



EXAMINING THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL
STAKEHOLDERS IN THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION TO SCAVENGER
CHILDREN: A CASE OF LILONGWE CITY GARBAGE SITE

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Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Education

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Abstract

EXAMINING THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL
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According to the National Statistics Office (NSO) Malawi Demographic & Health Survey, (MDHS), (2024), 28% of women and 37% of men have attended secondary school or higher; 7% of women and 5% of men have no formal education, with poorer ones being more likely to be out of school and lack access to education. The purposes of this study are to examine the role of stakeholders (line ministries) in the provision of education to scavenger children who frequent the Lilongwe City garbage site for their survival and neglect school. The conceptual framework used in the study assumes that if the relevant stakeholders are engaged in the provision of education and equitable service delivery to all scavenger children, there will be reduced school dropout rates, reduced crimes and violence commonly associated with the garbage community. The study adopted a sequential mixed research method approach following a case study research design so that the 4 objectives of the study could be achieved in response to the 3 research questions. The main theory guiding the study is the Anomie/Strain theory whereas other minor theories have been explained and linked to the study with reference to the lifestyle of scavenger children on their communities and access to education. The researcher conducted the study using face-to-face and online interviews on 266 participants. For the quantitative component, it involved in depth interviews for 26 stakeholders, (Ministry of Education and Ministry of Gender), 24 Donor Partners, 15 Implementing Partners, 122 community members, 23 Primary School Management, 20 Community Day Secondary School (CDSS) management and 18 opted not to respond. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with 6 participants for each group for school managers, PTA members, teachers and community leaders. Qualitative data was analyzed using inductive thematic and descriptive analysis for observations from the checklist interviews FGDs. Quantitative data was analyzed using version 20 of SPSS, Stata14 and Nnivo version 12. Results of the study indicate that the relevant governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in education have not done much and neglected scavenger children at Lilongwe City garbage site by not providing conducive environment, Guidance and Counselling (G & C) and motivation for scavenger children to get

access to quality and equitable education. Findings from quantitative data indicate that provision of meals, educational resources and appropriate G & C will help reduce the maladies such as crimes, truancy and child labor which are rampant around the Lilongwe City garbage site.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

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Dedication

I hereby dedicated this research study to my loving family, my children and grandchildren, my mother, and my own Chief for their unwavering support both financially and morally. Your belief in my abilities has been the driving force behind my academic achievements. I am forever grateful for your presence in my life.

Most of all, I thank God Almighty for taking me through during both the good and hard times.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables	xvi
List of Figures	xviii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.0. Introduction.....	1
1.1. Statement of the Problem.....	5
1.2. Purpose, Research Aims and Objectives	12
1.3. Nature of the study.....	13
1.3.1. Methodology and Research Design.....	14
1.3.2. Research Design.....	14
1.3.3. Data collection tools and techniques	14
1.3.4. Sample and Sampling Procedures	15
1.3.5. Data collection methods and analysis	16
1.4.0. Significance of the study.....	16
1.4.1. Out of school youth (Scavenger children).....	16
1.4.2. Parents and the whole community.....	17
1.4.3. The community	17
1.4.4. The researcher	18
1.4.5. Ministry of Education.....	18
1.5.0. Research questions and Hypothesis to the study	18
1.5.1. Hypothesis.....	18
1.5.2. Research Questions	19
1.6.0. Conclusion	19
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	21
2.0. Introduction.....	21

2.1.0. Problem Statement	25
2.1.1. Theoretical Framework with Supporting Theories.....	26
2.1.2. Anomie Theory.....	27
ii. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB).....	34
iii. Social Learning Theory	35
iv. Poor Family Socialization Theory.....	36
v. Educational Equity Theory.....	37
2.2.0. Conceptual Framework.....	38
2.2.1. Description of the field industry.....	41
2.2.2. Defining scavenger communities' need for education	42
2.2.3. Local Government involvement in solid waste refill sites	43
2.2.4. State of scavenger children on lack of access to education.....	46
2.2.5. Stakeholder involvement in scavenger communities	50
2.2.6. Factors influencing high rates of dropouts and their effects on scavenger children	
55	
2.2.7. Environmental related factors	56
2.3. Status of child garbage scavengers in the rise of criminality in scavenger	
communities.....	64
2.3.1. Child rights violations	65
2.3.2. Child Labor	65
2.3.3. Child Marriage	66
2.3.4. Sexually Related Gender Based Violence, (SRGBV).....	67
2.3.5. Delinquent Behavior.....	68
2.3.6. Stakeholder and Parental involvement	69
2.4.0. Provision of Guidance and Counseling to Scavengers children	70
2.4.1. Importance of Guidance and Counseling (G&C).....	71
2.4.2. Stakeholders' involvement in Guidance and Counseling.....	72

2.4.3. Efforts to maximize behavioral change for child scavenger's children.	76
2.5.0. Motivation factors to keep child garbage scavengers in school	82
i. School infrastructure	84
ii. Teacher Behavior and Personality	85
iii. Teaching Methods.....	86
iv. Parental Habits and Involvement	86
2.6. Effects of lack of motivational factors on school dropouts and re- admission procedures	87
2.6.1. Results of Lack of Motivational factors.	88
2.6.2. Family issues and instability	89
2.6.3. Peer Relationships	89
2.6.4. Learning Environment.....	90
2.6.5. Community perception of education	91
2.6.6. Revised Readmission Policy	92
2.7. Socio-cultural effects on accessing education at home and school for child scavengers	93
2.7.1. Community and parental involvement in providing education to child scavengers. 99	
2.7.2. Effects of Socio Class on Community and Parental Involvement.....	107
2.8.0. Policies and strategies guiding government and stakeholders in providing education to out-of-school youth, (scavenger children)	109
i. The National Education Policy.	111
ii. The National Youth Policy	112
iii. National Gender Policy.....	112
iv. Re-admission policy	114
v. The National Girls' Education Strategy (NGES)	115
vi. Inclusive Education Strategy.....	116

vii. National Education Sector Investment Plan, (NESIP 2020-2030).....	118
viii. National Educational Standards	119
2.8.1. Possible solutions to lack of education for out of school youth in scavenger communities	122
2.9. Summary	124
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD	131
3.0. Introduction.....	131
3.1. Purpose, Research Aims and Objectives	135
3.2. Research Approach and Design	135
3.2.1. Positivism and Interpretivism.....	136
3.2.2. Interpretivism	138
3.2.3. Mixed Research (MRM)	139
3.3. Population and Sample of the Research Study	147
3.3.1. Description and Appropriateness of the Sample	148
3.3.2. Sampling Procedures.....	150
3.3.3. Sample and study design relevance.....	151
3.4. Materials and instrumentation.....	153
3.4.1. Development of the questionnaire.....	153
3.4.2. Data collection process.....	154
3.4.3. Design of the questionnaire.....	156
3.4.4. Heading and specific type of group to be interviewed	156
3.4.5. Informed Consent Form: Containing the researcher's and supervisors' details..	157
3.4.5. Briefing.....	157
3.4.6. Certificate of consent.....	158
3.4.7. Demographic Background.....	158
3.4.8. The community and parents' questionnaire	159
3.5.0. Validity and Reliability of Pilot Study.....	160

3.5.1. Data Analysis	161
3.5.2. Operational Definition of Variables for Mixed Study.....	164
3.5.3. Constructs and Variables Measured.....	164
3.5.3. Construct/Variable 1.....	166
3.5.4. Construct/variable 2	167
3.5.5. Construct /Variable 3.....	167
3.6.0. Study Procedures and Ethical Assurances	169
3.7.0. Ethical Considerations	175
3.7.1. Relevant ethical issues and how they were addressed.....	177
3.8. Summary	180
CHAPTER 4:	183
4.0. FINDINGS	183
4.1. TRUSTWORTHINESS OF DATA.....	188
4.2. CREDIBILITY, VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY.....	189
4.3. RESULTS	193
4.3.0. Data collection Summary	193
4.3.1. CAUSES OF SCHOOL DROP OUT IN COMMUNITIES AROUND THE GARBAGE SITE	195
4.3.2. RESULTS: RESPONSIBLE STAKEHOLDERS OF PROVIDING EDUCATION TO CHILD SCAVENGERS AT THE GARBAGE SITE	201
4.3.3. RESULTS ON RESEARCH QUESTION / OBJECTIVE 2.....	207
4.3.4. RESULTS ON RESEARCH QUESTION / OBJECTIVE 3	217
CHAPTER 5:	220
5.0. Introduction.....	220
5.1. Methodology Approach	221
5.1.1. Study Limitations	221

5.1.2. Sampling.....	222
5.1.3. Ethical Dimensions	223
5.2. Implications for the findings.....	227
5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS	234
5.3.1. Introduction	234
5.3.2. Advocacy on recommendations	236
5.4. Conclusion	244
5.5.0. Recommendations For Future.....	246
5.5.1. Introduction.....	246
5.5.2. Poverty	250
5.5.3. Stigma and discrimination	251
5.5.4. Health and safety.....	253
5.5.5. Family responsibilities:.....	255
5.5.6. Lack of support:	256
5.6.0. Conclusions.....	258
References.....	270
APPENDICES: Research Tools	286
Appendix A: Questionnaires.....	286
Appendix B: Gate Keeper Letter	325
Appendix C. UREC APPROVAL	329
Appendix D: Approval.....	330
Appendix E: REAF DS	331

List of Abbreviations

BCC	Behavioural Change Centre
CAP	Collaboration Approach Model
CCC	Chisomo Children's Centre
CBE	Community Based Education
CBT	Cognitive Behavioural Theory
CDSS	Community Day Secondary School
CRC	Convention on the Rights of a Child
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IGA	Income Generating Activities
LCC	Lilongwe City Council
MIP	Malawi Implementation Plan
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
MP	Municipal Council
NEP	National Education Policy
NGES	National Girls Education Strategy
NSO	National Statistic Office
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SRGBV	School Related Gender Based Violence
SRGBV	Sexual Related Gender Based Violence
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
WHO	World Health Organisation
WFP	World Food Programme

List of Tables

Table 1: Input-Process-Output (IPO) conceptual model: adopted from, img1.wsimg.com	9
Table 2: Sample size and Sampling Procedures	15
Table 3: Literature Review Matrix.....	22
Table 4: Positivism and Interpretivism approaches to research methods	137
Table 5: Population Sample breakdown for the pilot study.....	144
Table 6: Cronbach’s Alpha Results for pilot study.....	145
Table 7: Sample size and sampling procedures	149
Table 8: Data collection process	155
Table 9: A summary of variables.....	168
Table10: Summary of findings	190
Table 11: Survey demographics (n = 250).....	193
Table 12: Participants involved in the qualitative data collection	194
Table 13: Objective and Research Question 1	201
Table 14: agreement to “Government should take lead in providing education to (Scavenger Child)”	201
Table 15: Agreement proportions to “Government should take lead in providing education to out of school youth (Scavenger Child)”	202
Table 16: Frequencies on “Government not being the only stakeholder responsible for safeguarding the education rights of out of school scavenger children”	203
Table 17: Objective and Research Question 2.....	208
Table 18: Engagement between national level and community level.....	210
Table 19: chi-square test for association results – stakeholder engagement	212
Table 20: Regression Variables	215
Table 21: Regression Output	216

