to establish whether the head teacher treats each student equally based on their individual needs. About 12(86.0%) of deputy head teachers, 89(79.5%) of teachers, and 199(61.0%) of students confirmed implying that the needs of students were addressed uniquely. This was in line with the individualized consideration aspect of transformational leadership. The study established that needy students from poor economic backgrounds were given
bursaries to support those who cannot afford to pay for school fees. Other support services included the provision of personal items like soap, pens, clothes, blankets, and sanitary towels for girls among others. It was noted that satisfying these needs was important because students developed positive self-esteem, felt comfortable, minimized vices of theft, stayed together harmoniously, and concentrated on their studies. The findings reiterate a similar study conducted by Nooruding & Baig, (2014) who established that 95.0% of teachers and (86.0%) of students felt that transformational leadership style influences students’ behavior management through awarding students good behavior. This, therefore, means that awards were considered a positive strategy for influencing students’ good behavior.

However, some participants negated the statement whereby 101(31.0%) students, 10(8.9%) teachers, and 1(6.7%) deputy head teacher disagreed that head teachers treat students equally according to their needs. This is because of many needy cases that the school cannot afford. This was confirmed during the interview when one of the head teachers in school 13 remarked that:

It is difficult to treat all students equally according to their needs because they are many and due to financial problems. I refer them to some organizations like CAMFED (Campaign for Female Education Development), especially for girls. Some students are on government bursaries and other organizations but others do not. (SSHT 13, Personal Communication, April, 15th 2021).

The response of the head teachers indicates that despite the challenge of many needy cases, school heads who practiced transformational leadership tried varied strategies to meet their needs. They were open to new thinking and could solicit participation from other organizations to support needy students.
In another statement, participants were asked to state whether the head teacher listens carefully to individual students and assists them in resolving their problems. The majority of 13(86.7%) deputy head teachers, 86(76.8%) of teachers, and 207(63.5%) students agreed. Active listening is one of the attributes of a transformational leader. By paying full attention to students’ narration of their encounters, head teachers were able to identify their potential problems, and advised on how to resolve their conflicts.

On the other hand, some respondents had different opinions whereby, 77(23.6%) students’, 12(10.7%) teachers strongly and 1(6.7%) deputy head teacher disagreed. The findings of this study are related to those of Mbogori (2012), who found that most head teachers (62.5%) preferred transformational and democratic leadership styles and had a significant influence on students’ discipline in public secondary schools for controlling the discipline of students. This is known that a head teacher who practices democratic and transformational leadership styles has fewer cases of indiscipline in a school. As a result, the school is admired by society because of the good discipline measures of students.

Finally, results in Table 23 indicate that when respondents were asked whether the head teacher cares for all students in schools. Therefore, the majority 13(86.6%) of deputy head teachers, 84(75.0%) of teachers, and 221(67.8%) of students agreed with the statement. This implies that head teachers have the responsibility of taking care of each student to make sure that their needs are satisfied. The practice of transformational leadership style helps head teachers to care for all students in schools in the use of individual consideration.

However, some respondents had different opinions whereby, 68(20.9%) students and 15(13.4%) teachers disagreed that head teachers care for all students in schools. The aforementioned study’s findings are consistent with those of Odhiambo (2016) that various aspects
of transformational leadership style such as charisma, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individual consideration were being practiced, and these had a positive bearing impact on students’ discipline especially, in the application of guidance and counseling.

Based on the influence of the head teacher's transformational leadership style on students' discipline, the researcher sought to investigate from the respondents whether the head teacher's transformational leadership style influences students' discipline. From the study’s findings, the majority, 205 (62.9%) of students, 90 (80.4%) of teachers, and 13 (86.7%) of D/head teachers who participated in this study said that transformational leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools. This is because students’ discipline has been improved in most schools. Students' behavior has positively changed, hardworking students are rewarded and motivated which encourages others to behave well and maintains discipline. Additionally, students’ academic performance has been improved in some schools, there is also a good relationship between students, teachers, and head teachers; a code of conduct is followed by obeying rules and regulations; motivational speakers are invited to guide and counsel students to shape their behavior; schools have few cases of indiscipline, and transformational leadership style is effective because it improves performance in Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) results. This examination is written after students have completed four years in secondary school according to 8-4-4 of the Education System in Malawi.

However, the minority of 121 (37.1%) of students, 2 (13.3%) of teachers, and 14 (12.5%) deputy head teachers said that the application of head teachers' transformational leadership style has little influence on students' discipline. Students are not treated fairly, according to respondents, and there is discrimination and corruption by head teachers and even some teachers at schools
when it comes to bursaries to assist disadvantaged students. When it comes to disciplinary concerns, disciplined students are punished while undisciplined students are not, resulting in injustice. The fundamental issue is that the disciplinary committee is inactive, and there is no encouragement because of the corrupted leadership. This is concerning the interview guide, which revealed that the majority of head teachers said it was difficult to treat each student individually due to the large number of students in schools and also to fulfill their needs.

Although the majority 13(86.7%) of deputy head teachers, 90(80.4%) teachers, and 205(62.9%) students reported that transformational leadership style influences students' discipline in public secondary schools; in reality, it was less practiced by head teachers in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. The results are similar to those of Narain (2015), who discovered that head teachers' capacity, moral commitment, and charismatic position had a significant impact on students' discipline. Students' discipline and the causes of indiscipline could not be reduced to any causal relationship due to the multi-faceted structure of the school compound.

Testing Hypothesis 3

\[ H_{03}: \text{The Head teachers' transformational leadership style has no statistically significant influence on student discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi} \]

Prior to testing the hypothesis, the means of the three categories of participants was determined. The findings are illustrated in Table 24.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Case Processing Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHT7  * CATEGORY OF PARTICIPANT</td>
<td>411</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 24

*Means of three categories of groups on head teachers’ transformational leadership style*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MHT7  (For Transformative Leadership Style)</th>
<th>CATEGORY OF PARTICIPANT</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Head Teachers</td>
<td>49.8667</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.87505</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>46.3465</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>9.93120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>43.9661</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>9.60826</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>44.7664</strong></td>
<td><strong>411</strong></td>
<td><strong>9.81432</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 24 shows that the head teachers’ transformative leadership style show that the mean of the deputy head teacher is 49.867, the teachers mean is 46.347 and that of students is 43.966. The researcher wanted to determine whether the means were statistically different, the inferential statistic of One-Way Analysis of Variance was used to test the hypothesis. The output is shown in the Table 25.
Table 25

*One Way Analysis of Variance for the means of head teachers’ transformational leadership style.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>831.311</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>415.656</td>
<td>4.387</td>
<td>.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>38660.266</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>94.756</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39491.577</strong></td>
<td><strong>410</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results from the Table 25 indicate that $F(2, 408) = 4.387$, the p-value is 0.013 which is less than 0.05 confidence level. This implies that the means are significant; we have evidence against the null hypothesis. We therefore reject the null hypothesis and take the alternative. This means that the head teachers’ transformational leadership style was significantly different and it negatively influenced students’ discipline. The study concludes that transformational leadership style has a negative influence on students' behavior, and is less /fairly practiced by most secondary school head teachers in Malawi hence students’ performance is improved. The results are similar to those of Narain (2015), who discovered that head teachers' capacity, moral commitment, and charismatic position had a significant impact on students' discipline. Students' discipline and the causes of indiscipline could not be reduced to any causal relationship due to the multi-faceted structure of the school compound.
4.4.5 Challenges Encountered by Head Teachers’ Leadership styles in Influencing Positive Students’ Discipline.

The study sought to investigate information from students, teachers, and deputy head teachers on challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing positive students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. The aim was to identify the drawbacks and propose appropriate remedial. Their responses were grouped and categorized into themes presented in Table 26.
Table 26

Student’s, Teacher’s, and Deputy Head Teacher’s Responses on Challenges Encountered by Head Teachers in influencing Student’s Discipline in Public Secondary Schools.

Students, n =326; Teachers, n=112; D/Head teacher, n= 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head Teacher’s Challenges</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>D/H/Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student’s rudeness and disrespect of authorities.</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of cooperation between local community and teachers</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor communication skills between students, teachers, etc.</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’, parental, political and cultural influence</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate teaching/learning resources/poor performance.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students were disobedient to school rules and regulations</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ lateness and absenteeism from school.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge for decision making</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer pressure/drug abuse influence and making noise</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of community involvement in decision-making.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>326</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>112</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data 2021

Key: F=Frequency and %= Percentage

The results in Table 26 show a small proportion, 108(33.1%) students, 15(13.4%) teachers, and 3(20.0%) deputy head teachers said that students’ rudeness and disrespect of authorities by students are some of the challenges that head teachers encounter. It has been a great concern that in some schools head teachers and teachers are not respected at all by some students. The study found that they are threatened, bullied, teased or mocked, (given nicknames), and insulted by
students. The researcher confirmed this when she encountered a heated argument between the head teacher and the student. The latter was rolling up the sleeves, breathing out furry in readiness to fight. This lack of self-control is a form of indiscipline; which results in demonstrations or student unrest because students become unruly and uncontrollably undermine the authorities. This was confirmed by one of the head teachers in school 015 during an interview when he complained that:

In this modern world, some students are rude indeed and they refuse to do punishment given by the school and they run away. When the school administration stands firm on punishing culprits, they plan and mobilize outsiders to fight with the head teacher unexpectedly and innocently because of the punishment they are given. Such students are reported to top authorities for suspension (SSHT 015, Personal communication, April 13, 2021)

The response from the head teacher warrant attention, such indiscipline not only disrupts the harmonious relationship between teachers and students but the teaching and learning process results in poor academic performance. The findings concur with that of Kilonzo (2013) study which revealed that absenteeism, rudeness to head teachers, teachers, and fighting among students were the prevalent indiscipline problems encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in Lamu County, Kenya. Poor relationships between teachers, and students and parental negligence were also cited as the major causes of indiscipline in the same county.

Another challenge cited by the study participants was the lack of cooperation from the local community, teachers, and head teachers mentioned by 40(12.3%) of students, 12(10.7%) teachers, and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers. Lack of cooperation was evidenced when parents refused to attend planned school meetings to get reports about their children’s welfare and discipline issues. They established some uncooperative teachers who absconded classes, absenteeism, and had a sore
relationship with students. This is unprofessional conduct that warrants interdiction and was cited as the cause of students’ unrest. Cooperation is very important in any institution or organization for the smooth running of the institution or organization. The local community and a school including teachers and head teachers should work as a team for the development of the institution. Failure to do so creates an unconducive environment resulting in students’ unrest in schools. The findings are similar to those of Miriti (2012) who found that the major challenges encountered by administrators were lack of cooperation from parents, and students and poor implementation of discipline policy by the government.