Table 22: Objective and Research Question 3217

List of Figures

Figure 1. Independent and Dependent Conceptual Model	8
Figure 2. Robert K. Merton’s Device Typology	28
Figure 3. Source: "Theory of Planned Behavior: An HC3 Research Primer"	32
Figure 4: Adoption of the IPO conceptual model on scavenger children to stay in school: Kafulatira, G.2023 unicaf	37
Figure 5: Stages of Change Model School of Medicine	72
Figure 6: Self-determination Theory.	79
Figure 7: Baumrind’s Parenting Styles Theory. Source: TheBump.com	91
Figure 8: Source: The Theory of Planned Behavior model.	94
Figure 9: Mixed Research Methods.....	136
Figure 10: Independent and Dependent Conceptual Model. Grace Kafulatira, Unicaf. 2023	163
Figure 11: Conceptual Framework	164
Figure 12: Causes of school drop-out in communities around the garbage site	195
Figure 13: Frequencies on “Government not being the only stakeholder responsible for safeguarding the education rights of out of school scavenger children”	204
Figure 14: responses on responsible departments to lead in the provision of education to scavenger children?.....	205
Figure 15: Frequencies on “Initiatives to encourage scavenger children to attend school” ..	206
Figure 16: Engagement at national level	208
Figure 17: Engagement at community level.....	211
Figure 18: Effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling.....	218
Figure 19: Collaboration Approach Model (CAM).....	262

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0. Introduction

This study sought to examine the role of stakeholders in education on how they ought to provide education and survival skills to out-of-school youth. In this case, the ‘out of school youth’ are a special group of vulnerable children who scavenge for survival at the garbage site of the City of Lilongwe garbage site. (Scavenger Children). Kasinja & Tilley, (2018), describes scavenger children as hard to reach due to their social economic status which is associated with rampant urban poverty. This is the worst form of poverty in urban squatter areas whereby families have no source of income for survival and proper living worth for human beings. The United Nations Children’s Education Fund, (UNICEF), (2023), describes extreme poverty as a kind vulnerability which is to the extreme so much so that those affected by it cannot have basic needs in the areas of education, food, proper shelter fit for human beings, sanitation facilities health, right to information and safe drinking water sources. World Bank, (2015), estimated that over 2 billion people Worldwide were leaving below the poverty line of 1.90\$ a day.

The study intended to find solutions to the increasing number of schools dropouts that frequent the garbage site in the City of Lilongwe in Malawi by approaching the City Council and other stakeholders in education to take lead in solving such issues. With reference to the revised Re-admission Policy of (2018 - 2023), and the National strategy on Inclusive Education (2017 -2021), the study proposed for the availability of teaching and learning materials to the school close to the garbage site, reach out to the community’s youth through Guidance and Counseling and suggest conducting an awareness campaign on the dissemination of the Re-admission Policy and the National Strategy on Inclusive Education which were developed by Ministry of Education (MoE). The proposed interventions will assist parents and guardians surrounding the garbage site to become aware of the importance of the policy and the strategy

and how school dropouts can be brought back to school regardless of their diverse needs for some of the children. Parents will take their role to participate in their children's education as one of the fundamental rights for children, regardless their color, race and ethnicity, according to the (2020), amended Constitution of the Government of the Republic of Malawi. Through such proposed interventions, the City Council will be able to commit its corporate social responsibility by finding possible ways to provide food rations, health care, shelter or mobile classes that could reach child garbage scavengers who might not be able to attend the normal school due to their situation. This will be in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 4 which emphasizes on inclusive and equitable education and promotion of lifelong learning opportunity for all; And the objectives of (Malawi 2063 Agenda) the first 10 years of implementation, (MIP), which focuses on raising the country income status to lower-middle level by 2030, and to meet most of the sustainable Development goals (SDG) whose end-line target is the Agenda, (2030), Enablers in MIP 1, (the first 10 years) are indicators to some of the interventions being taken by Ministry of Education towards improving Education in Malawi. For example: According to the Malawi 2063, Enablers 5.1 the focus is on education and skills development. Mainly much focus is on organizations dealing with provision of education and skills development to vulnerable youth in Malawi to take up their social responsibilities by making sure that all children have access to basic education which can reduce literacy poverty for the Malawi nation.

According to statistics, though scanty, Lungu, et. al, (2020), states that, "Malawi is the least urbanized among the Sub-Saharan countries but has the fastest urbanized rates of 6.2% for City of Lilongwe only." Barre, (2015), indicates that, although Malawi does not have many children who live on the street there are many who are living off the streets such as the youth that frequent Lilongwe City Council garbage site for their survival as stated earlier in this chapter. Research carried out by Kanjere, (2019), reveals that Lilongwe and Blantyre have a

combined population of over 4,000 children that frequent the streets to beg or scavenge on daily basis whilst about 10% of the population is completely homeless, leaving the 90% to homes without any source of proper income hence scavenging for food anywhere where there is a dump site or make shift garbage collection sites within the two cities. Lilongwe has 2,389 street children as compared to the 1,776 in Blantyre with garbage scavengers inclusive. However, Kanjere, (2019), explains that most of the street children do not go to scavenge at the garbage site, hence it should be noted that scavenger children are a unique group of vulnerable children who come from vulnerable homes around the garbage site.

According to Climate Policy Watcher, (CPW), (2022), it has been observed that developing countries do not have the capacity to manage their solid waste properly and that is why most of the poor people in the cities scavenge through garbage to earn a living while ignoring access to education, health and safety. Climate Policy Watcher, (CPW), (2022), further indicates that countries such as in Malawi and Zambia, scavengers literally survive on the garbage without proper handling procedures. Barry, (2019), as cited by Mohanty, (2010), reports that families prioritize garbage scavenging for survival other than sending their children to school due to rampant urban poverty as already stated earlier. Nonetheless, there seems to be no concern for the education, health and safety of the child garbage scavengers by many stakeholders in education which are in form of NGOs, CSO's, parents, local and traditional leaders living in the scavenger communities. Their minimal interventions could also be compromised as there have been no proper studies conducted mainly for the children of the garbage site and in this case, specifically 'scavenger children's. Kasinja & Tilley, (2018), explain that the responsibility of managing solid waste lies in the hands of city councils starting from collection, transportation and disposal at designated dumping sites at the boundaries of the city of Lilongwe. Scheinberg & Anschiz, (2007), pp, 257-327, observed that scavenger / waste picker communities mainly frequent these garbage sites to scavenge and it has become

their way of living plus surviving in the cities while living under the poverty line of not more than one dollar a day over the years. There have been minimal initiatives by local NGO's and Government through the 'social cash transfer, to engage them to start small scale businesses because they cannot handle the hustle of borrowing money from lending institutions due to their economic vulnerability. Wilson D., (2005), echoes that the idea of the pro-poor-private-partnerships-promotion (5Ps) develops this approach more explicitly by addressing the need to engage users, the rights of small and micro enterprises and the informal sector, and obligation to serve the poor communities fairly and effectively. However, many stakeholders engaged in economic empowerment such as village banks, Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCO) and lending institutions may not risk engaging the scavenger communities for issues of poverty and preconceived attitudes towards such communities. For example, if one wants to get a loan from a SACCO, they are supposed to have shares and affordability to settle the loan, which is a far-fetched dream for scavenger families.

According to National Statistics Office, (NSO), the number of street children and garbage scavengers is growing very fast every day, as the population of Malawi is also growing at an alarming rate with a projection of 17.5 million in 2017. According to Worldometer, (2024), Malawi's population projection is estimated at 21.6 million people which is an equivalent of 0.27% of the world total population. While the population is growing at an alarming rate the numbers of economically vulnerable communities are also growing as there is no proper means for survival, especially in towns and cities for people who do not have proper means for survival. Medina, (2005), explains that up to 2% of the urban population survives by scavenging from the garbage sites in developing countries. According to Chisomo Children's Centre (CCC), (2015), reports indicate that there were 3,000 garbage scavengers in Blantyre and 2,500 in Lilongwe, with a population of 1,250 parents living around the garbage

site. Kanjere, (2019), states that garbage scavengers are unique because they are a new generation of the past generation of garbage scavengers that live and survive on garbage alone while neglecting to enroll their children into school. According to studies by Tilley & Kasinja, (2019), Barre, (2019), and Kanjere, (2018), they all agree that scavenger children are a generation of people that are deprived of education, and it is assumed that conducting a study on such a social problem could help to alleviate their poverty and social-economic status. Authorities such as the Municipal Council and private garbage collectors who create garbage sites continuously, do not support education activities at the garbage sites and this has led to negative impacts on people's health as well as the entire garbage site environment. According to Barre, (2015), there are a lot of negative outcomes such as health hazards for children scavenging for survival at the garbage sites as physical and bodily harm, air pollution causing lung diseases, rotten food causing food poisoning which could result in long term illnesses. Some of the issues scavenger children deal with are inadequate access to safe and clean drinking water and nutritious food, no access to proper livelihoods, conflict with the law, inequality issues both at home and the school if they attempt to enroll, poor or no education, lack of infrastructure for learning and limited or no capacity of stakeholders in education to address these causes, hence the need for a research study in the area of interventions by stakeholders to the scavenger communities. The ILO observed that often children from the garbage scavenger communities are engaged in various activities such as casual labor, hawking and sand mining or they sorely survive by frequenting the garbage site at the expense of dropping out of school amid numerous health risks whether physical or psychological as they scavenge at the garbage site.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The problem is that most Scavenger children are neglected by both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders who are responsible to ensure that they stay in school and

access education as stipulated in the SDG# 4, Agenda 2063 Goal # 2, National Education Policy (NEP) Re-admission Policy and Free Primary Education by responding to the Education for ALL (EFA) goals. According to the NSO Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (MDHS), 11% of primary-age children are out of school, with poorer ones being more likely to be out of school. Thus, scavenger children are inclusive. Kacheyo, (2024) states that approximately 15,000 children live and work in the streets of Malawi's major cities, but this excludes scavenger children. Non-governmental stakeholder projects target small numbers of vulnerable children, for example Fiddes.org, (2023), targeted 40 street children at the Home of Hope in Chitedze, Lilongwe against a population of over 3,000 child scavengers. Although there are low drop-out rates in the City of Lilongwe, of (0.7% for both girls and boys), (2024). Annual School Census, scavenger children do not enroll into school as education is not yet compulsory. In the 2022 academic year, 38 children aged 10 – 17 dropped out of school at the primary school near the garbage site. (School records). More statistics indicate that Lilongwe city has a fast yearly growth rate of 4.42% as indicated by Macrotrends, (2022). Wilson, (2008), indicates the magnitude of scavenging that twenty million people depend on waste picking worldwide.

Children close to the garbage site neglect school and opt to pick these wastes, hence the emergence of garbage scavenger children, however, there is little to no evidence of what is being done by stakeholders in education in Malawi to influence these children to attend school due to lack of research around this topic. Culkins, (2020), explains that over 90% of children around the garbage site are likely to drop out of school due to negligence by stakeholders in education. According to the 2015-16 Malawi Demographic and Health Survey, the survey findings indicate that attainment of education goes along with household wealth, a thing that affects scavenger communities in having access to education due to urban poverty.

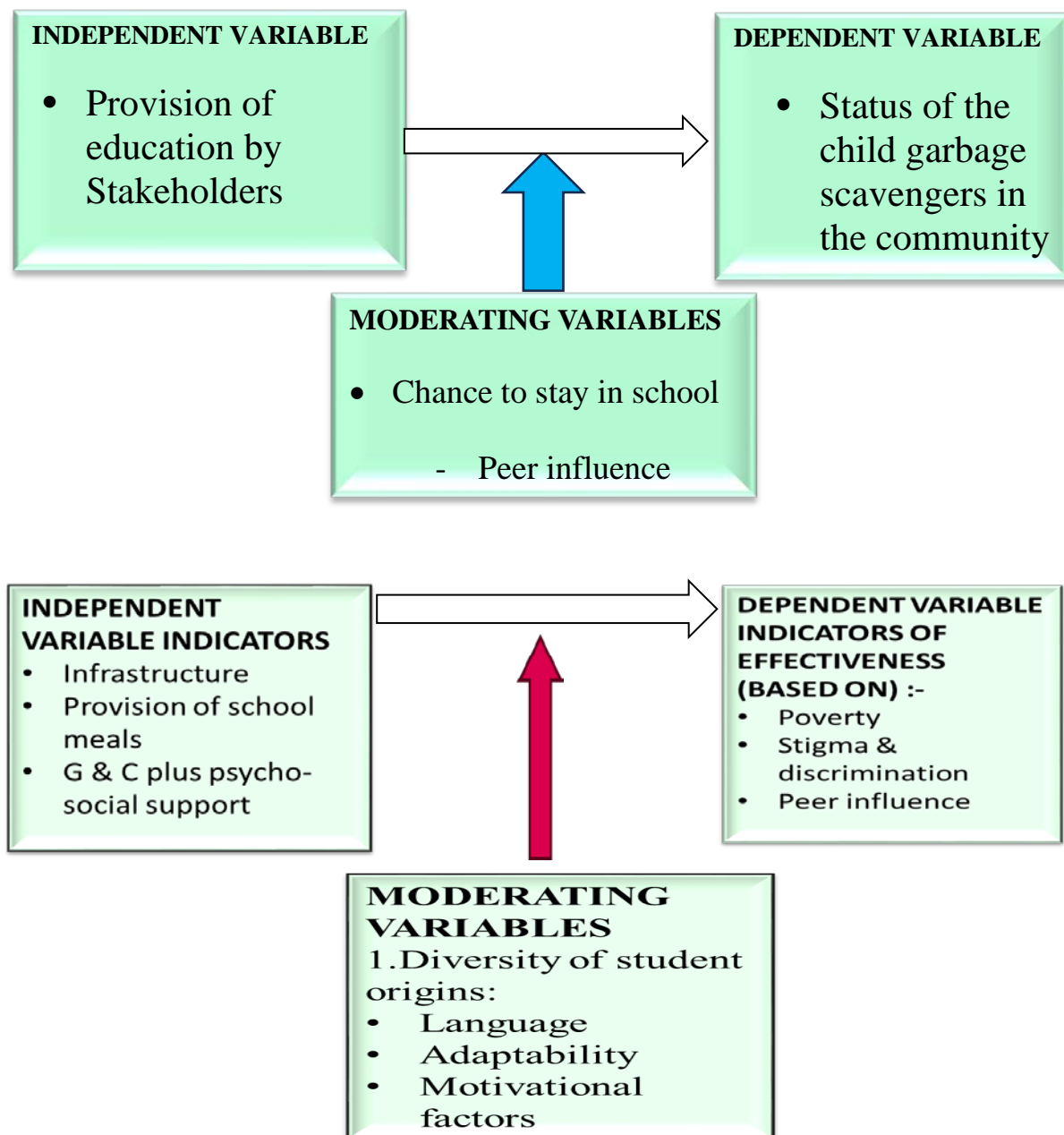
Therefore, the study assumes that the City Council will be obliged to provide space at the garbage site that could easily be converted into a Behavioral Change Centre (BCC) where interventions on education and survival skills for out of school youth could be provided if they do not opt to be re-admitted back into school or continue scavenging. It is also assumed that research gaps in this study would be addressed as areas for future study such as poverty, which causes lack of basic needs for scavenger children to remain in school, stigma and discrimination lack of Guidance and Counseling, psycho-social support and skills development, unavailability of good parenting skills violation of child rights which brings about School Related Gender Based Violence (SRGV) and lack of portable and safe drinking water, proper shelter, food and health care.

In this study the main idea was to find solutions to the problem of lack of quality and equitable and inclusive education ought to be provided to child garbage scavengers that have been sidelined by some governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children. This is due to barriers that always hinder scavenger children from enrolling into school, such as poverty and mostly lack of basic needs for them to stay in school. Specifically, the study area was the City of Lilongwe garbage site where school going children from the scavenger community scavenge for survival. The conceptual framework focused on the independent variable model that seems to have influence on the dependent variable, and these are influenced by the moderator variables. For example, in the figure below:

-

Figure 1

Independent and Dependent Conceptual Model:



Source: Kafulatira, G., Unicaf University in Malawi: 2023: (Adopted from Bhandari, P., (2022))

If stakeholders in government and non-governmental organizations provide quality, equitable and inclusive education to child garbage scavengers, the assumption was that poverty literacy will decrease and that they will sustain good status in the community and gain a meaningful livelihood in future. However, there will also be a high possibility of dropouts if the child garbage scavengers may not stay in school due to other reasons, such as poverty,

hunger, lack of school infrastructure, delinquent behavior and lack of parental care and guidance. The moderator variable then provides a chance for the scavenger children to stay in school which is also regulated by the diversity of the scavenger children in terms of their origins, which are determined by their language and proficiency at the entry point in class one. For example, if scavenger children fail to communicate properly in English, then this becomes a source of stigma and discrimination. These reasons can be tackled using the Input-Process-Output (IPO) conceptual model, which was adopted by Joseph in 1964 so that the research process could be guided. For example, in table 1: -

Table 1

Input-Process-Output (IPO) conceptual model: adopted from, img1.wsimg.com

Input	Process	Output
Provision of school infrastructure	Collaboration between Ministry of Education, Developing and Implementing Partners in the category of NGO's and CSO's to construct classrooms blocks, libraries and laboratories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased pass rate at National Examination level - High Retention rates - High transition rates into secondary school
Provision of financial support	Identification of needy children to benefit from bursaries and scholarships with entitlements such as school uniforms, school bags, take home rations and writing materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meaningful life after the school cycle - Productive and responsible citizens within the scavenger communities
Provision of school meals	Engaging schools and community leaders to participate in preparing school meals for children at school. For example, women offering to cook and wash plates and men cutting firewood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Behavioral change among scavenger children
Provision of Guidance and Counseling	Engaging qualified and willing community members and the school for provision of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentorship - Role modeling - Good parenting skills 	

Apart from the mentioned variables, environmental factors could also bring specific differences due to age, sex and gender in the academic area. Barre, (2015), observed that mostly children aged between 8 and 12 who are likely to be in classes 1 to 5 in junior primary are often discriminated against. For example, they are discriminate against for getting enrolled into school at a later stage than their counterparts due to economic hardships even though primary education is free in Malawi, but they may lack basic needs to keep them in school and access quality and inclusive education. Additionally, such communities may also need an environment which ought to be conducive to scavenging and negative cultural and traditional beliefs and practices of their community. The main idea was to bring together all barriers that hinder child garbage scavenger's education apart from governmental and non-governmental stakeholders' minimal and non-involvement in providing inclusive education so that scavenger communities issues could be addressed and probably be useful for future research on child vulnerability in their communities. Therefore, there is need to examine the multi-stakeholder involvement in providing educational services to scavenger communities including areas which have the capacities to include scavenger children's survival rates at the primary school and their community vulnerability due to rampant urban poverty around the garbage site and surrounding areas.

Theoretical models to be discussed in the study sought to bring out explanations regarding understanding not only the causes of lack of quality, equitable and inclusive education for child garbage scavengers but also their decisions to get readmitted back into school. Ortega-Ritz, (2012), looked at the other factors that make stakeholders in education sideline child garbage scavengers' access to quality, equitable and inclusive education and other basic needs at the garbage site and their nearby schools. These factors obviously have been a stumbling block to scavenger children when it comes to access quality and equitable

education. For example, Chisomo Children's home reported that 10 out of 15 scavenger children that enroll into school in class one, only 5 remain in school and they probably drop out of school before the age of 10.

Theoretically, Young & Chavez, (2022), explains that criminality for scavenger communities could gradually be on the rise due to lack of equal access to education. For example, if scavenger children are prone to teasing and bullying by their fellow learners and even inappropriate remarks from those in charge, can easily trigger anger which usually results in anti-social behavior and withdrawal from their peers and even school activities. According to Mohanty, (2014), among scavenger children who drop out of school, a few could be successful but most of them do not manage to lead normal livelihoods without using survival skills and education in later years. With reference to some characteristics of attributes that surround child garbage scavengers, it has been observed that due to poverty, the scavenger communities will likely suffer if this trend continues. Genemo, (2022), states that if waste pickers or scavenger communities do not get education now, they will later be driven by ignorance, disease, dishonesty and dependency on handouts if stakeholders in education do not address the cause of poverty and vulnerability through provision of quality, equitable and inclusive education. To address such variables, there will be need to find solutions by using possible supporting theories such as Anomie /Strain Theory being the main theory and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as the main supporting theory whereas Human Capital Theory, Rational Decision-making Theory, Social Learning Theory and Poor family socialization theory are vital for future research. For example, according to Fenn, (2013), CBT Theory is based on the concept on how individuals' actions affect an individual's thinking, feelings and their behavior. This theory supports the study in such a way that specifically individuals' thoughts generate feelings and behavior. In the situation of child garbage scavengers, negative or positive thoughts emerge as an outcome of the situation they live in. Grant, (2014), maintains

that mostly anti-social behaviors in scavenger children are influenced by negative situations such as hunger and lack of proper shelter among many more which may result into mental illness and later could turn into trauma, distress and depression. However, these theories will continue to uncover issues that go along with scavenging at the expense of losing out on education and the roles that stakeholders in the categories of the district/municipal of city councils ought to undertake to address the problem of denying scavenger children basic education and skills development as any other child in the country. The Malawi Constitution, (2013), indicates it is a constitutional right for every child to get education without being discriminated due to their race, ethnicity, color or religious affiliation, just to mention a few.

1.2. Purpose, Research Aims and Objectives

The study will seek to engage stakeholders in education and skills development within the City of Lilongwe to assess their level intervention in addressing the issue of vulnerability and lack of access to education and provision of guidance and counseling plus psycho-social support to the targeted group at the garbage site. The engagement will aim at dealing with stakeholders' responsibility in education to decrease the number of schools dropouts at the expense of scavenging for survival.

A. Aim

The aim of the study is to investigate the level of involvement stakeholders take to provide education to the out-of-school youth that frequent garbage site of the city of Lilongwe and interventions that could possibly solve the problem of dropping out of school with parental involvement in behavioural change.

B. Objectives:

The objectives of this study are: -

1. To identify the responsible stakeholders in providing education to child scavengers at the garbage site.

- i. To analyse the role different stakeholders can take as their responsibility to decrease the number of schools dropouts at the garbage site.
 - ii. To scrutinize the level of parental involvement in their children's education and behaviour.
2. To engage stakeholders in education and skills development to take up their roles on child garbage scavengers in providing them with education as a human right.
 - i. To determine the effect of guidance and counselling and psychosocial support to child garbage scavengers.
 - ii. To engage responsible stakeholders to support provision of child garbage scavenger friendly services for them to stay in school.
3. To scrutinize the level of engagement by Ministry of Education with other stakeholders in the implementation of policies and strategies to provide education and skills development to child garbage scavengers.
 - i. To analyse the effectiveness of the already existing policies and strategies for the out of school youth education.
 - ii. To identify existing gaps in the policies and strategies in the provision of education and skills development for child garbage scavengers.