Ministry of Education Science and Technology (2014, p.8) highlighted that parents or community members are an integral part of the school management system. They play an important role to provide food, shelter, care, and support to the students. In addition, they provide necessary services to enable students effectively and fully participate in education and to make sure that the school is well managed. Furthermore, they are also responsible for the development of the school through the school management committee (SMC) and Parent Teachers’ Association (PTA). The MoEST is emphasizing the need for cooperation between the school and community for effecting learning and maintenance of discipline in schools.

Thus, the study recommended that the government should get involved in discipline enforcement by empowering school administrators by reviewing discipline-related policies and facilitating awareness meetings for parents on school discipline. This would help head teachers to influence the discipline of students in schools.

Effective communication is key to the smooth running of the school. However, the study revealed the challenge of poor communication skills among students, teachers, and even parents was cited by 35(10.7%) students, 15(13.4%) teachers, and 2(13.3%) deputy head teachers. This
signifies that there is no effective or proper communication in some schools. Students, teachers, and parents need to be communicated in an institution before any action is taken or implemented to prevent students’ unrest or any indiscipline issue which may arise unexpectedly. They are part of the school management once they are communicated in advance in any matter arising in a school, they feel happy that they are accounted for the management of the school. Poor communication in any institution results in students’ unrest or indiscipline cases. This was confirmed during an interview when one of the head teachers in school 014 reported that:

In 2018, there was student unrest due to changing of students’ meals without consultation in advance with dining prefects and head boy/girl, which was done by the boarding master of this school. In addition, I was not also communicated in advance, had it been I was communicated it couldn’t happen. Students were served beans instead of beef on that particular day. Suddenly, they started singing abusive songs and throwing foodstuff in front of the boarding master’s door and head teacher’s office. (SSHT 014, Personal communication, April 14, 2021)

The findings of the study agree with the study of Tembo (2015) who revealed that poor communication and ineffective management resulted in students’ unrest in the Northern Central Division, Malawi. Students were served with weevil beans or rotten because they were not communicated in advance about the condition of the beans. This resulted in riots or violence, demonstration, and the destruction of school properties. This translated that some of the challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in schools are related to the school or head teachers themselves. Therefore, effective communication is very important for the smooth running of the school.
Results in Table 26 showed that a small percentage, of 32(9.2%) students and 5(4.5%) teachers said that teacher’s, parental, political, and cultural influences are some of the challenges that head teachers encounter in influencing students’ discipline in schools. This implies that there is no good relationship or cooperation between teachers, parents, politicians, and the community due to their culture. In a school setting, there should be a good relationship or cooperation with the mentioned stakeholders for the smooth running of the school. Failure to cooperate with them leads to students’ unrest. However, in a few schools in the Mulanje district, there is no cooperation or a good relationship between teachers, parents, and the community around them. In an interview guide, one of the head teachers in school 007 complained that:

Some teachers mobilize students to go on demonstrations or strike against the head teachers. For instance, in 2019 students demonstrated bad behavior to the extent of a strike and were mobilized by one of the teachers because of a misunderstanding between the administration and students’ grievances. This affected the teaching and learning activities of the school resulting in poor performance the school. Some parents sideline their children not to do punishment. (SSHT 2007, Personal communication, April 15, 2021)

The findings of the study are related to the study of Chilimba (2015) who found that cultural factors, unsupportive work environment, inferiority complex, lack of confidence, involvement of politics in educational leadership, and insufficient resources were the challenges encountered by female head teachers in schools not to attend their leadership roles effectively by influencing students’ discipline in schools. This implies that female head teachers were distracted by external forces and lacked support from the community, political influence and cultural factors, lack of confidence, and others. According to the findings, it means that there was no relationship between
the community and the head teachers or the school, head teachers were not competent to manage the schools in terms of discipline and others. All these factors would also lead to students’ indiscipline in schools as one of the challenges encountered by the head teachers in schools. Sometimes cultural factors, community influence, and others can influence students to develop unacceptable behavior in schools.

Results in Table 2 indicate that a small proportion of 32(9.8%) students, 3(2.7%) teachers, and 2(13.3%) deputy head teachers said that inadequate teaching and learning material e.g. text books, chairs and desks are some of the challenges head teachers encounter in influencing students’ discipline in schools. This means that some public secondary schools in Mulanje District, have inadequate teaching and learning materials and students grumble for one book and resulting in quarreling even fighting. Therefore, the government should ensure that there are adequate teaching and learning materials in all schools to prevent student unrest so that head teachers should influence students’ discipline in schools effectively.

From the aforementioned findings, they agree with (Kilonzo & Nzeli, 2013; Adams & Muthiah, 2019; Miriti, 2020) studies which revealed that inadequate facilities and resources; negative attitudes toward parents, cultural practices; students’ rudeness and fighting, lack of cooperation from parents, students, teachers, local community and poor implementation of the discipline policy by the government were some of the challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools. The study also highlighted that one of the main challenges encountered by the school head teachers was discipline and social problems in schools. This possess a great challenge to head teachers’ leadership in schools, and the issue of discipline and social problems are affecting head teachers’ leadership styles in the smooth running of schools in the 21st Century. Furthermore, (80.0%) of the teachers also revealed that cultural and
social challenges interfered with the management of school affairs; cultural factors, unsupportive work environment, inferiority complex, lack of confidence, involvement of politics in educational leadership, and insufficient resources, were some of the challenges encountered by the head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools in the 21st Century.

In this regard, results in Table 26 indicated that a small proportion, 22(6.7%) of students, 31(27.7%) teachers, and 5(33.3%) of deputy head teachers said that students’ disobedient to school rules and regulations is one of the challenges encountered by head teachers. This implies that in some schools students are not following rules and regulations which results in students’ unrest. In a school setting, there are rules and regulations established for students to follow. Failure to obey those rules and regulations they are punished. However, in some schools in Malawi students are reluctant to obey the rules and regulations of the school. The Ministry has a set of rules and regulations that guide the operations of schools and direct the schools in the management and controlling of student and teacher behavior and standardized approaches to the management of discipline in schools (MoEST, 2014, p.31). Those students who fail to adhere to rules and regulations are punished to correct their behavior.

Table 26 results indicated that a small percentage, 22(6.7%) students, 15(13.5%) teachers, and 1(6.7%) deputy head teacher revealed that students’ lateness and absenteeism from school without any permission was one of the challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in schools. This implies that in some schools students are not attending classes which would result in poor performance in their studies. This shows that they have no interest in their education which would result also in poverty in their lives. The head teachers have to be very strict with the attendance register to be punishing those absentees. The respondents emphasized that there must be a follow-up to those absentees from schools by giving them punishment or
calling their parents to discipline them. This study’s findings are collaborated to the study of Benewah (2017) who found that students were leaving school campus frequently without permission from authorities. While teachers highlighted that there was insubordination to school authority and inappropriate dress code violations. Lateness and absenteeism among day students were students’ disciplinary challenges in Obuasi Secondary Technical School in Ghana.

Table 26 results showed that a minority of 14(4.55) students and 5(4.5%) teachers reported that lack of knowledge for decision-making by the head teachers is one of the challenges that head teachers encounter in influencing students’ discipline. This translates that some head teachers in public secondary schools are not equipped with decision-making skills to sort out students’ problems due to a lack of training. Head teachers should be well equipped and knowledgeable in problem-solving which may arise in a school. Failure to sort out students’ problems would lead to student unrest in schools and disrespect by students. The findings are consistent with the study of Adams and Muthiah (2019) revealed that the lack of knowledge and skills of the leadership of head teachers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia were some of the challenges encountered by head teachers in the management of discipline in their respective schools. This signifies that head teachers should be trained in leadership skills in the management of discipline before they are appointed to become leaders in schools.

The results in Table 25, a small percentage, 11(3.4%) of students and 2(1.8%) of teachers said that peer pressure, use of drug abuse, for example, smoking and drunkard are some of the challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in schools. This implies that in some schools students are indiscipline because of peer pressure due to joining bad companies of students who show bad behavior. Some students use drug abuse and make noise in class. This kind of behavior disturbs innocent learners to concentrate on their studies. Therefore,
head teachers have the responsibility of controlling them because it leads to students’ unrest. Peer pressure results in indiscipline not respecting the authorities even fellow friends. They are not also allowed to take drugs which may damage their brain and lead to violence in schools. In an interview guide, one of the head teachers in school 004 said that:

In 2019, there was student unrest whereby one of the students used intoxication of drug abuse and tried to beat a girl and was injured and taken to the hospital. The offender was given a penalty and he went on wild we called the police to assist. When students saw the police vehicle, they started throwing stones and some parts of the vehicle were damaged, and some students were arrested at the police station. The case was reported to the Education Division Manager’s Office. (SSHT 004, Personal communication, April, 15th, 2021)

The findings of this current study concur with those of (Masekoameng, 2010; MoEST, 2014, p 27-30; Kachepa & Tembo, 2015) study’s which revealed the existence of disciplinary problems in schools. For instance, in some situations, students vandalize school property, damage tables, and chairs, fight, and make noise in class. The study found that some teachers influenced students to go on strike against the head teacher. Parents were neither guiding nor counseling their children. This means that they did not play a supportive role to instill discipline in their children.

Lack of community involvement in decision-making was another factor pointed out by a minority of 10(3.1%) students, 9(8.0%) teachers, and 1(6.7%) deputy head teacher. For the school to function effectively in terms of discipline and development, the community or parents should be involved because they are part and parcel of the school management. As highlighted by MoEST (2014) parents or community members are also responsible for the development of the school through the school management committee (SMC) and Parent Teachers’ Association (PTA). The
findings agree with those of Miriti (2020) who revealed that lack of cooperation and involvement in decision-making mitigated the maintenance of discipline in schools. This signifies that failure to involve parents/local community would result in students’ unrest in schools because they can mobilize students to engage in unacceptable behavior in schools.

Furthermore, other challenges reported were students reporting late and absenteeism from school. Lack of punctuality to attend class on time meant not only that the concerned student misses the content taught but disrupts other students when finding out where they have reached.

The researcher observed that, in most secondary schools, students were not in full school uniform in terms of dress code. This means that the head teachers have to enforce them to wear full schools’ uniform. The study translates that students should be given punishment to correct their unacceptable behaviors demonstrated in schools. It also showed that guidance and counseling were not practiced in schools to guide students to correct their behaviors to reduce students’ disciplinary problems in school. This study’s findings have collaborated with the study of Benewah (2017) who found that students were leaving school campus frequently without permission from authorities. While teachers highlighted that there was insubordination to school authority and inappropriate dress code violations. Lateness and absenteeism among day students were students’ disciplinary challenges in Obuasi Secondary Technical School in Ghana. In addition, the findings revealed that teachers and students were not involved in decision-making by the administration as a result lack of cooperation existed among themselves.
4.4.6 Strategies which should be used to Mitigate Challenges Encountered by Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles in influencing positive Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools

The study sought the views of the participating teachers, students, and deputy head teachers on strategies to be put in place to mitigate the challenges. Responses obtained were categorized into themes. Table 27 presents the participant's responses.
Table 27

Student’s, Teacher’s, and Deputy Head Teacher’s Responses on Strategies that can be used to Mitigate Challenges Encountered by Head Teachers in Influencing Students’ Discipline in Schools.