1.3. Nature of the study

The study focused on the out of school youth who frequent the City of Lilongwe garbage site as child garbage scavengers for their survival and livelihood. These children have little or no time to attend school. Having visited the area of study for some time, it has been observed that stakeholders in education, parents/guardians and local leaders including the City

Council pay no attention in taking responsibility to provide education to this group of children. Every child has a right to education as stated in the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi. Malawi ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) an international agreement adopted in 1989 and 196 parties are signatories. Therefore, there was need to explore strategies to assist in providing education to child garbage scavengers.

1.3.1. Methodology and Research Design

This study involved a sequential mixed research approach method which involved both qualitative and quantitative methods as some information needed quantification and interviews through face to face and focus group discussions. The administration of questionnaires both structured and semi-structured were conducted to all the targeted respondents like parents, local leaders, selected learners from the school, City Council and other stakeholders in education.

1.3.2. Research Design

The study used a case study research design in the areas of data collection techniques, analysis procedures, sampling and sources were maximized. The research focused on analyzing the situation as a way of solving real life problems. Mchitanjiru Primary School and Community Day Secondary School was one of the research sites where most of the out of school youth are re-admitted back into school.

1.3.3. Data collection tools and techniques

- i. The study required identification and development of research instruments such as designing questionnaires for the quantitative component of the study and interviews and focus group discussions for the qualitative component of the study.
- ii. Exploration and selection of policies and strategies to analyze information based on research topics and background information.

- iii. Field notes and summaries were compiled immediately after interviews on focus groups and face to face interactions whereby some sensitive information, if any, was to be destroyed.

1.3.4. Sample and Sampling Procedures

The planned research sample was 404 participants which involved stakeholders in the provision of education to out of school youth, (scavenger children) from Government Ministries, community leaders, parents/guardians, garbage scavengers and the re-admitted students and school Management.

Table 2

Sample size and Sampling Procedures

Category	Number	Method of sampling	Method of data collection
municipal council local assembly	50	Random/ purposeful random	Interviews Observation/ Questionnaires FGD
Principal secretaries	4	purposive	Questionnaire
Directors	4	Random	Questionnaire/ interviews
Deputy Directors	4	Random	Questionnaires/interviews
Chief Executive Officer	1	purposive	Face to face / Questionnaire
Mayor	1	purposive	Questionnaire
Social Welfare and Child Protection Officers	20	Random	FGD, Questionnaire / interviews
School Management	140	Random and purposive	Observation, face to face and FGD
Local and faith- based leaders	40	purposive	FGD
Parents and guardians	70	Random	FDG
Out of school youths	70	Random and purposive	Observation and FDG

1.3.5. Data collection methods and analysis

Data collection was through interviews, observation, questionnaires, face-to-face and focus group interviews. The type of data collected was observational and experimental. Data analysis involved both qualitative and quantitative research methods. This study used grounded theory, narrative and case study for qualitative and descriptive quantitative research methods.

1.4.0. Significance of the study

The significance of the study is that it assumed that the study could bring a lot of positive changes in the community and in the lives of the scavenger children. Further assumption is that there will be economical and environmental benefits after the study. Nuripuch, et al, (2022), stresses that equitable access to education could reduce the rate of school dropouts and health risks for communities living around the area.

1.4.1. Out of school youth (Scavenger children)

Barre, (2019), observes that some of the out of school youth are child scavengers that drop out of school due to a few reasons such as poverty, lack of interest and child labour. These will benefit the out of school youth through identification of stakeholders in education who have the capability to assist. Examples of such stakeholders in Malawi as Save the children Malawi, CAMFED, CRECOM, World Vision, OXFAM, Plan International, UNICEF, Press Trust, SOFF, and many more working toward the improvement of vulnerable community's access to education. Stakeholders could provide infrastructure such as school blocks, libraries, teaching and learning materials. School feeding programmes by stakeholders will benefit the school and the students. World Food Program (WFP), (2021), indicates that school feeding programmes have the capacity of keeping children in school. Statistics indicate that Malawi has reduced absenteeism by 5% and drop-out rates by 2.9 %. And attendance increased from 77% to 92%, reducing absenteeism and truancy by in schools.

1.4.2. Parents and the whole community

They will benefit through mentorship, guidance and counselling session's students will benefit in positive behavioral change. Their behaviors without counselling range from unruly behavior, truancy, foul language, fighting, stealing and alcohol and substance abuse. This is a community where parents and guardians have either little or no control over their children's behaviour and to them that is a normal trend of parenting. Through the provision of guidance and counseling services to be offered by stakeholders and the school the scavenger community and particularly its parents will be prepared for the challenges they currently face and in future will be able to support their child with education, personal and social guidance through community participation. Thamarasseri, (2014), states that Guidance and Counselling prepare students to understand fully their choices and responsibilities with regards to the environment they are living in. For example, mostly children choose careers of the people they live with, such as white-collar jobs and even jobs which require skills and professionalism in the categories of teachers, policemen, soldiers and nurses.

1.4.3. The community

The community around the garbage site are squatter areas that have no proper and legalized planning of the City Council hence lack necessary settlement provisions such as portable safe drinking water, electricity and accessible roads. Kasinja & Tilley, (2019), as cited in Barre, (2015), observed that waste pickers do not prioritize basic needs as they work at the garbage site, mostly all the basic needs such as water, edible food and their welfare become secondary. However, there is a possibility that after the study the scavenger community will benefit by getting portable safe drinking water and even a health clinic from the City Council and other stakeholders as a move towards their social responsibility. This is the case because it every citizen requires safe water as a basic need in their everyday life.

1.4.4. The researcher

By trying to examine the role of stakeholders in the provision of education to out of school youth, will benefit by gaining an in-depth knowledge on scavenger children's lifestyle, critical basic needs and research gaps that need special attention apart from provision of education only as some of the gaps have a direct impact on the results of the study. The knowledge gained could also be used for future research in the same area.

1.4.5. Ministry of Education

The ministry being a policy holder will be able to link up with other line Ministries such as Ministries of Gender and Social Welfare, Health and Youth upon the results of the research study. The Ministry will coordinate by networking through Technical Working Groups (TWG) with different stakeholders in education through workshops and symposiums. There will be use of the already existing policies and strategies to provide education to all and leaving no child behind. Examples of such policies and strategies are, the National Education Policy (NEP), National Gender Policy, National Youth Policy, the revised Readmission Policy, the National Readmission Policy, National Girls' Education strategy (NGES), National inclusive Education Strategy, and National Education standards.

1.5.0. Research questions and Hypothesis to the study

1.5.1. Hypothesis

The study will be testing:

First Hypothesis

- i.- Null Hypothesis (H0): Providing out of school youth with proper interventions by relevant stakeholders in education will not minimize high school drop-out rates.
- ii.- Alternative Hypothesis (H1). Providing out of school youth with appropriate intervention by relevant stakeholders in education, will minimize drop-out rates.

Second Hypothesis

- i.- Null Hypothesis (H0): Delinquent behavior and anti-social behavior will not be minimized by providing scavenger communities with guidance, counseling, and good parenting skills. -
- ii.- Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Delinquent behavior and anti-social behavior will be minimized by providing scavenger communities with guidance, counseling, and good parenting skills.

1.5.2. Research Questions

Research Question 1:

What is the role of different stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children at Lilongwe garbage site?

Research Question 2:

To what extent are the different stakeholders engaged in implementing policies and strategies in providing education to child scavengers.

Research Question 3:

How effective is provision of educational resources, Guidance and Counselling and good parenting skills at reducing drop-out rates for child scavengers?

1.6.0. Conclusion

In conclusion, the theoretical framework for the study is to examine the responsibilities of various stakeholders in providing education and skills development for child garbage scavengers who are at risk of being left behind without any basic education even though they have the right to education. For example, The Poor Family Socialization Theory, Newcomb, (1997), stresses that it is not school factors alone that cause dropout but there are other factors that cause individual differences in children. These could be family background, social-

economic status, and parent's levels of education, cultural and traditional beliefs and attitude towards education. Therefore, it was important for the researcher to gain an in-depth knowledge and understanding of such differences. Ojiambo, (2017), pp. 16-182, stresses that leadership in cultural and traditional beliefs of a family also have a huge part to play when it comes to accessing education especially for scavenger children. Mostly, scavenger communities have a history of migrating from the rural areas to the peri urban where dumping sites are usually allocated. It is at these dumping sites where culturally practiced habits could either be reserved or ignored depending on the discipline of an individual when faced by barriers to provide education for their children.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Positionality Statement

My positionality is rooted in a commitment to social justice and the belief that education is a fundamental right, not a privilege. With reference to child rights protocols such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, (CRC), Agenda 2063 goal #2, Sustainable Development Goal # 4 and other literature pertaining to non-discrimination in accessing education; for example, Free Primary Education which was introduced in 1994 in Malawi; under the Education for All (EFA) goals. It is in this respect that scavenger children deserve equal access to quality education as a way of getting them out of the poverty cycle from the garbage site.

As an educationist and child rights advocate, this study intends to bring a unique perspective on lack of access to education for scavenger children. My previous experience in working with marginalized communities in Malawi and to be precise, secondary schools; has instilled a deep understanding of the complexities surrounding educational exclusion for marginalized communities. Through working with local NGOs, CSO's and other stakeholders on vulnerable children, there has been firsthand witnessing of the resilience and potential of scavenger children, who despite facing extreme adversity, demonstrate remarkable determination to learn and achieve their goals through equal access to education as stipulated in the Constitution of Malawi, Chapter IV (Human Rights) Article 13, which enshrines equality and non-discrimination. And policies such as the National Education Policy (NEP), Readmission Policy on out-of-school youth and the National Inclusive Strategy.

There have been situations where bias almost became unavoidable due to emotions and empathy during data collection. As a researcher, I bracketed myself by using research assistants to continue with data collection to avoid or minimize research bias. This stance influences my interpretation of the data, as I acknowledge the power dynamics at play in educational systems and the need for transformative change in policy formulation and interpretation especially for vulnerable communities such as the scavenger children environment. I recognize that my outsider-insider perspective, shaped by my professional background, may both facilitate or limit my understanding of the issue under study.

2.0. Introduction

The study's objective was to examine the role of stakeholders in the provision of education to child garbage scavengers who frequent the Lilongwe City Council (LCC), garbage site for their survival while they drop out of school or get no education at all. The theoretical and conceptual framework used was to engage stakeholders in education to come out with solutions on lack of equal access to quality education for the scavenger communities amidst other challenges that force them to drop out of school as stated by both the hypothesis and the null hypothesis of the study. However, there are core stakeholders who deal with policies and strategies to accommodate out-of-school youth even though despite such

interventions, scavenger children remain marginalized and discriminated against. Mohanty, (2019), states that scavenger children are very much aware of their sorry status, to the point that they acknowledge that even some teachers and fellow learners make fun of their vulnerability, hence the high rates of dropouts. The immediate core stakeholders are, Ministries of Education, Gender, Health and Non-Governmental Organizations plus other Development Partners whose agenda revolves around child rights and vulnerability.

The literature reviews the matrix of inclusion concerning age, gender, race, ethnicity, demographic factors, level of authority for participants to address the research questions but also thought of excluding those that have conflicted with the law, chronically ill and those with mental disorders due to trauma and depression. While in the search engines criteria was to search for articles or journals with relevant information with regards to the research title, methodologies and designs aligning with the role of stakeholders' involvement in the provision of education to out of school youth and with much focus to scavenger children at the garbage site.

Table 3*Literature Review Matrix*

Name of Author	Year of Publication	Focus	Methodology	Key Findings	Critic	Gap
Bond, I.,	2019	Mental Health well-being	Quantitative	Psycho-social support for all ages	Intellectual disability in older persons	Limited generalizability, sidelining vulnerable children
Mohanty. P.,	2014	Non-enrolment and drop out for scavenger children	Mixed methods	Deprivation of education for scavenger children living in urban slums	lack of access to quality and equitable education	Limited stakeholder involvement
Nickerson,C.	2015	Merton's Theory of Deviance and Anomie in sociology	Mixed methods	Child vulnerability influenced by family environment and wealth	parenting style and cultural diversity	Limited generalizability on the power of the Anomie theory beyond delinquency and street crime
Barré • J.,	2015	Waste Market in Urban Malawi:	Qualitative	peace education and community engagement	social norms change intervention	Small sample size
Bennert, D.,	2022	Child mental health	Quantitative	Child vulnerability influenced by family environment,	parenting style, and trauma	Limited generalizability
Candeleza. A.,	2020	Child well-being	Quantitative	Child vulnerability exacerbated by poverty,	lack of access to education and health care	Limited cultural diversity
Dorough, M. L.,	2003	Effects of school dropout and prevention	Mixed Methods	Child vulnerability influenced by family environment	Characteristic of school drop outs	Policy and strategy inclusion in drop-out prevention
Kasinja & Tilley	2015	Waste management	Mixed Methods	poverty, lack of access to healthcare	Access to education ignored	Scavenger children non-existence
Kanjere, P.,	2019	Street children safety	Qualitative Desk Study	Child poverty	Lack of access to education	Small sample size
Arunthaiyar	2010	Child rights and impact of waste disposal	Mixed methods	occupational impact on the children of manual scavengers	Lack of access to education	Limited stakeholder involvement
Singla, P., (2003).	2003	Scavenger community welfare	Quantitative	Rehabilitation of scavengers and social networks bullying	Lack of scavenger education tracking systems	Access to education for scavenger communities

2.1.0. Problem Statement

The problem is that most Scavenger children are neglected by both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders who are responsible to ensure that they stay in school and access education as stipulated in the SDG# 4, Agenda 2063 Goal # 2, National Education Policy (NEP) Re-admission Policy and Free Primary Education by responding to the Education for ALL (EFA) goals. According to the NSO Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (MDHS), 11% of primary-age children are out of school, with poorer ones being more likely to be out -of school. Thus, scavenger children are inclusive. Kacheyo, (2024) states that approximately 15,000 children live and work in the streets of Malawi's major cities, but this excludes scavenger children. Non-governmental stakeholder projects target small numbers of vulnerable children, for example Fiddes.org, (2023), targeted 40 street children at the Home of Hope in Chitedze, Lilongwe against a population of over 3,000 child scavengers. Although there are low drop-out rates in the City of Lilongwe, of (0.7% for both girls and boys), (2024). Annual School Census, scavenger children do not enroll into school as education is not yet compulsory. In the 2022 academic year, 38 children aged 10 – 17 dropped out of school at the primary school near the garbage site. (School records). More statistics indicate that Lilongwe city has a fast yearly growth rate of 4.42% as indicated by Macrotrends, (2022). Wilson, (2008), indicates the magnitude of scavenging that twenty million people depend on waste picking worldwide.

As stated in chapter one, the significance of the study is that it is assumed that the study will bring a lot of positive changes in the scavenger communities and particularly the lives of child scavengers. The other assumption is that there will be economic and environmental benefits because of the study. Nuripuch, et.al, (2022), explain that equitable access to education could reduce the rate of school dropouts and health risks for communities living around garbage sites. The beneficiaries of such an initiative will be the out of youth who are child garbage scavengers who drop out of school due to various reasons emerging

due to rampant poverty. Parents and the whole community will also benefit due to the provision of Guidance and Counseling that will bring behavioral change among the inhabitants. The community around the garbage site could benefit from commitment from the stakeholders in education on other needs apart from provision of education. These could be safe and portable drinking water, school infrastructure, including classroom blocks and sanitation and health services within the scavenger community. The researcher will benefit by gaining an in-depth knowledge of the needs of child scavengers and the role of stakeholders and the Ministry of Education by linking and networking with other line Ministries through Technical working Groups (TWG), workshops and symposiums with reference to existing policies and strategies. Kendall, (2008), stresses that providers of education, must consider the environments vulnerable communities live in relationship to other basic needs and pressing issues of their communities.

2.1.1. Theoretical Framework with Supporting Theories

As discussed in chapter one, the theory in this area of the study indicates that illiteracy due to lack of equal access to education for garbage scavengers will cause a huge rise in criminal cases for the scavenger communities over the years to come. According Kasinja & Tilley, (2018), Lilongwe City Council created the garbage site that has in turn become a survival asset to the poor communities around the area. Therefore, there is need to explore means of providing education to the scavenger communities so that they can gain meaningful future livelihoods with the knowledge gained in choosing their career pathways. The main theory used in this study is the Anomie Theory. And the possible supporting theories on examining the role of stakeholders in the provision of education to out-of-school youths, scavenger children, in this study are the Theory of Planned Behavior, (TPB), whereas the Social Responsibility Theory, Social Learning Theory, Poor family socialization and

Education Equality Theory for future research. These theories are critical in the examination of the role stakeholder's responsibilities in education towards the child garbage scavengers as they bring out issues worth solving.

2.1.2. *Anomie Theory*

The Anomie Theory, also known as 'Strain Theory,' responds to the reasons why certain norms discontinue in certain societies than others. Robert Merton's anomie theory explains that most people strive to achieve culturally recognized goals. A state of anomie develops when access to these goals is blocked to entire groups of people or individuals. In this case, access to education is provided by scavenger children.

Merton identified five ways in which individuals may respond to this strain or frustration: conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism, and rebellion. The result is a deviant behavior characterized by rebellion, retreat, ritualism, innovation, and/or conformity.

- i. Some become rebels
- ii. Some become conform to Norns
- iii. Some retreat, withdraw or become isolated
- iv. Others obey as a ritual
- v. Others become innovative in their spheres

Anomie is also called normlessness. Originally proposed by Émile Durkheim in 1893, anomie might be most clearly illustrated in the situation of a single mother who is forced to commit crimes if she cannot get a job or social aid to pay for the expenses for herself and her child.

Nickerson, (2002), mainly describes, this theory deals with the link that exists between crime and social cultural norms of the communities. For example, in my area of study, it is supposed to be a norm for every child to get free primary education at the nearest school. Bennet, (2022), explains that society, due to rampant urban poverty, opts for their

children to scavenge at the garbage site for survival and non-enrolment for scavenger children is taken as the normal way of living as there are other priorities to be considered than getting education. The priorities fall under the category of food, good clothing, shelter and a conducive learning environment for scavenger children. Dr. Merton, (2019), discovered that in trying to survive and achieve goals in the strain theory, social and ethical norms in a society from a group of people of the same status norms are broken. It has been observed that the way people survive becomes different. For example, for communities around the garbage site some use power to survive such as 'survival of the fittest,' others succumb to stealing and taking the law into their own hands while criminality rises.

According to Merton (2019), due to the tough life for survival, child garbage scavengers most of the time choose not to get education or drop-out of school to fend for themselves and their families. There are no instant role models for scavenger children in their communities and Gender Based Violence (GBV), seems to be rampant whereby some members of their communities have agreed to live with it. There are acts of violence such as, like wife battering, sexual assault due to gender and age differences. Efendi, (2020), indicates that scavenger communities have over the year been stuck to some traditional, cultural and religious beliefs and values which result to criminal offenses such as forced and child marriages, violation of child rights and mob justice. Downey, (2022), analyzes the deviant behaviors such as engaging into drug and alcohol abuse, child prostitution, exposure to STI's including HIV and AIDS, murder and rape being regarded as a means for survival and a way of life. Thus, such behavior cannot be connected to having access to education, but other alternatives believed to assist in obtaining success by breaking the cultural norms. Stakeholder ought to cast the net wider to address accompanying issues to access education such as mentorship and psycho-social support for the scavenger children alongside provision of good parenting skills for scavenger families within their communities.

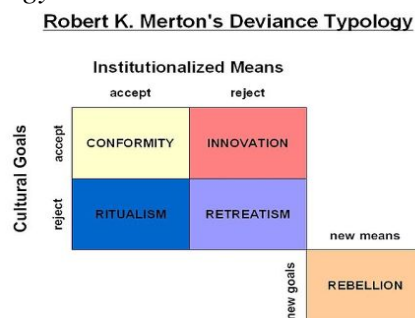
According to Bond, (2020), it is stressed that the anomie theory, describes the state of social disorder though it may not reach the level of murder and rape as it is conducted for survival means where there are no alternatives to earn a living. It is believed that anomie theory has a trend which promotes deviant behavior as it is based on motivation and goal achievement regardless of the strategy used to achieve goals. For example, in my area of study, there is need for motivation to scavenger children, parents and guardians at the school environment such as school supplies or meals. Education for All (EFA) goals will just be a fallacy if the scavenger communities continue to scavenge for survival while resisting government efforts to enroll all their children into school. Stakeholders in education should plan cautiously to motivate the communities with achievable goals such as take-home food rations for child garbage scavengers and other vulnerable groups to minimize criminology, lack of interest in school and negativity about school within the scavenger communities.

According to Torracco, (2016), it has been observed that scavenger communities choose to accept their cultural goals and may reject them but accept their way of living by using improper ways of getting their goals. For example, they can opt to stealing instead of begging or working to get their intended goal by the end of the day. Durkheim as cited by Bond, (2019), acknowledges that the extent of certain levels of deviant behavior is considered normal and this trend is present in all societies and on individual capacities. However, if the deviation from the norms becomes a way of living then there is a threat of an Anomie which will lead into the rising of criminology in form of murder, rape, Gender Based Violence and other associated anti-social behaviors as earlier stated in this chapter and often such acts may often be inflicted on the weak. There have been occasions when the out of school youth within the scavenger communities have been involved in the formation of gangs that survive on terrorizing people by conduct of violence such as armed robbery in other areas outside the scavenger communities. For example, in my area of study alone there were 2 gang groups which were apprehended by the police. The average age for the gangs was 14 and there were

terrorizing residents with acts of violence. In such communities' stakeholders need to provide the presence of law-enforcers and in my area of study a police unit or community policing would be sufficient to minimize crime. As criminology is on the rise, Bond, (2019), observes that stakeholder need to understand the roots of crime in societies such as the garbage site and provide appropriate interventions by engaging professionals in psycho-social support, juvenile justice, counseling and law enforcement. Such a move would make the scavenger communities safer and conducive to providing them with the much-needed quality education. According to Merton, (2019), the Anomie/Strain theory is distinguished through Conformity, Innovation, Ritualism, Retreatism and Rebellion as indicated in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Robert K. Merton's Deviance Typology:



Source: <https://study.com/academy/lesson/mertons-strain-theory-definition-examples-quiz.html#quiz-course-links>

The possible outcomes of Robert Merton's Deviance Typology influence scavenger children and their communities with regards to the Anomie Theory as outlined in the following according to Merton, (2019) Strain Theory definitions:

i. Conformity

Scavenger communities face too much deviance in areas where they cannot access education, health services and other basic needs for survival. For example, scavenger communities may conform to cultural norms and goals such as getting enrolled into school. They can still perform initiation ceremonies while going to school. Nonetheless, they may deviate if those that are not sending their children to school are in the majority within their community. It is therefore such situations which trigger scavenger communities to conform to instigating disorder and confusion by staging riots or organized crime such as mass stealing of learning materials at the school or terrorizing other nearby communities. Nickerson, (2023), stated that some of the abnormal behaviors that occur later in life are because of factors that influenced an individual's childhood. For example, crime and deviant behavior in a society of people of the same class and beliefs.