Students, n =326; Teachers, n=112; D/Head teacher, n= 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies to Mitigate Head Teachers’ Challenges</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>D/H/Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give stiff punishment or suspension to indiscipline students</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective communication with students, teachers, and parents.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow students to explain their problems and give feedback.</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involve students, teachers, and parents in decision-making</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage guidance and counseling in schools</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforcing school rules and regulations, and dress code for students</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide adequate teaching/learning materials, e.g. textbooks.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consult students and teachers before making a decision.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing frequent PTA meetings at school level.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treat all students, teachers, and parents equally</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage motivation and reward students who work hard And show good behavior</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| TOTAL | 326 | 100.0 | 112 | 100.0 | 15 | 100.0 |

Source: Field Data 2021.

Key: F=Frequency and %=Percent

Data in Table 27 shows that a small proportion, 54(16.6%) of students, 20(17.9%) of teachers, and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers proposed stiff punishment or suspension of
indiscipline students as strategies used for mitigating challenges. The study findings showed that in some schools, head teachers had established clear rules and regulations on types of offences and the corresponding type of punishment to be administered. These were communicated to the staff, parents and students. The researcher confirmed this when she reviewed the punishment books and noted the type of punishments given. They included temporary exclusion, missing break time, loss of privileges for students’ leaders, detention at lunch time, after school and weekend for boarders as well as the inclusion of students’ behaviors in their reports.

Other punishments included clearing bushes around the school the compound, watering plants, cleaning classrooms and dining halls after meals. At times students were asked to remove unwanted markings (‘graffiti’) on the walls of classrooms, along the corridors. These punishments were administered outside class time which was appropriate because school administration ensured no student missed lessons. Demarcation of offences given to students prevented the staff and student leaders from giving unwarranted excessive punishments that trigger indiscipline.

In other schools’ different strategies were employed; they included exclusions, confiscation of illegal items in school like knives, alcohol, etc. Occasionally, the head teachers and teachers conducted impromptu routine checks to cease prohibited items that students smuggled into the school. They were identified as dangerous weapons like knives, illegal drugs, tobacco and cigarettes as well as pornographic articles which a student may use to harm either oneself or others. Other forms of discipline were suspensions from school compound until the case of the student culprit is heard. The findings of the study are supported by Miriti (2012), who found that punishments, suspensions, discussions with parents, guidance and counseling, the use of clubs and societies, and suspensions of students from the school were among the most commonly used strategies in enforcing school discipline in the schools.
Discipline policies are articulated clearly by the Ministry of Education to guide the school heads and teachers when to administer them. Punishment is a disciplinary measure that aims at modifying students from unpleasant acts to pleasant behavior. On the other hand, suspension is when a student is withdrawn from school for a period of one year due to being pregnant and responsible for the pregnancy, when found smoking cigarettes (tobacco), and habitual committing offenses requiring internal corrective measures (MoEST, 2014, p.32).

In a school setting, there are rules and regulations which are established by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, and other rules are established within the school level which every student is expected to follow. Students who broke these rules are either punished or suspended from school. The findings concur with the Ministry of Education Science and Technology’s guidelines for disciplinary action (2014, p.32-33) in Malawi, which established that warning, e.g. verbal and non-verbal issued with a letter, physical punishment, and mediation are some of the strategy(s) for disciplining students in school to maintain discipline.

Effective communication with students and teachers was another strategy suggested by 50(15.3%) students, 3(2.7%) teachers, and 1(6.7%) deputy head, teacher. Good communication is the cornerstone of leadership. It should be two-way communication and give the information at the right time. Studies have shown that for effective communication to take place, leaders have to prepare well in advance. Creating a goal, getting an outline of what one wants to say clearly, active listening to what the person is saying, and getting relevant facts to one’s argument, using a humorous tone can appeal to students to buy into one’s ideas and follow them. When the head teacher receives complaints from students, teachers, or even parents, they need to receive feedback from the head teacher. This creates a conducive environment for teaching and learning activities.
in schools. Communication is a very vital tool in the daily running of any school. It can be verbal (speech), or non-verbal (writing, signals, visuals, and behavior (MoEST, 2014, p.41).

Communication is very vital because it also helps to direct and coordinate school activities, manage the behavior of teachers, students, and support staff, and also gives motivation to stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, and others). The findings are related to the study of Ofoyuru & Too-Okema (2011), who revealed that rewards, punishments, effective communication, guidance, and counseling students were some of the strategies for influencing students’ discipline in Gulu District, Uganda.

Similarly, a minority of 45(13.8%) of students and 1(0.9%) of teachers cited allowing students to explain their problems and giving feedback as one of the strategy(s) that could be used for mitigating challenges. In a school setting students have the right to explain problems to their head teachers as one way of communication and be sorted out by giving feedback. This helps the head teacher to instill discipline in students as they come individually. In an interview guide, one of the head teachers in school 006 remarked that:

Due to COVID-19, communication is done in the classroom through their Form Teachers and Students’ leaders or class prefects. We ensure to maintain social distance, and there are 30 students per class. Another communication is done through the notice boards, and assemblies were postponed. (SSHT 006, Personal communication, April, 12th, 2021)

However, some head teachers had different opinions whereby 3(20.0%) responded negatively that they don’t allow it because students fear coming to their offices and fear of punishment because of the hierarchical position. The current study's findings are similar to those of Barongo (2016), who found that 50.0 % of principals used a democratic leadership style as one of the
strategies for influencing students' discipline by encouraging an open-door policy where students are free to see the school's principal explain their problems. According to Barongo's findings, adopting a democratic leadership style as one of the strategies for improving students' discipline in public secondary schools resulted in good communication between head teachers and students in schools. Though the outcomes of the previous study did not include a dress code, cooperation, or guidance and counseling as a strategy for improving student discipline, the current study incorporated that.

Involvement of students, teachers, and parents in decision-making is another strategy that could be used for mitigating challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in schools as reported by 37(11.3%) of students, 15(13.4%) of teachers, and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers. This means that students, teachers, and parents should be involved in decision-making as one the managers of the schools. Once they are involved, they feel happy and motivated by contributing their ideas for the smooth running of the school. Therefore, the study revealed that students, teachers, and parents should be involved in decision-making as one of the strategy(s) that could be used for mitigating challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in schools.

The findings concur with Safi (2014) who found that strengthening in-services courses on conflict management; increasing the school budget to enable an effective running of school activities (e.g., for purchasing teaching and learning materials, e.g. textbooks, etc.); having regular meetings with school stakeholders and involving student’s council body in decision making were some of the strategies identified to overcome the problems of students’ protest. According to Safi’s findings, students’ indiscipline is sometimes caused due to lack of attention by the head teachers to students, resulting in unacceptable behavior. Therefore, head teachers should listen to students’
grievances whenever they are approached. In the case of teaching, teachers must be well qualified and knowledgeable about their subject matter to attract or motivate students when teaching.

The results in Table 27 showed that a small proportion, 3(20.0%) deputy head teachers, 21(18.8%) teachers, and 36(11.0%) students said that encouraging guidance and counseling could be one of the strategies. Offering guidance and counseling is the best way of correcting students’ behavior in schools (MoEST, 2014, p). An effective head teacher organizes workshops and seminars for counseling students by inviting motivational speakers to talk to students to shape their behavior. The findings also collaborate with those of Chanda, Songolo, and Mutekenya (2015) study which established that in Norway the Ministry of Education and Research recognizes guidance and counseling as one of the strategies for managing students’ discipline in schools, which involves teachers, and school heads and parents. While in Zambia, see punishment is one of the strategies for managing students’ discipline in schools. This implies that school administrators, teachers, and parents have the responsibility in schools to mold and account for the behavior of students to meet the expectations of society. The findings of the study also agree with the study of Chege, Salgong, and Ngumi (2016) who found that guidance and counseling to students had improved discipline and academic performance of students as well as of the school. This shows that a lack of guidance and counseling for students might lead to student unrest.

Enforcing school rules and regulations, and dress code for students, 13(11.6%) of teachers, 24(7.4%) of students, and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers. This shows that in some schools rules and regulations are not forced for students to follow to maintain discipline, resulting in students’ unrest. In a school setting rules and regulations are set for students to obey and maintain discipline. The findings are similar to the study of Kibiwot (2014) who found that enforcing rules and regulations for students and enforcing students in school uniforms helped students to maintain
discipline. Students look smart and decent as an indicator of good discipline in school as well as the students.

Results in Table 2 show that about 19(5.8%) students, 2(1.9%) teachers, and 1(6.7%) deputy head teacher suggested that the provision of adequate teaching and learning materials such as textbooks, desks, and chairs, and also enough science teachers as some of the strategies. This signifies that in some schools there are inadequate teaching and learning materials, therefore, the government need to supply to those schools in need for the improvement of their performance.

The findings concur with Safi (2014) who found that strengthening in-services courses on conflict management; increasing the school budget to enable an effective running of school activities (e.g. for purchasing teaching and learning materials, e.g. textbooks, etc.); having regular meetings with school stakeholders and involving student’s council body in decision making were some of the strategies identified to overcome the problems of students’ protest. According to Safi’s findings, students’ indiscipline is sometimes caused due to lack of attention by the head teachers to students, resulting in unacceptable behavior. Therefore, head teachers should listen to students’ grievances whenever they are approached. In the case of teaching, teachers must be well qualified and knowledgeable about their subject matter to attract or motivate students when teaching.

Consulting students and teachers before decision-making were one of the strategies that could be used for mitigating challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in schools. This was pointed out by 16(4.9%) of the student and 10(8.9%) teachers’ participants. Participative leadership requires leaders to get the views of students and teachers with regards to timetabling especially before introducing extra lessons for remedial classes, time for preps as well as introducing a new subject like a foreign language. In boarding schools, it is important to get the students' views about meals, for instance, the time they want to eat certain foods is key for them.
Involving students in choosing their class monitors and prefects is another important aspect because they know who is best for them. In schools where student leaders are chosen for them are viewed with suspicion and rejected. Engaging students in the change of school uniforms particularly for student leaders create satisfaction and accept wearing them. The findings agree with the studies of Asfaw, Jinot & Munirah (2021) which revealed that (50.0%) of the head teachers used a democratic leadership style as one of the strategies influencing students’ discipline.