ii. Innovation

One of Robert Melton's Strain Theory definitions is innovation. According to Bates & Gainey, (2016), innovation is a situation whereby there is a desire to achieve culturally accepted anti-institutional goals by rejecting the norm or getting it through unacceptable ways. For example, scavenger children can either survive through scavenging at the garbage site or steal to earn a living as they continue to being discriminated against things which can be lacking in their day to day lives. In the case of my study, scavenger children lack better education, health services and child protection services. Mohanty, (2010), realized that within the scavenger communities some individuals may learn some skills in small business in the informal economy in an unprofessional manner. Such that they may acquire driving or motorcycle or business licenses on the black market and illegally survive, while others would follow the normal and accepted process of obtaining such papers.

iii. Ritualism

Most of the scavenger children have no instant role models to the extent that they do not realize why they are in school and benefits of education. With reference to Melton's Anomie (Strain) Theory of (1938), ritualism has been described as a way of living whereby individuals practice certain performances in their communities or societies even though they do not value such practices but only involve themselves for the benefit of achieving certain goals to satisfy their immediate needs. For example, in my area of study, it is a situation whereby scavenger children are involved in non-enrollment into schools as has always been the case in their society but may enroll just to benefit from incentives such as school meals or take-home food rations. Torracco, (2016), pp 348 -349, compared the extent of literacy poverty among parents in scavenger communities and interest in education by scavenger families with the negative attitude towards education by scavenger children.

iv. Retreatism

Scavenger children may engage themselves in violent behavior, such as stealing, street fighting and joining gangs as part of withdrawal and anti-social behavior with regards to retreatism. According to Melton, (1938), cited by Nickerson, (2023), retreatism which in other words is called 'withdrawal', occurs mainly when individuals face difficulties in acquiring their goals and may do away with possible means to get their goals in an acceptable means. For example, the act of using violent behavior to get food or financial independence by living on the streets. Corboz, et.al, (2019), explains that some of the scavenger children have turned into street kids hoping to find a means of survival. Barre, (2015), reports that most of the scavenger children who do not enroll into school end up being abused through child labor and carrying out criminal errands on behalf of other equally frustrated individuals or groups of people.

V. Rebellion

The strain theory by Robert K. Merton states that people may deviate or rebel if the culturally accepted and defined goals and ways to achieve them do not match their status in the society they are living in. For example, it is a parental responsibility to look after their children from the time they are born and get an education. Although it is a child right to get education as stipulated in the Malawi Constitution, lack of parental care may crop in due to the low social economic status of the parents and society, and in this case the scavenger community where urban poverty is rampant and there are no proper means of survival to raise children. According to Candezeza, (2020), individuals exposed to rebellion as stated in the Merton's anomie theory, could end in rebellious behavior against authority which may in turn be disastrous, such as crime ranging from shooting battles where guns are legalized, vandalism and terrorism. In case of the school environment, scavenger children tend to withdrawal and use anti-social behavior such as fighting, arranging revenge on their bullies and eventually opt to permanently drop out from school.

2.1.3. Other minor supporting theories

These other minor theories have been included in this study as a way of explaining their attachment to scavenger children's style of living and how they affect their access to education. The theories are likely to be used in future research with reference to the emerging themes of this study. These are, Social Responsibility Theory (SRT), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Social Learning Theory, (SLT), Poor Family Socialization theory (PFAT) and Education Equity Theory (EET). All of them have a link to the Anomie theory which is the main theory used for this study.

i. Social Responsibility Theory

From the previous chapter, this is one of the supporting theories in this study that might assist the potential stakeholders fulfilling their civic duty that could be beneficial to the whole society. For example, provision of the much-needed education to scavenger children as their right and a social responsibility by the immediate and direct stakeholders, engaging the community in Income Generating Activities (IGA), and social cash transfers as a way of empowering the scavenger communities which will bring a balance between the families' financial stability and their environment. Bowen, (1953), indicated that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is obligatory for individuals or companies to act and assist their environment and society for the betterment of their livelihoods. This theory links to this study in a way that the Lilongwe City Council (LCC) should be obliged to construct a school, health clinic, a police unit or introduce community policing for the betterment of the families of the scavengers and probably skills development as well for the scavenger community youth. The fact that it is the LCC that created the garbage site, then they should also be responsible for the scavenger community's welfare and contribute to access to education for scavenger children. In showing social responsibility by all stakeholders including government, scavenger children could have lesser problems in accessing quality education.

ii. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

According to Abend, (2008), he describes the meaning of theory with reference to Theory of planned behavior as that, pp32, 665 – 68,

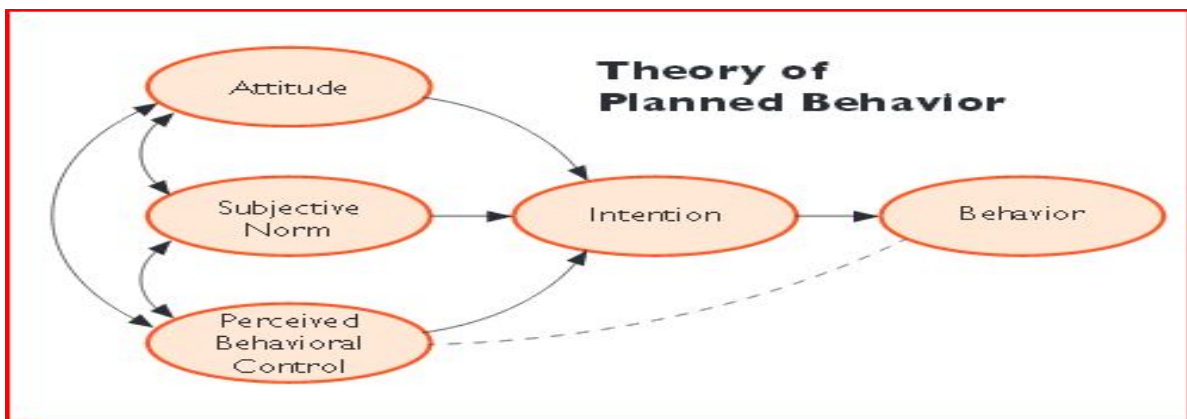
“Theory psychologically connects to behavior while maintaining attitude, subjective norms and the belief of performing a given behavior which brings out an individuals' behavior in the end.”

Whilst Alaa-Eldin, (2014), explains that theory building brings about concepts that are related to solving research phenomenon. For example, influencing child garbage

scavenger who dropped out of school to change their mindset and be re-admitted back into school and rewarding them with either food rations or school uniform or learning materials. The theory has the capacity to support this study because there is a possibility of retaining more students in school by using planned motivation acts as mentioned. This is a cognitive theory by Azjen (1985).

Figure 3:

Theory of Planned Behavior



Source: *"Theory of Planned Behavior: An HC3 Research Primer"*

The diagram concurs with the TPB and links with the theoretical framework of the study (Anomie Theory), in such a way that the behavior of the scavenger children towards provision of education and staying in school will be influenced by the motivation factor of being rewarded by food rations or learning materials and it is assumed that the outcome will be high enrollment and retention rates which will reduce dropping out of school and non-enrolment.

iii. Social Learning Theory

The Social Learning Theory (SLT) has the capacity to influence the child garbage scavengers and praised for such a move, for example, if they come to school early and they are recognized by giving them a pencil or a notebook. Lederman, (2015), emphasizes that children learn more by imitation through the teaching of desirable behaviors and positive

reinforcement and rewards. Mainly, the motivation factor must continue and be sustained if this theory must work. Perin, (2003), explains that it may not be material motivational only but also verbal praise, such as clapping hands for those that have done well or making them have a special place to sit for an allocated time. This can assist in keeping them in school by rewarding them each time they attend classes verbally or with incentives like books, pencils or monetary rewards for those that manage to attend school for a whole week without being absent. Bandura, (1977), cited by Mcleod and updated in (2022), people learn and obtain new skills by observing and doing what others are doing. In this case, if scavenger children are rewarded for any good deed in schools. It is in this regard that the Social Learning theory links with this study that the other children are bound to follow the same and end up liking being in school because of the motivation factors with will assist in dealing with withdrawal and anti-social behavior.

iv. Poor Family Socialization Theory

Emphasis on Poor Family Socialization theory (PFST) is on the connection between parents' lack of education, and low expectations which are usually linked to factors such as low socio-economic status, gender, ethnicity, and dropout. Candeleza, (2020), observed that children living in absolute poverty tend to be exposed to greater risks which are accompanied by negative emotions causing lower cognitive and social skills. Mostly such children produce poor academic performance and anti-social behaviors while giving rise to criminology. Thus, stakeholders will have to discover that such children might be associated with mental health issues because of undergoing through a lot of stress, trauma and depression. Barre, (2015), explained that even if the Gender Parity Index (GPI) is at 0.99 in Malawi, it has been reported that there are still other areas that are experiencing Gender Based Violence especially in poverty-stricken homes whereby girls and women face a lot of discrimination and inequalities especially when it comes to accessing education. Negative home socioeconomic factors such

as lack of necessities with food ranking high on the priority list, are mostly the main cause of fights, stealing and breaking the cultural norms which may always end up in violence within the scavenger communities. This theory links well with the Anomie theory in matters of family socio-economic status of the scavenger families and how they intend to achieve their goals.

v. Educational Equity Theory

Education Equity Theory (EET) emphasizes believing that all learners must have equal access and take part in quality learning environments that will bring out successful results. According to Sanderson, (2006), vulnerable children might refuse to go back to school after dropping out due to other reasons that hinder their interest in education. Most of the barriers are caused by the inequality issues that education providers such as government and other stakeholders portray in comparison with other areas of intervention they work in. These might be in the form of infrastructure development, Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs), and adequate number of well-trained teachers.

However, the inequity issues for scavenger communities are dilapidated unfriendly infrastructure, inadequate school furniture, number of teachers and teacher's houses, teaching and learning materials. Lack of these things demotivate child garbage scavengers to stay in school. Efendi, (2020), explains that apart from school factors, other inequity issues arise within their environments such as access to clean drinking water, shelter, health services and child protection issues with regards to human rights. Such inequities increase drop-out rates, and the assumption is that if these issues are resolved, the scavenger communities will realize high rates of turn-over with an increase in learner retention. Dorious, (2010), explains that if fairness and inclusion are part and parcel of quality and equitable education then the outcome will uplift the socio-economic status of the scavenger communities and their families. It can

rightly be stated that lack of equity brings about rebellion, conformity, innovation and ritualism and retreatism and explained by Robert Melton as stated by Nickerson, 2022.

2.2.0. Conceptual Framework

As already discussed in chapter one the main idea is to find possible solutions to the problem of lack of education to child garbage scavengers that are sidelined in Malawi and probably areas for future research. It is assumed that lack of education for the scavenger communities continues to cause high drop-out rates which results in organized crime, violence, child abuse, alcohol and substance abuse. As a way of responding to the Theoretical Framework, there should be equality and equity in the provision of education to all citizens. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, (2015), stipulates that no one must be left behind in education regardless of status, gender, color or ethnicity. Therefore, stakeholders in education have the obligation to make sure that the scavenger communities are not marginalized in accessing quality education and other basic needs that contribute as causes to non-enrolment in school.

Considering the Anomie /Strain theory by Durkheim, (2015), cited by Lukes, pp. 699-704, explains that the assumption in low-income households is that protocols for living fulfilling meaningful lives are broken as there are many bottlenecks and the major one being rampant poverty. As much as the scavenger communities have their own culture and norms, most of them resort to delinquent behavior that results into so many anti-social characteristics such as bullying, stealing and all sorts of negative behavior like violence, child prostitution and dropping out of school. The Malawi Education statistics, (2022), indicates that 1.24% out of a total enrollment of 185,556 boys and girls dropped out of school in lower and upper primary in Lilongwe City alone. However, these statistics may not cover those that are already out of school due to non-enrollment. It is assumed that stakeholders will include the scavenger children in their social responsibility commitments to providing education by considering other necessities in dealing with high rates of drop-out; for example, child friendly

infrastructure, adequate teaching and learning materials, qualified teachers, access to health facilities, community policing and provision of Guidance and Counseling. Furthermore, engaging communities in good parenting skills and knowledge on Re-admission Policy for re-entry procedures of dropouts would be a useful strategy to empower the scavenger communities.

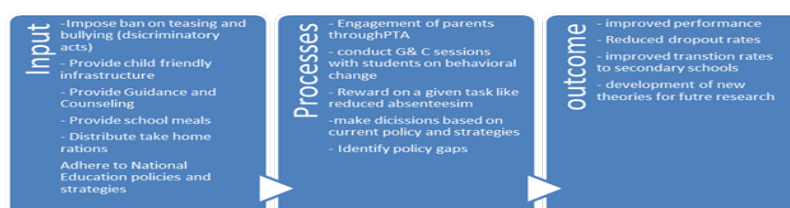
Conceptual framework can be aligned to the independent and dependent variables and the Input-Process-Output (IPO) conceptual model. Deng, (2022), assumes that all stakeholders directly involved with the welfare of the child garbage scavengers will take their roles in form of corporate responsibility to assist the scavenger community acquire education as their right among other basic needs. For example, the Ministry of education as a policy holder should make sure that teaching and learning takes place for scavenger children by looking critically into infrastructure issues, teaching and learning materials and provision of teachers. Nonetheless, other line Ministries like Local Government, Gender and Health have also an obligation to make due to issues of child protection and well-being despite their socioeconomic status. Therefore, the Independent, dependent and moderator variables will guide the research process to bring out successful outcomes for the scavenger communities by addressing the problems faced with child garbage scavengers in accessing equitable education in Malawi as stipulated in the Social Learning Theory. With reference to the hypothesis and research questions as outlined in the study's chapter one; case of my study, it is assumed that if out of school youth (child garbage scavengers) are provided with appropriate intervention by relevant stakeholders in education then drop-out rates will be minimized or they will not be minimized. Barre, (2015), explains that Malawi is guided by the Refuse and Rubble Disposal (RRD), Bi-Laws of the Local Government in Urban Areas Act (Cap22:01). Nonetheless this act does not talk about provision of education to such communities hence the research question, "who are the responsible stakeholders in providing education to the vulnerable child scavengers?" The idea is that the provision of necessary

infrastructure, furniture, teaching and learning materials, school meals and enough qualified teachers would minimize the number of child garbage scavengers that drop out of school or do not attend school at all. However, the provision of the above necessities may not be enough. The communities around the study area need motivation like provision of school meals since they are hit by rampant urban poverty, health services, police services or community policing for safety and Guidance and Counseling for the vulnerable learners as they face everyday life with hardship of rampant urban poverty in their communities and families to the point that there has been an increase in mental health issues such as trauma and depression cannot be avoided.

Lederman, (2015), suggested that there is also a high possibility of dropout for child scavengers in such communities and may not stay in school due to other reasons such as poverty, hunger, lack of school infrastructure, delinquent behavior and lack of parental guidance. These reasons can be tackled using the Input-Process-Output (IPO) conceptual model so that the research process can be guided. The model highlights the input, process then output. For example, if the input is provision of school meals at the school environment, the process will be engaging the scavenger community and the school management for the successful output of the intervention such as keeping scavenger children in school to get the much-needed education for their future meaningful livelihoods and perform better while staying in school.

Figure 4

Adoption of the IPO conceptual model on scavenger children to stay in school



Source: Kafulatira, G.2023 Unicaf University in Malawi

Apart from the mentioned variables, environmental factors could also bring specific difference due to age, sex and gender in the academic area and the environment which is conducive to scavenging and negative cultural and traditional beliefs and practices. The main idea is to bring together all barriers that hinder child garbage scavenger's education apart from stakeholder non-involvement in providing education so that such areas could be addressed and probably be useful for future research on scavenger children's vulnerability. Barre, (2015), emphasizes on the need to examine stakeholders' involvement in providing services to such communities including other mentioned areas as their social responsibility. For example, interventions by engaging in school youth communities, such as, UNICEF Child and Youth Friendly Community Initiative (CYFCI) whereby the aim is to safeguard child rights protection. The initiative further supports children's mental well-being and protection from all sorts of abuse as they meet a lot of hardships within their community. Another example is by working on resilience to the economic shocks that came along with climate change and child vulnerability.

2.2.1. Description of the field industry

With reference to sciencedirect.com, a field industry of study is the area of concentration and activities occurring with regards to the topic of the research paper. The activities may include processes of obtaining data by meeting participants personally using the appropriate research tools. The study area in this research study is the scavenging community where scavenger children are born and spend their lives in while the education sector is where equity to access to education must be provided without inequalities and marginalization. For example, these inequalities are found in school factors such as infrastructure development, provision of qualified teachers, Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) and re-admission of school dropouts' issues. Gibbs, (2023), outlines the use of

necessary research tools for Focus Group Discussion during data collection in a research study. These can be in the form of a questionnaire, recording instruments and use of school records. Nonetheless, in this study, the field industry extends to Local Government through the Lilongwe City Council (LCC), garbage site and the slums around it. In addition, the labor market for the scavenging community is found in the informal sector whereby activities are not regulated by the law. For example, unlicensed businesses operating at very small and minimal scales by the scavenger families within their community in the form of beer selling, fruits, soap, and many more. Furthermore, in this field there are a lot of activities that fall under several industries such as building, commerce, trade and manufacturing from recycled waste from the garbage site. However, without taking into consideration the Education Equity Theory (EET), the scavenger communities will continue to be marginalized on issues of social justice if their cultural norms continue to be sidelined. Grant, (2014), hence the rise in crime rate. Therefore, it is the responsibility of stakeholders in the mentioned field industries to observe that equity and equality issues are given a priority in support of uplifting the livelihoods of the scavenger communities especially by improving their dwelling environments through the provision of quality, equitable and inclusive education.

2.2.2. Defining scavenger communities' need for education

Scavenger communities are usually found close to waste dumping sites mainly in the cities and district councils. According to Aryampa, (2021), scavenging is the act of going through garbage containers or city dumping sites without permission. It has been observed that even cities with the largest dumping sites do not have the legal obligation to develop strategies fit for solid waste picking and recycling into the formal market. However, due to socioeconomic status of the scavenger communities, there are a lot of informal activities that take place at the dumping sites such that children dwelling in such communities are part of the scavenger community vulnerability. For example, the inhabitants of the scavenger

communities are a generation of past generations that survive and depend on garbage scavengers for as long as the municipal council keeps the garbage site open. Despite the hardships and vulnerability of the of the scavenger communities, scavenger children need to get access to equitable education as stipulated in article 1 section 25; Constitution of Malawi, (2013), which stresses on equal access to education by all persons regardless of color, ethnicity and religion. Stakeholders in education have always turned a blind eye to the scavenger community's vulnerability, even though they still qualify for the right to education. However, there are still acts of continued vandalism of school property; lack of interest in enrolling in school by the families and the children themselves and lack of basic needs before schooling is taken into consideration. The scavenger communities' environment has always been unsuitable for human survival. Nonetheless, such communities, if not provided with education, it is assumed that the future generations will be full of criminality and that normal protocols used to earn meaningful and productive livelihoods will be broken as provided by the 'Anomie / strain Theory' in chapter one. The (2010-2015), the Lilongwe City Council, Development Strategy, (pp. 70) reveals that, "the intergovernmental management of the education function between the National Department and the City Assembly is poorly managed." For example, insufficient teaching and learning material are featuring highly with unclear roles and responsibilities at council level whilst Local Government has no policies on vulnerable groups where the orphans and vulnerable children, the aged and promotion of gender equality have been cited as examples. Nonetheless, scavenger children's education is almost invisible in the strategy, a thing which does not take to task the city council to take responsibility for the garbage site.

2.2.3. Local Government involvement in solid waste refill sites

According to the World Habitat on solid Waste Management in World Cities (2010), the handling of garbage sites or refill areas for solid waste is managed differently by municipal

councils which fall under local government. In large and developed countries' cities, the municipal councils have put systems in place for solid waste recycling and picking while in developing and under-developed countries the story is different. In the Saharan Africa, the landfills are not secured, and scavengers do not follow any procedures to pick solid waste or recycle. Kasinja & Tilley, (2018), observes that countries like Malawi and Zambia, there is no capacity to manage the dumping sites and poor people from rural areas who migrate to urban areas without any proper agenda squat around these areas to scavenge for their survival. Even though it is the duty of municipal councils' responsibility to transport and manage solid waste beginning with collection, and disposal; the LCC has insufficient equipment to service garbage collection within the city. As the population growth is also escalating, experience has shown that local councils and in this case Lilongwe city council, do not have the capacity to carry out this work. The council further does not carry out its social responsibility obligations properly on the provision of education to child scavengers who have been sidelined, marginalized or completely forgotten. Kasinja & Tilley, (2018), explains that scavenger children are left to fend for their families disregarding the importance of education as a requirement and a priority in their lives. However, the situation in Malawi is that Local Government has taken over responsibility of handling basic education through the District Councils. Directors for Youth, Education and Sports (DEYS) come from the Ministry of Education and there are also Chief Education Managers (CEOs) that are managing primary education at District level. These offices link the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the District Councils, and the Director for Basic Education is located at the Ministry Headquarters. Despite this move by government, experience has shown and it has been noted that the available data from the District Education Management Information Systems (DEMIS), and the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), captures only children that are in school or those that have dropped out of school leaving out those that have never made any attempt to enroll into school or have dropped

out of school with no hope of returning back to school. This trend may have left out a lot of scavenger children who have never made any attempts to enroll into school from the scavenger communities. It has been noted that children who live with their parents may have a higher chance of enrolling into school to get some little education than those coming from child-headed families or single parent homesteads especially in the scavenger communities. Barre, (2015), explained that most of the times school dropouts have no interest in enrolling in school hence they are not captured in the EMIS data. In countries that have made education compulsory, such families are brought to book by law, and they are responsible for the penalties. However, there is only Free Primary Education (FPE) in Malawi, but education is still not compulsory or mandatory by law.

The Cambridge Dictionary defines compulsory as something that must be done because of the rule or law, or mandatory. Mohanty, (2010), comments that bringing compulsory education to scavenger communities will have its own consequences as most of the time their normal culture or tradition is ignored. For example, scavenger communities will possibly be met by resistance as compulsory education is a non-starter if scavenger communities do not have shelter, food, safe and clean drinking water and other necessities. Therefore, it is the responsibility of Local Government to engage the local leaders of the scavenger communities and sensitize them on the importance of education and the future of their children. It is assumed that this study will link Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Education to bring out issues that need to be addressed in order to provide quality and equitable, inclusive education to the entire scavenger communities and some of the pre-requisite interventions for scavenger children to be enrolled into school and minimize drop-out rates which are currently alarming.