However, consultation sometimes is tiresome and time-consuming to consult every time before taking a decision. This was confirmed by the Education Division Manager of the district remarked in an interview that:

> From my experience, sometimes consultation, before the decision is made, is time-consuming. Teachers feel bored and lose their period for teaching and some cannot contribute the necessary information needed. (EDM, Personal communication, April 22, 2021)

Another strategy suggested was organizing frequent Parents Teacher Association meetings at the school level as a strategy to mitigate challenges encountered by head teachers that could help to influence students’ discipline in schools. This is opined by 16(4.9%) of the participating students, 15(13.4%) teachers, and 2(13.3%) deputy head teachers. It is in these meetings that parents are briefed on the welfare of their children. Also, indiscipline issues are discussed at length and a consensus is reached on the way forward. They also can contribute to the development and management of the school by providing necessary materials to their children as well as for the school. The findings confirm that of Godfrey (2016) who found that, heads of schools were able to share their experience on different disciplinary problems or meetings such as PTA meetings in
their respective schools as one of the strategies for managing secondary school students’ discipline in Korogwe Town Council, Tanzania

However, there are a few schools that do not conduct frequent PTA meetings resulting in students’ unrest and low performance of the school. The study found that organizing frequent PTA meetings is one of the strategies.

Results in Table 27 indicate a minority of 15(4.6%) students and 2(1.8%) teachers proposed that treating all students, teachers, and parents equally could be one of the strategies that could be used for mitigating head teachers' challenges in influencing students’ discipline in schools. In a school setting where students have treated equally with no discrimination, it creates a conducive environment for teaching and learning activities in schools. However, in some schools students are not treated equally, there is unfair treatment. In an interview guide the Education Manager complained that in some schools, students are not treated equally. I think eradicating injustice (corruption) through civic education and training head teachers about the danger of corruption could be one of the strategies to be used for mitigating challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in schools. Therefore, students should be treated equally to achieve their goals by the application of transformational leadership style by head teachers to influence students’ discipline in schools.

Encouraging motivation and rewarding students who work hard in their academics and show good behavior was viewed by a small proportion, 14(4.3%) of students, 2(1.8%) teachers, and 5(33.3%) deputy head teachers as some of the strategies that could be used for mitigating challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in schools. This signifies that in some schools students are not motivated and rewarded though they work hard or show good behavior, this would demotivate students not to work hard and show unacceptable
behavior. For the smooth running of the school, both teachers and students need to be motivated to encourage them to work hard and maintain discipline in schools to prevent student unrest. Therefore, this would help head teachers to influence students’ discipline in schools and create a conducive environment for students and teachers to teach effectively.

The findings of this pertinent study are similar to the studies of Nooruding & Baig (2014) who found that (95.0%) of teachers and (86.0%) of students felt that transformational leadership style influences students’ behavior management through providing awards to the students for good behavior. Awards were considered a positive means of strategy(s) of influencing students’ good behavior. The findings also showed that there was the existence of a positive relationship between head teachers’ leadership style and students’ discipline. The study revealed that transformational leadership styles such as charisma (intellectual stimulation), idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individual consideration were being practiced, and these had a positive bearing on the discipline of students, especially on the application of guidance and counseling.

The study sought information from participants’ opinions on strategies that students should do to mitigate challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in schools. The majority of 9(60.0%) deputy head teachers, a small proportion of 91(27.9%) students, and 30(26.9%) teachers said that students should be adhering to school rules and regulations, cooperate and communicate effectively with their head teachers when there is any problem arises in schools. Furthermore, a small percentage of 29(25.9%) of teachers and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers also viewed that students should seek guidance and counseling and learn to accept change to adopt good behavior and also adhere to dress code. These would be some of the strategy(s) that students should do to mitigate challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in schools.
Other strategies suggested were teachers counseling students and encouraging them to good behavior pointed 30(9.2%) of students and 1(6.7%) of deputy head teachers said that Teachers should work as a team and interact with students to enhance discipline, which was viewed by a small proportion of 2(13.3%) deputy head teachers, 25(7.7%) students, and 6(5.4%) teachers. A small percentage, 1(6.7%) deputy head teacher and 20(6.1%) students said that teachers should listen to students’ problems and give feedback, and also treat them equally. Another 15(4.6%) of students said that teachers should give punishments to in disciplined students and monitor them as to tame their behavior.

The researcher requested the participants to suggest other strategies (s) that head teachers should use to mitigate the challenges. A minority of 14(4.3%) students and 1(6.7%) deputy head teacher suggested that head teachers should communicate with students, teachers, and parents effectively. Fair treatment for all students and listening to their problems was opined by 12(3.7%) students and 1(0.9%) teachers. Another 10(3.1%) students said that head teachers should cooperate and involve students and teachers in decision making. Only 2(1.8%) teachers mentioned that head teachers should be exemplary in enforcing rules and regulations to students. Finally 20(17.9%) teachers and 5(1.5%) students pointed out the provision of textbooks and other learning facilities as a way of improving teaching and learning to enhance students’ discipline in schools.

About 2(13.3%) teachers proposed that parents attend PTA (Parents Teachers Association) meetings to discuss disciplinary issues concerning their children and be involved in decision-making on the way forward. Another 1(6.7%) deputy head teacher and 20(6.1%) students, and 1(0.9%) teacher suggested that parents should guide and counsel their children to behave well both at home and at school. Only 1(0.9%) of the teacher said that parents should consult head teachers
if there is a problem concerning their learners. Further 3(2.7%) teachers opined that parents should not sideline or back up their children in indiscipline cases as deterrence.

For the Education Division Manager, 15(13.4%) teachers, proposed that she hold workshops to train head teachers and teachers on how to handle indiscipline cases in schools. The acquired knowledge and skills gained will enable the entire staff to deal with students concerns constructively. Provision of adequate teaching and learning materials such as textbooks, desks, chairs, etc. in schools. About 10(3.1%) students and 3(2.7%) of teachers, 20(6.1%) and 6(5.4%) teachers said that Education Division Manager Should visit or inspect schools to understand problems faced/encountered by students in schools, and 2(0.6%) students and 1(0.9%) teachers said that Education Division Manager should ensure that there is smooth running of schools and encouraging discipline in schools, as some of the strategies that should be used for mitigating challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in schools.

Finally, the study also sought information from respondents’ opinions on other strategies that the Ministry of Education Science and Technology should do to mitigate challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in schools. A small percentage of 20(6.1%) students said that the Ministry of Education Science and Technology should give suspension to culprit students, 15(4.6%) students and 3(2.7%) said that should allocate more science teachers and provide adequate teaching and learning materials in schools, 1(0.9%) teacher said that should train head teachers how to improve leadership styles practiced in schools, 7(2.1%) students said that should encourage guidance and counseling sessions for students in schools, 3(2.7%) teachers said that should establish programs for addressing students’ discipline in schools and 10(3.1%) students said that should inspect schools and meet students to listen to the problems
they face in schools as some of the other strategies that could be used for mitigating challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in schools.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study and gives a brief highlight of some of the findings and conclusions that the study established. The chapter further presents some of the recommendations made by the researcher based on the findings of the study to key stakeholders. Suggestions for further research studies are also presented in the study.

5.2 Summary of the Major Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of head teachers’ leadership styles and students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. The study was guided by six research questions as follows: What is the status of students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi? To what extent does the head teachers’ autocratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi? To what extent does the head teachers’ democratic leadership style influence students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi? To what extent does the head teachers’ transformational leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi? What are the challenges encountered by the head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing positive students’ discipline in public secondary in Mulanje District, Malawi? Which strategies should be used to mitigate challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing positive students’ discipline in Mulanje District, Malawi? The major findings of this study are summarized based on the research questions and hypotheses.

Based on status of students’ discipline, the study findings revealed that students’ discipline was low. This implies that students’ discipline was deteriorating therein some schools. Thus, head
teachers have a great role to play to bring change and transform students’ behavior in their schools. However, in some schools, it was high meaning that students observed school rules and regulations thus maintained order and harmony within their school environment.

On the influence whether head teachers’ autocratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. Key findings revealed that autocratic leadership style has a great positive and negative significant influences on students’ discipline both academics and behavioral wise though head teachers are enforcing rules and regulations to students. The study concludes that autocratic leadership style is being practiced by most secondary school head teachers in Malawi hence there is positive and negative influence though rules and regulations are enforced to students discipline is rarely maintained in some schools.

Based on whether head teachers’ democratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in public secondary schools. The findings therefore indicated that democratic leadership style influences students discipline both positively and negatively. This is because students, teachers and parents are involved in decision making and among others, while other schools do not which causes students’ unrests. The study concludes that the democratic leadership style has both positive and negative influences on students' behavior, and is being practiced by most secondary school head teachers in Malawi hence discipline is maintained.

Regarding whether the head teachers’ transformational leadership style influences students’ discipline. The findings revealed that students’ discipline has been improved in most schools and students’ behavior has positively changed, hardworking students are rewarded and motivated which encourages others to behave well and thus maintain discipline, students’ academic performance has been improved in some schools. There is a notable improvement in
schools whereby there are few cases of indiscipline. However, the application of head teachers' transformational leadership style has little influences on students' discipline. The fundamental issue is that the disciplinary committee is inactive, and there is no encouragement because of the corrupted leadership. The study concludes that although the transformational leadership style has both positive and negative influences on students' discipline in reality, it is less practiced by head teachers in public secondary schools due to injustice and corrupted leadership in some school in Mulanje District, Malawi.

Based on challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles in influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. Findings of the study include: student’s rudeness, disrespect of authorities, lack of cooperation between the local community and head teachers, poor communication skills between students, teachers and parental influences, inadequate of teaching/learning resources, negative peer pressure/drug abuse, lack of community involvement in decision making were the main challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools.

Further, the study focused on strategies that should be used to mitigate challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. The study participants proposed mitigation strategies as follows: indiscipline students should be given stiff punishment or suspension, establishment of effective communication with students, teachers and parents, allow students to explain their problems and give feedback, involvement of students, teachers and parents in decision making on matters that affect them, strengthen guidance and counseling in schools and among others were some of the strategies proposed by study participants as ways of mitigating challenges encountered by head teachers in public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi.
The study requested the study participants’ opinions on other strategies to be employed. Their opinions were geared towards the students’ behavior. For instance, they suggested that students should adhere to school rules and regulations, respect authorities (Head teachers and teachers), avoidance on the use illicit drugs, maintain discipline in schools, wearing of school uniforms among others.

They were of the opinion that teachers should assist the school heads to maintain discipline. These include counseling students to encourage good behavior, work as a team to sort out students problems constructively, interact and actively listen to their concerns as well as treating them fairly when administering punishments. On the part of head teachers, study participants viewed head teachers as key to managing appropriate discipline. The advocated that head teachers to develop effective communication with all stakeholders, inform them about the school life to keep them abreast of changes. Also, school heads establishment of clear procedures for selecting students’ leaders and communicating the same to students is of paramount importance to maintaining discipline during electoral process. Involvement of students in decision making in matters that affect their school life, rewarding of good behavior, encouraging students to work hard in their academics, strengthening of guidance and counseling in schools, enforcing of rules and regulations to students among others were proposed as other strategies for mitigating challenges encountered by school heads.

Participants also suggested the involvement of parents as another strategy. Parents’ attendance in Parents Teachers Association (PTA) meetings would help in sorting out disciplinary issues concerning their children. They should also support the school administration to maintain discipline by guiding and counseling their children to behave well both at home and school. They
should avoid defending their children when involved in indiscipline cases at school; instead, they cooperate with teachers to assist the student to develop good character.

Other strategies proposed were geared towards the Education Division Manager. Suggestions indicated Education division manager should organize workshops to train head teachers and teachers on how to handle indiscipline cases in schools. The knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired will enable staff to management students discipline constructively. She should visit the schools frequently for inspection in order to understand problems encountered by students in schools and address them immediately and constructively. All these will minimize students’ unrests and ensure the smooth running of schools.

The participants suggestions to the Ministry of Education Science and Technology were as follows: that they should give suspension to student culprits, allocate more science teachers and provide adequate teaching and learning materials in schools, encouraging guidance and counseling sessions for students in schools, establishment of programs for addressing students’ discipline, frequent inspection of schools and meeting with students to listen to their problems as other appropriate ways of mitigating the challenges.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were made: -

The status of students’ discipline has been deteriorating as many students are rude towards school authority. The findings attributed this to ineffective leadership and administration in schools not listening to students’ grievances. However, in other schools the status of discipline is high, meaning that students’ behavior has improved and rules and regulations are observed.
Generally, head teachers’ leadership styles influence students’ discipline in most public secondary schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. The study concludes that the majority of secondary school head teachers adopted multiple leadership styles for maintaining students’ discipline in their respective schools. They include autocratic, democratic, transformational, situational, and other styles practiced in schools. The study also concludes that autocratic, democratic and transformational leadership styles have a positive and negative influence on students’ discipline. The findings indicated that autocratic leadership style positively enhanced students’ discipline. That student behavior has improved, most schools reported improved academic performance compared to the previous years. On the other hand, autocratic leadership style was perceived by some participants as negatively influenced students’ discipline. They observed that even though head teachers are enforcing rules and regulations indiscipline cases are on rise in schools. That due to harsh strict rules and unfair treatment, students are becoming rude and do not respect authorities resulting in students’ unrest and poor performance. The style does not involve students, teachers, and parents in decision-making concerning discipline issues.

The study also concludes that democratic leadership style is practiced by head teachers in public schools. It influences students’ behavior positively and negatively. On the positive side, the style involves and consults students and teachers in decision-making, allows students to select their leaders, and encourages students and teachers to work as a team in schools and among others. On the negative side, it is time-consuming for the head teacher to consult every member of staff before a decision is made. The staff and students feel bored as the leadership style consume their time for teaching.

The study concludes that transformational leadership was less practiced in secondary schools in Mulanje district. On positive influence, it has changed students’ behavior and academics
in most schools. On the negative side if the school has no funds or any other measures for motivating students and teachers, it leads to chaos and demotivates students and teachers not to working hard because they are not motivated.

The challenges encountered by head teachers in influencing students’ discipline in schools, include: student’s rudeness, disrespect of authorities, lack of cooperation between the local community and head teachers. Others cited poor communication skills among students, teachers, and parental, political and cultural influence. Participants also pointed out inadequate teaching/learning resources/poor performance, students’ disobedient to school rules and regulations, students’ lack of knowledge of the head teachers for decision making, peer pressure/drug abuse influence, and lack of community involvement in decision making are some of the main challenges.

Proposed strategies for mitigating challenges include stiff punishment or suspension of indiscipline by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, establishment of effective communication with students, teachers and parents. Also allowing students to explain their problems strengthening guidance and counseling in schools, enforcement of school rules and regulations organizing frequent PTA meeting at school level were suggested as ways of mitigating challenges.

**5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made to key stakeholders. Focus is given to the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, Education Division Manager of the District, head teachers, teachers, parents and students.
5.4.1 Ministry of Education Science and Technology

Based on the status of students’ discipline, the study revealed that discipline is deteriorating in schools. Students are misbehaving not adhering to school rules and regulations, there is disrespect of authorities, demonstrations, destructions of school properties, use of drug abuse and among others in schools.

i. Therefore, the study recommends to the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST) to give suspension to indiscipline students or culprit in order to reduce students’ unrest in schools.

ii. The study also recommend to the Ministry of Education Science and Technology to find out what is ailing students and handle their raised issues constructively to eradicate vices of destruction.

5.4.2 Head Teachers

On the use of head teachers’ autocratic leadership style, the findings revealed a negative influence on students’ discipline in some schools that students, teachers and parents are not involved in decision making, and students’ problems are not listened or sorted out effectively.

Therefore, the study recommends that secondary school head teachers need to involve students in decision making during students’ meetings, teachers during staff meetings and parents during parents teachers association (PTA) respectively where they can contribute their views concerning discipline of the school and sort out their students’ problems effectively. This would help to reduce students’ unrest in schools.

5.4.3 Education Division Manager

i. The findings on the head teachers’ democratic leadership style showed a negative influence on students’ discipline that in some schools, students are not involved in decision making.
The study recommends that the Education Division manager need to organizing workshop for head teachers at the division level to sensitize them on when, how, why and where they can involve students in decision making in schools. This will make students to embrace decisions made by school authorities.

ii. Further, on the use of head teachers’ democratic leadership style showed a negative influence on students’ discipline that it consumes time in terms of consultation before a decision is made. iii. Therefore, the study recommends that the Education Division Manager of the District need to sensitize head teachers on the use of democratic leadership style to students in schools. They should be involved in decision making during students’ meetings or staff meetings conducted by head teachers for them to contribute freely without wasting their time for teaching and learning activities in schools.

Based on the use of head teachers’ transformational leadership style showed a negative influence in some schools that individual consideration had little influence on students’ discipline. Some students are not treated fairly by their head teachers according to their individual needs. There is discrimination and corruption by some head teachers in schools when it comes punishment and awarding of bursaries to assist the needy students, only few students are supported by the school.

i. The study recommends that, there is a need for Education Division Manager to organize a workshop for head teachers at Division Level to equip them with knowledge of transformational leadership on how they can treat students equally according to their individual needs. They also design programs that are relevant and impactful, engaging all school leaders.
ii. The study also established that disciplinary committee in most schools are inactive, and there is no encouragement by head teachers because of the corrupted leadership.

iii. The study recommends that the Education Division Manager need to organize workshop for head teachers’ and disciplinary committee meetings on the use of transformational leadership style by treating students equally and encouraging disciplinary committee to be active in schools in order to help students to achieve their goals.

The study found many challenges hindering head teachers from maintaining discipline.

i. The study recommends that, the Ministry of Education should allocate more science teachers in schools and provide adequate teaching and learning materials in schools in order to improve students’ performance.

ii. In addition, the study findings revealed that in some schools there is lack of cooperation between head teachers and local community. Therefore, the study recommends that secondary schools head teachers need to cooperate with local community especially during cerebration on graduation day and other functions.

5.4.4 Teachers.

The study findings brought out many strategies for mitigating the challenges. The study recommends that:

i. Teachers should uphold the teaching ethics of professionalism and integrity by not sidelining with students on unacceptable behavior, for example, encouraging students to protest against the head teacher at school.

ii. They should be at the frontline in conducting guidance and counseling session in schools organized by head teachers for students in order to shape their behavior to
maintaining discipline in schools and cooperate with head teachers as well as with students in schools.

iii. Teachers and head teachers need to counsel students and encourage them in good behavior and work as a team when there are activities in school and interact with them to maintain discipline.

iv. Further, they need to give punishments to indiscipline students and monitor them in order to shape their behavior.

5.4.5 Parents

i. The study recommends that parents need to attend PTA (Parents Teachers Association) meetings organized by head teachers at school in order to hear indiscipline issues caused by their children at school and find strategies for mitigating them.

ii. They need to consult head teachers at school if there is a problem concerning their learners and not sideline or backup their learners in indiscipline cases at school and should cooperate with head teachers for the smooth running of the school.

iii. They also need to be involved in decision making by head teachers at school on issues concerning indiscipline issues of their children or learners.

iv. Further, the study recommends that they need to counsel their children at home on how they can behave at schools by respecting authorities.

5.4.6 Students

Further, based on strategies for mitigating head teachers’ challenges, the study recommends that students should cooperate with head teachers and teachers by respecting and obey them at school and they should realize that everything in school is done for their benefit.
5.5 Suggestions for Areas of Further Studies

This study is not exhaustive because there are still many areas which need further investigation for the complementary of the topic under study. Some areas of further studies include:

i. Factors which cause head teachers to mismanagement of students’ discipline in public secondary schools

ii. The study to be replicated as a Case Study of Shire Highlands Education Division with incidences of recurring students’ unrest to compare the study findings.
REFERENCES


Miriti, K., C. (2020). Influence of Principals’ Leadership Styles on Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County, University of Nairobi Kenya.


RE: DATA COLLECTION FOR THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION.

I am a postgraduate student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA), Nairobi; Kenya. I am conducting a study titled: Influence of Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles and Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. The purpose of the study seeks to investigate whether the influence of head teachers’ leadership styles have an impact on influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools. The aim for carrying out this study is part of the requirement for graduation with ‘A Doctoral Degree of Philosophy in Educational Administration and Planning. Your school has been selected to take part in this study, and I kindly request you assist me in this endeavor. Your participation will be of great help. The information obtained will be used purely for academic purposes only in this research. You have assured the utmost confidentiality of your identity and responses.

Yours faithfully,

Sr. Cecilia Musaiwa
Phone Number: +254700895566
E-mail address: sr.ceciliaamusaiwa@yahoo.com
Appendix I: Questionnaire for Students

Section A: Demographic Information

Tick (√) one of the options for the correct answer. Do not write your name or your school.

1. Please indicate gender: (Tick one √)
   i. Male [  ]
   ii. Female [  ]

2. Please indicate your Age
   i. Below 11 years old [  ]
   ii. 12-13 years [  ]
   iii. 14-15 years [  ]
   iv. 16-17 years [  ]
   v. 18-19 years [  ]
   vi. Above 20 and years [  ]

3. Indicate the form you are currently in
   i. Form 3 [  ]
   ii. Form 4 [  ]

4. Type of School
   i. National Girls Boarding Secondary School [  ]
   ii. District Boarding and Day Secondary School Mixed [  ]
   iii. District Boarding Mixed [  ]
   iv. Community Day Secondary School [  ]
Section B: What is the Status of Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools?

Please tick √ to your option answer

5. a) Does your school experience students’ discipline problems or strikes? Yes [   ] No [  ]
   b) If yes, list the common discipline problems in your school?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

c) What do you think are the main causes of strikes/indiscipline in your school? Please list them.
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

d). How would you rate the incidences of indiscipline in your school?
   i. High [   ]
   ii. Low [   ]
   iii. Do occur [   ]
   iv. Not certain [   ]

Section C: Head Teachers’ Autocratic Leadership Style and Students’ Discipline.

6. The following statements show the different ways that head teachers as autocratic/authoritarian; leaders perform their duties in schools. Please indicate your views by ticking (√) the appropriate box. Use keys: 5=Strongly Agree (SA), 4=Agree (A),
   3=Undecided (UD), 2= Strongly Disagree (SD), and 1= Disagree (D).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SA 5</th>
<th>A 4</th>
<th>UD 3</th>
<th>SD 2</th>
<th>D 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a)i.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher does not allow students’ to explain their problems.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>ii.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher does not communicate with students when there is a problem</td>
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<td>iii.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher does not give student-leaders opportunities for decision-making to suggest possible ways of improving discipline.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
b). in your opinion does the use of the head teacher’s autocratic/ authoritarian leadership style influence students’ discipline in your school? Yes [   ] No [   ]

c). If yes, please explain, how? __________________________________________________________

d). If no, give reasons to your answer. ____________________________________________________

**Section D: Head Teachers’ Democratic Leadership Style and Students’ Discipline.**

7. The following statements show the different ways that head teachers as democratic leaders perform their duties in schools. Please indicate your views by ticking (✓) the appropriate box. Use the key: 1= Strongly Disagree (SD), 2= Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (UD), 4=Agree (A), 5=Strongly Agree (SA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SD 1</th>
<th>D 2</th>
<th>UD 3</th>
<th>A 4</th>
<th>SA 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>The Head teacher allows students to give their views concerning discipline.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>Head teacher involves students in selecting their leaders</td>
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</table>

iv. In our school, the head teacher does not involve parents in decision-making to suggest possible ways of improving discipline

v. In our school, the head teacher gets approval on important matters after the decision is made

vi. In our school, the head teacher does not organize guidance& counseling talks every term by inviting motivational speakers/ to counsel us on discipline issues.

vii. In our school, the head teacher sends indiscipline students to the disciplinary committee of guidance & counseling to discipline them.

viii. In our school, the head teacher enforces rules and regulations to students to maintain discipline.

ix. In our school, the head teacher punishes students who break rules and regulations of the school

x. In our school, the head teacher is very strict on students’ dressing code, e.g. school uniform by obeying rules and regulations

iv. In our school, the head teacher does not involve parents in decision-making to suggest possible ways of improving discipline

v. In our school, the head teacher gets approval on important matters after the decision is made

vi. In our school, the head teacher does not organize guidance& counseling talks every term by inviting motivational speakers/ to counsel us on discipline issues.

vii. In our school, the head teacher sends indiscipline students to the disciplinary committee of guidance & counseling to discipline them.

viii. In our school, the head teacher enforces rules and regulations to students to maintain discipline.

ix. In our school, the head teacher punishes students who break rules and regulations of the school

x. In our school, the head teacher is very strict on students’ dressing code, e.g. school uniform by obeying rules and regulations
b). In your opinions/views does the use of the head teacher’s democratic leadership style influence students’ discipline in your school? Yes [   ] No [    ]

c). If yes, please explain, how?_____________________________________________________

d). If no, give reasons to your answer_______________________________

Section E: Head Teachers’ Transformational Leadership Style and Students’ Discipline

8. a) The following statements show the different ways that head teachers as transformational leaders perform their duties in schools. Please indicate your views by ticking (√) the appropriate box. Use the key: 1= Strongly Disagree (SD), 2= Disagree (D), 3= Undecided (UD), 4= Agree (A), 5= Strongly Agree (SA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SD 1</th>
<th>D 2</th>
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<th>A 4</th>
<th>SA 5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher holds students accountable for their behavior s.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>ii.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher provides students with the necessary resources for learning to improve their performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>iii.</td>
<td>In our school students seek the guidance of the head teacher when they face difficulties in learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>iv.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher ensures that students have enough textbooks for different subjects</td>
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</table>
b. In your opinions/views does the use of the head teacher’s transformational leadership style influence students’ discipline in your school? Yes [   ] No [    ]

c. If yes, please explain, how?_____________________________________________________

d. If no, why? Give reasons_____________________________________________________

Section F: Challenges Encountered by Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles in Influencing Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools.

9. a) In your opinions/views please explain some of the challenges the head teacher encounter in influencing students’ discipline in your school.

i._____________________________________________________

b) Any other challenges? (Please specify)_________________________________________
Section G: Strategies that should be used to Mitigate Challenges Encountered by Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles in Influencing Positive Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools

10. a) Please suggest strategies that should be used to mitigate challenges encountered by the head teacher’s leadership styles in your school.

i).___________________________________________________________
ii)._____________________________________________________________________
iii)._____________________________________________________________________

b) What should be done?

i).Students_________________________________________________
ii).Teachers_________________________________________________________________
iii).HeadTeachers________________________________________
iv). Parents_________________________________________________________________

v). Education Division Manager of the District______________________________
vii). Ministry of Education Science and Technology of Malawi to improve the discipline of students in schools? ________________________________________________________________

End of questions

Thank you for your cooperation and support
Appendix 2: Questionnaire for Teachers

SECTION A: Demographic Information

Tick (√) one of the options for the correct answer. Do not write your name or your school.

1. Please indicate your gender: (Tick one √)
   
   i. Male [ ]
   
   ii. Female [ ]

2. Please indicate your age
   
   i. 20-25 Years old [ ]
   
   ii. 30-35 Years [ ]
   
   iii. 40-45 Year [ ]
   
   vii. 50-55 years [ ]
   
   viii. 60 years and above [ ]

3. Please indicate your marital status
   
   i. Single [ ]
   
   ii. Married [ ]
   
   iii. Divorced [ ]
   
   iv. Widowed [ ]

4. Please indicate your level of education
   
   i. Diploma in Education [ ]
   
   ii. B.Ed [ ]
   
   iii. BA (BSC) [ ]
   
   iv. M.Ed [ ]
   
   v. Others [ ]

Any other, please specify [ ]

5. Please indicate your years of teaching experience
   
   i. 1-5 Years [ ]
   
   ii. 6-10 Years [ ]
   
   iii. 11-15 Years [ ]
   
   iv. 20 and above years [ ]
SECTION B: Status of Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools

Please tick √ on your option answer. In open ended question give a brief explanation

6. a) Does your school experience students’ discipline problems or strikes? Yes [ ] No [ ]

   b) If yes, list the common discipline problems in your school?

   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________

   c) What do you think are the main causes of strikes/indiscipline in your school? Please list them.

   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________

   d). How would you rate the incidences of indiscipline in your school?

   i. Increasing [ ]

   ii. Decreasing [ ]

   iii. Do occur [ ]

   iv. Not certain [ ]

Section C: Head Teachers’ Autocratic Leadership Style and Students’ Discipline.

7. The following statements show the different ways that head teachers as autocratic/authoritarian; leaders perform their duties in schools. Please indicate your views by ticking (√) the appropriate box. Use keys: 5=Strongly Agree (SA), 4=Agree (A), 3=Undecided (UD), 2= Strongly Disagree (SD), and 1= Disagree (D) respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>SD</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a)i.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher does not allow students’ to explain their problems.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher does not communicate with students when there is a problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>iii.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher does not give students opportunities for decision-making to suggest possible ways of improving discipline.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
b). In your opinion does the use of the head teacher’s autocratic/authoritarian leadership style improves students’ discipline in your school? Yes [ ] No [  ]

c). If yes, please explain.__________________________________________________________

d). If no, give reasons to your answer.______________________________________________

Section D: Head Teachers’ Democratic Leadership Style and Students’ Discipline.

8. The following statements show the different ways that head teachers as democratic leaders perform their duties in schools. Please indicate your views by ticking (✓) the appropriate box. Use the key: 1= Strongly Disagree (SD), 2= Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (UD), 4=Agree (A), 5=Strongly Agree (SA) respectively.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>The Head teacher allows students to give their views concerning discipline.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>Head teacher involves students in selecting their leaders</td>
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<tr>
<td>iii.</td>
<td>The Head teacher holds meetings with students to discuss discipline issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>iv.</td>
<td>Head teacher involves student leaders in decision making</td>
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<tr>
<td>v.</td>
<td>Head teacher discusses students’ discipline with parents</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
b). In your opinions/views does the use of the head teacher’s democratic leadership style influence students’ discipline in your school? Yes [   ] No [    ]

c). If yes, please explain, how?_____________________________________________________

d). If no, give reasons to your answer_____________________________________________

Section E: Head Teachers’ Transformational Leadership Style and Students’ Discipline

9. The following statements show the different ways that head teachers as transformational leaders perform their duties in schools. Please indicate your views by ticking (√) the appropriate box. Use the key: 1= Strongly Disagree (SD), 2= Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (UD), 4=Agree (A), 5=Strongly Agree (SA)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<th>A 4</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.i</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher holds students accountable for their behaviors.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher provides students with the necessary resources for learning to improve their performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>In our school students seek the guidance of the head teacher when they face difficulties in learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>iv</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher ensures that students have enough textbooks for different subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher inspires students by encouraging them to uphold good values</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher rewards students who show good behavior in schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher rewards students who perform well in Malawi Secondary Certificate of Education Examinations (MSCE)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii</td>
<td>In our school students feel motivated by the way the head teacher talks and interacts with them</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b. In your opinions/views does the use of the head teacher’s transformational leadership style influence students’ discipline in your school? Yes [ ] No [ ]

c. If yes, please explain__________________________________________________________

d. If no, why? Give reasons_______________________________________________________

Section F: Challenges Encountered by Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles in Influencing Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools.

10. a) In your opinions/views please explain some of the challenges the head teacher encounter in influencing students’ discipline in your school.

i).____________________________________________________________________________

ii).___________________________________________________________________________

iii).___________________________________________________________________________

b) Any other challenges? (Please specify)___________________________________________________________________________

Section G: Strategies that should be used to Mitigate Challenges Encountered by Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles and Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools

11. a) Please suggest strategies that should be used to mitigate challenges encountered by head teachers’ leadership styles in your school.

i).____________________________________________________________________________

ii).____________________________________________________________________________

iii).____________________________________________________________________________
b) What should be done by:

i). Students___________________________________________________

ii). Teachers____________________________________________________________

iii). Head Teachers_____________________________________________

iv). Parents________________________________________________________________

v). Education Division Manager of the District_________________________________________

vi). Ministry of Education Science and Technology of Malawi to improve discipline of students in schools?

____________________________________________________________

End of questions

Thank you for your cooperation and support
RE: DATA COLLECTION FOR THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION.

I am a postgraduate student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA), Nairobi; Kenya. I am conducting a study titled: Influence of Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles on Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. The purpose of the study seeks to investigate whether the influence of head teachers ‘leadership styles have an impact on influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools. The aim for carrying out this study is part of the requirement for graduation in the ‘Doctoral Degree of Philosophy in Educational Administration and Planning. Your school has been selected to take part in this study, and I kindly request you assist me in this endeavor. Your participation will be of great help. The information obtained will be used purely for academic purposes only in this research. You have assured the utmost confidentiality of your identity and responses.

Yours faithfully,

Sr. Cecilia Musaiwa

Phone Number: +254700895566

E-mail address: sr.ceciliamusaiwa@yahoo.com
Appendix 3: Questionnaire for Deputy Head Teachers

Instructions: Tick (√) one of the options for the correct answer. Do not write your name or your school.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

1. Please indicate your gender: (Tick one √)
   i. Male [ ]
   ii. Female [ ]

2. Please indicate your age
   i. Below 30 Years old [ ]
   ii. 40 -50 years [ ]
   iii. 60 years and above [ ]

3. Please indicate your marital status
   i. Single [ ]
   ii. Married [ ]
   iii. Divorced [ ]
   iv. Widowed [ ]

4. Please indicate your level of education
   i. Diploma in Education [ ]
   ii. B.Ed [ ]
   iii. BA(BSC) [ ]
   iv. M.Ed [ ]
   v. Others [ ]

Any other, please specify [ ]

5. Please indicate your years of serving as the deputy head teacher’s experience
   i. 1- 5 Years [ ]
   ii. 6-10 Years [ ]
   iii. 11-15 Years [ ]
   iv. 20 and above years [ ]
SECTION B: Status of Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools

Please tick √ on your option answer. In open ended question give a brief explanation

6. a) Does your school experience students’ discipline problems or strikes? Yes [   ] No [   ]

   b) If yes, list the common discipline problems in your school?

   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________

   c) What do you think are the main causes of strikes/indiscipline in your school? Please list them.

   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________

   d). How would you rate the incidences of indiscipline in your school?

      i. Increasing [   ]
      ii. Decreasing [   ]
      iii. Do occur [   ]
      iv. Not certain [   ]

Section C: Influence of Head Teachers’ Autocratic Leadership Style and Students’ Discipline.

7. The following statements show the different ways that head teachers as autocratic/authoritarian; leaders perform their duties in schools. Please indicate your views by ticking (✓) the appropriate box. Use keys: 5=Strongly Agree (SA), 4=Agree (A),
3=Undecided (UD), 2= Strongly Disagree (SD), and 1= Disagree (D) respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SA 5</th>
<th>A 4</th>
<th>UD 3</th>
<th>SD 2</th>
<th>D 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a)i.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher does not allow students’ to explain their problems.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher does not communicate with students when there is a problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b). In your opinion does the use of the head teacher’s autocratic/ authoritarian leadership style improves students’ discipline in your school? Yes [   ] No [    ]

c). If yes, please explain.__________________________________________

d). If no, give reasons to your answer._________________________________

**Section D: Influence of Head Teachers’ Democratic Leadership Style and Students’ Discipline.**

8. The following statements show the different ways that head teachers as democratic leaders perform their duties in schools. Please indicate your views by ticking (✓) the appropriate box. Use the key: 1= Strongly Disagree (SD), 2= Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (UD), 4=Agree (A), 5=Strongly Agree (SA) respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SD 1</th>
<th>D 2</th>
<th>UD 3</th>
<th>A 4</th>
<th>SA 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>The Head teacher allows students to give their views concerning discipline.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>Head teacher involves students in selecting their leaders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>iii.</td>
<td>The Head teacher holds meetings with students to discuss discipline issues.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>iv.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher does not give students opportunities for decision-making to suggest possible ways of improving discipline.</td>
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<tr>
<td>v.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher does not involve parents in decision-making to suggest possible ways of improving discipline</td>
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<tr>
<td>vi.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher gets approval on important matters after the decision is made</td>
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<td>vii.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher does not organize guidance&amp; counseling talks every term by inviting motivational speakers/ to counsel us on discipline issues.</td>
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<td>viii.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher sends indiscipline students to the disciplinary committee of guidance &amp; counseling to discipline them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ix.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher does not organize guidance&amp; counseling talks every term by inviting motivational speakers/ to counsel us on discipline issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>x.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher is very strict on students’ dressing code, e.g. school uniform by obeying rules and regulations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
b). In your opinions/views does the use of the head teacher’s democratic leadership style influence students’ discipline in your school? Yes [   ] No [   ]

c). If yes, please explain, how?_________________________________________________

d). If no, give reasons to your answer_____________________________________________

Section E: Influence of Head Teachers’ Transformational Leadership Style and Students’ Discipline

9. The following statements show the different ways that head teachers as transformational leaders perform their duties in schools. Please indicate your views by ticking (√) the appropriate box. Use the key: 1= Strongly Disagree (SD), 2= Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (UD), 4=Agree (A), 5=Strongly Agree (SA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SD 1</th>
<th>D 2</th>
<th>UD 3</th>
<th>A 4</th>
<th>SA 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher holds students accountable for their behavior s.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher provides students with the necessary resources for learning to improve their performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>iii.</td>
<td>In our school students seek the guidance of the head teacher when they face difficulties in learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>iv.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher ensures that students have enough textbooks for different subjects</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>v.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher inspires students by encouraging them to uphold good values</td>
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<tr>
<td>vi.</td>
<td>In our school, the head teacher rewards students who show good behavior in schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b. In your opinions/views does the use of the head teacher’s transformational leadership style influences students’ discipline in your school? Yes [ ] No [ ]

c. If yes, please explain, why?

d. If no, why? Give reasons

Section F: Challenges Encountered by Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles in Influencing Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools.

10. a) In your opinions/views please explain some of the challenges the head teacher encounter in influencing students’ discipline in your school.

i).

ii).

iii).

b) Any other challenges? (Please specify)

______________________________________________________________
Section G: Strategies that should be used to Mitigate Challenges Encountered by Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles in Influencing Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools.

12. a) Please suggest strategies that should be used to mitigate challenges encountered by the head teacher’s leadership styles in your school.

i).__________________________________________________________________________

ii).__________________________________________________________________________

iii).__________________________________________________________________________

b) What should be done?

i).Students__________________________________________________________

ii).Teachers_________________________________________________________

iii).HeadTeachers____________________________________________________

iv). Parents___________________________________________________________

v).Education Division Manager of the District____________________________

vi). Ministry of Education Science and Technology of Malawi to improve the discipline of students in schools? ________________________________

End of questions

Thank you for your cooperation and support.
Appendix 4: Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Head Teachers

This interview guide seeks to get information from head teachers, on the Influence of Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles on Students Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. You have been selected to participate in the study because of your position in the school, and the experiences you have in influencing students’ discipline. Kindly be honest with your responses. Thank you in advance for accepting to participate in this study.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

1. Gender: (Male or female)
2. Age: (Below: 40 years, 41-45 years, 46-50 years, 51 and above years)
3. Marital Status: (Married, single, divorced widow)
4. What is your level of education? (Diploma in Education, B:Ed, BSC, M.Ed, PhD)
5. Type/category of Institution:______________
6. For how long have you served as a head teacher of this school: ? _______________ years

SECTION B: Head Teachers Leadership Styles and Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools.

7. What type of leadership styles do you prefer in influencing students’ discipline in your school? (Probe for: Autocratic, democratic and transformational etc)
8. In your opinion, to what extent does autocratic/authoritarian leadership style influences students’ discipline in your school? (Probe for: does not allow students to explain their problems, does not involve students in decision making and among others).
9. In your opinion, to what extent does democratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in your school? (Probe for: allowing students to select their leaders, involving students, parents and teachers in decision making, etc)
10. In your opinion, to what extent does transformational leadership style influence students’ discipline in your school? If yes, how? (*Probe for: motivation of those with good behaviors, perform well in their academics etc.*)

11. What other leadership styles do you think influence students’ discipline in your school? (*Probe for: transaction, autocratic, democratic and transformational leadership styles.*)

12. How does your school involve students in the formulation of rules and regulations in your school? (*Probe for: during students’ meetings, through suggestion box, etc.*)

13. a. Does your school have a guidance and counseling committee? (*Probe for: conducting guidance and counseling session for students, etc.*)

   b. If yes, do you invite motivational speakers to come to talk to students concerning their behavior? (*Probe for benefits students change their behavior*)

14. How do you motivate students who show good behavior and perform well in the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE)? (* Probe for: by motivating them rewarding certificates of recognition, mathematical instruments, etc.*)

15. How do you manage to treat all students equally according to their needs in your school? (*Probe for: paying their school fees through bursaries for needy students, etc.*)

16. What are the major or common problems experienced in your school? (*Probe for: students’ rudeness, disrespect of authorities, peer pressure, teasing and bullying, etc.*)

17. Has your school ever gone on student unrest for the past four years? (*Probe for years 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020.*) If yes, what were the main causes? Please can you take me through or can you clarify? (*Probe for: poor diet, misunderstanding between students and administration, absenteeism, etc.*)
18. What do you do to those students who show indiscipline behavior in your school? (*Probe for: punishment, rustication, suspension, etc.*).

19. How would you rate the status of students’ discipline in your school? (*Probe for: high, low, do occur and uncertain, etc.*)

20. What are the common challenges you encounter in influencing students’ discipline in your school? (*Probe for: lack of cooperation between students, teachers and local community, etc*). Any other challenge? (*Probe for: teenage pregnancies leading to school dropout, disrespect of authorities, disobeying of school rules and regulations by students, etc.*)

21. What strategies should be used or put in place to mitigate challenges you encounter in influencing students’ discipline in your school? (*Probe for: involving students, teachers and parents in decision making, allowing students to select their own leaders, etc.*) Any other strategies that should be done to mitigate challenges? (*Probe for: treating each student equally according to their needs, motivating them in good behavior or academics, etc.*)

22. What suggestions/recommendations would you give for improving the discipline of students in your school? (*Probe for: encouraging guidance and counseling in schools, enforcing students to adhering school rules and regulations, etc.*)

Thank you for your cooperation and support
RE: DATA COLLECTION FOR THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION.

I am a postgraduate student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA), Nairobi; Kenya. I am conducting a study titled: Influence of Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles on Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. The purpose of the study seeks to investigate whether the influence of head teachers’ leadership styles have an impact of influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools. The aim for carrying out this study is part of the requirement for graduation in ‘Doctoral Degree of Philosophy’ in Educational Administration and Planning. Therefore, this interview guide seeks to get information from the Education Division Manager on the Influence of Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles and Students Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. You have been selected to participate in the study because of your position in Shire Highlands Education Division (SHED) in Mulanje District, Malawi, and experiences you have with head teachers how they manage students’ discipline in public secondary schools in your district. Kindly, be honest with your responses. Thank you in advance for accepting to participate in this study.

Yours faithfully,

Sr. Cecilia Musaiwa

Phone Number: +254700895566

E-mail address: sr.ceciliamusaiwa@yahoo.com
Appendix 5: Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Education Division Manager

This interview guide seeks to get information from the Education Division Manager on the Influence of Head Teachers’ Leadership Styles and Students Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Mulanje District, Malawi. You have been selected to participate in the study because of your position in Shire Highlands Education Division (SHED) in Mulanje District, Malawi, and the experiences you have with head teachers and how they manage students’ discipline in public secondary schools in your district. Kindly, be honest with your responses. Thank you in advance for accepting to participate in this study.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

1. Gender: (Male or female)
2. Age: (Below: 30 years, 30-50, and above 50 years)
3. Marital Status : (Married, single, divorced widow)
4. What is your level of education? (Diploma in Education, B:Ed, BSC, M.Ed, PhD)
5. What is the location of your District you are serving in the Division_________________
6. How many public secondary school do you have in Mulanje District_________________
7. For how long have you served as a Division Manager in SHED in Mulanje District? _____________________________________________________________________________ years.

SECTION B: Types of Leadership Styles Most Head Teachers Use in Influencing Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools.

8. What types of leadership styles do most of the head teachers use in influencing students’ discipline? (*Probe for: autocratic, democratic, transformational leadership styles etc*).
9. In your opinion, does autocratic/ authoritarian leadership style influences students’ discipline in schools? (*Probe for: it improves students’ performance and behaviours, sometimes does not, students fear punishment, etc*).
10. In your opinion, does democratic leadership style influences students’ discipline in schools? (*Probe for: students are allowed to select their own leaders, teachers, parents and students are involved in decision making, etc*).
11. In your opinion, does transformational leadership style influence students’ discipline in public secondary schools? And how (Probe by: motivating students on division level those students who perform well in Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE)).

12. In what ways do you think the following leadership styles influence students’ discipline in public secondary schools in your District? (Probe for: laissez-faire, participatory, autocratic, democratic, and transformational leadership styles, etc).

13. What is the status of students’ discipline in public secondary schools in your District? (Probe for: high, low, do occur, not certain, etc).

14. What complaints do you receive from students, teachers, and parents to those autocratic/authoritarian, head teachers on students’ discipline in public secondary schools in your District? (Probe for: mishandling of indiscipline cases, harsh rules, etc).

15. What complaints do you receive from students, teachers, and parents to those democratic head teachers? (Probe for: students, teachers, and parents are involved in decision making, etc).

16. What complaints do you receive from students, teachers, and parents to those transformational head teachers? (Probe for: students are motivated by motivation speakers, rewarded with certificate of recognition those who show good behaviours, etc).

17. What are the major problems experienced in public secondary schools in your District? (Probe for: disrespect of authorities, poor diet in boarding schools, etc).


19. If yes, what were the main causes? Please can you take me through or can you clarify? (Probe for: Misunderstanding between students and administration, poor diet, etc).

20. What are the common challenges head teachers encounter in influencing students’ discipline in public secondary schools in your District? (Probe for: teachers’, community, peer pressure influence, students’ absenteeism, lateness, teasing, etc).

21. Any other challenge? (Probe for: lack of cooperation between local community, head teachers, students’ rudeness and disrespect of authorities, teenage pregnancies, etc).

22. What strategies should be put in place for mitigating challenges encountered by head teachers in public secondary schools in your District? (Probe for: head teachers should be involving students, teachers and local community in decision making, etc).
23. Any other strategies should be done to mitigate the challenges? (*Probe for: encouraging guidance and counseling in schools, enforcing school rules and regulations to students, etc*)

24. Which program do you have or put in place to motivate head teachers to improve their skills in the management of students’ discipline in Schools? (*Probe for: Organizing workshop or seminars for head teachers to equip their skills for managing discipline in schools, training of head teachers and teachers on how to handle indiscipline cases in schools, etc*).

**Thank you for your cooperation and support**
Appendix 6: Reliability Statistics

(a): Reliability Statistics For Students’ Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.739</td>
<td>0.767</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b): Reliability Statistics for Teachers’ Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.781</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c): Reliability Statistics for Deputy Head Teachers’ Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.781</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>38</td>
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</table>

Source: Field Data, 2021
Appendix 7: Statistical Table of Determining the Sample Size of a Known Population

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<td>100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>361</td>
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<td>86</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>364</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>8000</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>374</td>
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<tr>
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<td>108</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>15000</td>
<td>375</td>
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<tr>
<td>160</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>20000</td>
<td>377</td>
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<tr>
<td>170</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>30000</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>123</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>40000</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>190</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>50000</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>75000</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>100000</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NOTE:* \(N\) = is population. \(S\) = is sample size

*Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970*
Appendix 8: Documents Analysis Guide

Information Required from Public Document from Head Teachers’ Office

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Document</th>
<th>Information Required</th>
<th>Available</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Schemes and Records of Work</td>
<td>Completion of Schemes &amp; Records of Work (Check on dates, topics, objectives, resource materials used, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Lesson Plan</td>
<td>Time estimate, content, learning activities, resource materials, inspections, by who, how, often, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Punishment Book</td>
<td>Check if offenders are given punishment, reason, solution made, by who?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Scholastic Records</td>
<td>Check the year of examination results from 2017-2020, e.g. Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) for school performance by average pass rate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Guidance &amp; Counseling Records</td>
<td>Check on Guidance &amp; Counseling Committee and their records, when it was conducted and by who?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Attendance Register</td>
<td>Check if students attend classes, who inspect them?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data from Head Teacher’s Office, April, 2021
Information Required from Public Documents from Education Division Office of Mulanje District

12. Have you ever experienced students’ unrest from public secondary schools in your district for the past four years in Table 3?

*Trend of Students’ Unrest for the Past Four Years, 2017-2020.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Strikes</th>
<th>Reasons for Strikes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Field Data, From Education Division Office and Head Teachers, April, 2021*
Appendix 9: Observation Guide

Infrastructure, Teaching Resources, School Environment and Code of Conduct

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Infrastructure/facilities</th>
<th>Available</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Classrooms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Toilets/washrooms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dining hall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Library</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dormitories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Teaching Resources

| • Textbooks                                                      |           |               |         |
| • Desks & Chairs                                                 |           |               |         |
| • Tables                                                         |           |               |         |
| • Computers                                                      |           |               |         |

3. School Plant/Premises

| • Play ground                                                   |           |               |         |

4. Dressing Code

| • Uniform                                                       |           |               |         |

5. Time Management

| • Students’ Punctuality to school                               |           |               |         |

6. Students’ Behaviour

| • Students’ interaction                                         |           |               |         |

Source: Researcher’s Observation from the Field, April, 2021
Appendix 10: Introduction Letter from Catholic University of Eastern Africa

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA
Faculty of Education
Department of Postgraduate Studies in Education

Our Ref: CUEA/DVC-ACAD/FOE/PGSE/SHED/03/ MARCH 2021

25 February 2021

THE EDUCATION DIVISION MANAGER
SHIRE HIGHLANDS EDUCATION DIVISION (SHED)
PRIVATE BAG 7
MULANJE
MALAWI – C – AFRICA

RE: SR. CECILIA DONANSIANO JOSENII MUSAIWA, REG. NO. PHD 1033089

I wish to introduce to you Musaiwa Cecilia Donansiano a final year Doctor of Education student at The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi – Kenya; and request you to assist her accomplish her academic research requirements.

Musaiwa’s area of specialization is in Educational Administration and Planning. Every student in the programme is required to conduct research, write a report/dissertation and submit it for examination in the final years of study. Accordingly, Musaiwa research proposal has been approved and she will conduct research on the following topic:

'Head teachers’ Administrative Leadership Styles on Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Mulanje District, Malawi’

Thanking you in advance for according Musaiwa Cecilia the assistance she may require to conduct her research successfully.

Sincerely,

SR. DR. ELIZABETH NDUKU
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT - POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN EDUCATION

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA (CUEA) P.O. BOX 62157-00200 Nairobi – KENYA
Tel: 020-2525811-5, 8890023-4, Fax: 8891084, Email: pgse@cuaa.edu, Website: www.cuea.edu
Founded in 1984 by AMEICRA (Association of the Member Episcopal Conference in Eastern Africa)
ISO 9001:2015 Certified by the Kenya Bureau of Standards
Appendix 11: Research Authorization from Mulanje District, Malawi

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: SISTER CECILIA MUSAIWA

I write to certify that Sister Cecilia Musaiwa, grade TH is an employee in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology currently working as a teacher at Providence Secondary School in Mulanje district.

Sister Musaiwa is pursuing a Doctorate Degree in Education with the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi – Kenya. As one of the requirements to finalise her studies she is supposed to conduct research on the following topic: “Head teacher’s Administrative Leadership Styles on Student’s Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Mulanje District, Malawi.” This letter therefore is permitting her to conduct research in some of the institutions within Mulanje District.

May you please assist her accordingly for the findings of the research are strictly meant for the study.

Yours faithfully,

KONDWANI MUNKHUWA

For: EDUCATION DIVISION MANAGER-SHED

EDUCATION DIVISION MANAGER-SHED

22 MAR 2021

PRIVATE BAG 7, MULANJE
Appendix 12: Informed Consent Form for the Research Study Participants.

Informed Consent Form for Research Study Participants

Dissertation Title: Head Teachers’ Administrative Leadership Styles on Students’ Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Mulanje District, Malawi.

Research Student: Sr. Cecilia Donansiano Josen Musaiwa
Catholic University of Eastern Africa
P.O.Box 62157-00200, Nairobi, Kenya

I have read the invitation letter to participate in this research study and had the opportunity to ask the researcher any questions I may have had about the research study. I understand that my participation is voluntary and even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind. I have been advised by the researcher that there are no potential risks and burdens associated with this research study.

I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research study. I understand that participation in this research study involves filling a questionnaire or face-to-face interview. I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated and stored confidentiality and my identity will remain anonymous.

I understand that the data collected from my participation will be used primarily for a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) dissertation, and will also be used in any summary form for publication of journal article in a recognized journal and I consent for it to be used in this manner.

I understand that I am free to contact the research student through cellphone number +254700895566 to seek further clarification and information. By signing below I am giving my consent to participate in this research study.

Signed ___________________________ Designation ___________________________

Date 25/03/2021

Witness Signature ___________________________ (In Case of Head Teacher Participant)
Appendix 13: List of School Codes and Head Teachers’ Codes Anticipated In the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>SCHOOL CODES</th>
<th>HEAD TEACHERS’ CODES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>001</td>
<td>SSHT 001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>002</td>
<td>SSHT 002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>003</td>
<td>SSHT 003</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>015</td>
<td>SSHT 015</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Education Division Office, April 22nd, 2021

Key: SSHT= Secondary School Head Teacher, 001, 002, etc
Appendix 14: Map of Malawi Showing Mulanje District-Area of Study

(Source: Downloaded,mw.net April 26th 2021)
Appendix 15: MAP OF MULANJE DISTRICT- AREA OF STUDY

Source: Downloaded, mj.net. April, 2021