2.2.4. State of scavenger children on lack of access to education

Marginalization and deprivations of such rights and privileges have proved to be increasing, especially for those living under the poverty line. According to UN Women, (2015), worldwide nations have been preaching of the right to education and social justice for girls and young women with boys inclusive. Young & Chavez, (2022), indicates that this socioeconomic classification discrimination and phenomenon has become very noticeable in very remote and rural areas which are followed by semi-urban areas so much so that scavenger communities have not spared. In the cities the phenomenon is rampant in the squatter areas such as the scavenger communities which are highly patronized by the rural immigrants to urban areas especially in the outskirts of the cities. Mohanty, (2010), explains that scavenger children face a lot of discrimination, anti-social language use, bullying, unfriendly seating plans in the classroom, discrimination and sexual exploitation among many others. The Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM), Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy, (CSPP), stresses on ensuring that governmental and non-governmental stakeholders implementing child related programs should prioritize child protection against all forms of child rights violations such as child labor, sexual abuse, child marriage and child trafficking among many more. However, there is limited or no child protection reporting structures in the scavenger communities, since their presence is fluid as they are nomadic and have no proper homes as compared to other children outside the scavenger communities. Kanjere, (2019), stated that many times, child abuse incidents have been reported on social media about children being assaulted in various ways which result in physical and psychological damage to the child victims. It is in this respect that this study intends to intensify awareness on child rights violations so that scavenger children are protected just as any other children born in Malawi regardless of the areas they are born in. According to the (2020) National Education Strategic Investment Plan (NESIP), the

general objective for the out of school youth on functional literacy and Complementary Basic Education (CBE).

“Is to expand access and enhance utilization for basic literacy, numeracy and livelihood skills and knowledge attained by the youth for effective participation in their communities and through national development.” 4.2.3. pp. 42.

However, there are so many factors that affect out of school youth with scavenger children inclusive. These factors as already mentioned in chapter 1 lack basic needs such as food, shelter, safe drinking water, clothing and in addition, proper parental care. It has been documented in the NESIP that, the Youth Functional Literacy (YFL), is underfunded and absenteeism is high among scavenger children and street children if they attempt to enroll into such schools. Another factor is that governmental stakeholders working with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Gender and Social Welfare are failing to recognize the legal part of taking care of vulnerable children where policies and strategic plans are not utilized adequately when it comes to keeping scavenger children in school. For example, failing and delaying providing Teaching and Learning Materials (TLM's) where budgets are available due to long procurement processes. Currently, the system at the central level the planning has been to decentralize Complementary Basic Education (CBE) with focus on digitizing teaching and learning materials such as use of tablets, Television and radio for remote teaching. Malawi seems to have a long way to go to reach as most of the out of school youth such as scavenger children who already find it difficult to stay in school or get organized in their communities to participate in CBE as the type of life scavenger communities lead have proved to be unfriendly with teaching and learning procedures. Efendi, (2020), suggests that there should be well coordinated and harmonized efforts to accommodate scavenger children with access to education. The same goes with the attempt to improve acquisition of technical and vocational skills for out of school youth so that they can live meaningful and productive livelihoods in future. Aida, et.al, (2016), observes that all stakeholders interested in uplifting the lives of

scavenger communities must understand that the scavenger community is very different from other common poor communities in urban areas in such a way that they merely rely on scavenging at the garbage site. Scavenger children's lives have reached a point where any mishap happening to them at the garbage site is taken as normal and they have learned to endure unbearable pain for the mere fact that they are scavenger children. For example, breaking limbs or even facing death when they fall off the garbage track or getting hit by the unlicensed and unregistered garbage trucks. It has been observed that such incidents mostly go unreported and nobody is taken to task. Therefore, the scavenger communities need not only to be considered on their physical needs but also their emotional and educational needs. As stated before, governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children seriously need to find strategies and policies that can overcome obstacles to education such as lack of teaching and learning materials, decentralizing of CBE to improve on its effectiveness and efficiency in delivery of the national education programs. Ojiambo, (2022), stressed on the need of bringing forward the research agenda on the provision of quality, equitable and inclusive education to out of school youth and especially scavenger children so that capturing of real time data in future studies so that assistance and interventions on this research problem should be strengthened. Aryampa, (2019), explains that marginalization of scavenger children is a violation of the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC), and it could be minimized especially around the scavenger communities if timely interventions as mentioned earlier were to take place. A good example in the world is the Peoples' Republic of China where it is mandatory for children between the ages of 6 and 15 to attend school regardless of their race, gender, or nationality. However, their tuition is free, but parents are supposed to buy books, a practice which cannot suit scavenger children in the absence of social cash transfers to vulnerable families.

Another barrier to scavenger children's access to education is the levels of their parent's education which does not allow them to appreciate the benefits of education for the future livelihoods and better living conditions. Candaleza, (2020), observed that most of the parents and guardians of the scavenger children would rather have their children or wards follow them to the garbage site to pick waste or beg on the streets than attend school. Apart from school and home factors, there are other principal factors that contribute non-enrolment or dropping out of school for scavenger children if they try enrolling into school such as lack of basic needs at home and parental care especially regarding access to education. Kasinja & Tilley, (2018), observed that there are a lot of child labor issues in the scavenger communities where families expect children to fend for their homesteads by working in the agricultural sector, building sector such as sand mining and brick burning. Others go hawking or go on the streets begging and sometimes resort to stealing. Such children have very minimal chances to enroll into school let alone attend classes without considering the principal factors troubling them both at home and at school. However, there are very little or no statistics available on out of school youth that live in scavenger communities whose lifestyle is fluid due to their nomadic type of life shifting from one squatter house to another and the scanty statistics are available, they do not give a true reflection of the actual problem on the ground. Mohanty, (2010), stresses that out of school factors also feature highly than the in-school factors that cause high rates of dropouts for child garbage scavengers. Mohanty further explains that children in the scavenger communities are prone to abuse and sociocultural injustice so much so that child rights through child protection policies and strategies are barely noticeable and respected in these communities. For example, Zodiak online (#ZBSNews), of 4th May, (2022), reported that the consortium of child rights activities was documenting 30 cases on defilement of sexual harassment and other forms of child abuse that were being recorded in Lilongwe every day; an action which meant that scavenger communities were not spared. It was also reported that some

of the children continue to face different kinds of abuse in the squatter areas mainly due to poverty, and lack of good parenting skills.

2.2.5. Stakeholder involvement in scavenger communities

Most governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in the provision of education, Ministry of Education, Gender and Local Government feature highly as policy and strategy holders and developers in the provision of education for the scavenger children. Bennet, (2022), indicates that even though the scavenger communities are highly marginalized and ignored due to their low socio-economic status in society. The Malawi 2063 stresses on referring to the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 4, which stresses mainly on the provision of education to its citizens. There is the introduction of inclusive education for all and that no one must be left behind and so does the Malawi 2030. The Malawi 2063 plan on education includes goals such as provision of quality, equitable and inclusive education, and promotion of adult education plus improving workforce skills. The line Ministries and other stakeholders that are directly linked with the newly formulated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 agenda are Ministry of Education, alongside Ministries of Gender and Social Welfare and Health just to mention a few. These governmental stakeholders are guided by policies and strategies which are clear on the provision of education to all citizens regardless of race, color and ethnicity. For example, the National Education Policy (NEP), on priority Area number 1 of the Policy, provides for: “Quality, accessible and equitable basic education, and the policy gives the mandate to ministry of youth to deal with issues of provision of education. However, such interventions leave out governmental and non-governmental organizations involved directly with provision of quality, equitable and inclusive education to out of school out of youth with a choice of their targets and may completely miss the scavenger children.

i. Ministry of Education

Ministry of Education in Malawi, in (2023), developed the National Education Policy (NEP) which guides on the education system including out of school youth. According to NEP, (2023), it is stated that the purpose of the policy is to guide and provide a coordinated approach to the development of the education system for relevant knowledge, skills, competencies and values necessary for the socioeconomic development of the nation. However, it is not very specific about scavenger children's education as they are just included in the category of orphans and vulnerable children. Despite this fact, it should be noted that education brings about knowledge that is created by working hard to have strong systems put in place through research agendas and innovations. For example, putting in place strategies that could improve the welfare of scavenger children such as school feeding programs, take home rations and recreation centers where children can be assisted with behavior change remedies through counselling and psycho-social support. Scheinberg & Anschiz, (2007), pp 257-322 suggests that both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders should be aware of child rights for every living child in the country and link this with equal access of education for all despite their race, ethnicity, status and color. For scavenger children this is not the case, once they decide to drop out of school, most of them end up entering the labor market prematurely without proper skills for back up. Kanjere, (2018), acknowledges that scavenger children face all sorts of stigma and discrimination while in school which brings about lack of interest in schooling for them. Nonetheless, the National Education Ppolicy (NEP), (2023), indicates that Malawi has embarked on migrating from free primary education for all, to compulsory education whereby non-enrolment will be illegal if parliament will pass the bill. However, if environmental and home factors for scavenger children will not be addressed, such as basic needs like shelter, portable water, health services and protection of citizens then compulsory education will be a non-starter. It is in this respect that all governmental and non-governmental

stakeholders responsible for providing education to scavenger children must understand that education is a fundamental right for all citizens despite their status in society. Therefore, Ministry of Education and Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare need to be in the forefront catering for the scavenger communities in the provision of quality, equitable and inclusive education starting from Early Child Development (ECD) centers. For instance, in my area of study, there is one primary school and a Community Day Secondary School (CDSS), that caters for mostly scavenger children and the infrastructure needs to be upgraded in the areas of additional classrooms, toilets, sporting facilities, such as grounds, football and netball pitches and water points as the population in the scavenger community is increasing day by day. There is a need to build proper infrastructure and provide adequate teaching and learning materials to the increasing number of children who enroll as early as in standard one. As of now the textbook ratio at primary level is 1:1 whilst at secondary school it fluctuates depending on the subject. For example, English is at 3:1. While others range from 5:1, 4:1, and 2:1. This is indicated in the National Education Strategic Improvement Plan, NESIP (2022). Further to this, the primary school uses one borehole against an enrollment of more than 3,400 students who uses 10 classrooms and does not have an adequate water supply in the dry season as they depend on one borehole.

ii. Ministry of Gender Community Development and Social Welfare

Ministry of Gender Community Development and Social Welfare is the custodian of child protection issues including developing and implementation of policies and strategies. The Ministry is supposed to allocate officers in every district who ought to investigate the issues of child protection and social welfare and they are also supposed to link up with Ministry of Education and the Police victim support unit at district level. One of the policies developed which covers child protection issues is the Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM) Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy, (CSPP). The policy isms to engage and work with Local

Government in sensitizing traditional leaders on national laws and policies that govern child protection issues. The government legislature ought to review laws and policies regarding child protection while lobbying for mobilization of resources to escalate child protection interventions. However, scavenger children still face stigma and discrimination in schools and public places and are most of the time associated with crime and antisocial behavior. Georgeta & Lopez, (2022), pp 610-628, observed that when children are faced with so many basic needs hardships, they have little or no concentration in class and they end up being poor performers in class. In this case it is scavenger children that end up being victims of social injustice which always results in their dropping out of school. Nonetheless, the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare has social welfare officers who monitor the affairs of street children and some of them are given shelter and food in some of their designated places within the city. Despite such efforts, scavenger communities do not benefit from these interventions since the garbage site is a different scenario all together than that of the streets who opt to leave their families and live alone on the streets. Barre. (2015), stresses that it is the role and responsibility of parents to care for their children by providing food, shelter and education, but this is not the case with scavenger children. It has been observed that scavenger children's parents have no means to provide fully for their families hence they let their children fend for themselves at the garbage site where cases of child marriages, child prostitution and child labor are on the increase around the garbage site. According to MDHS, (2015-16), 46.7% of girls are married before the age of 18 which remains higher percentage despite the passing of the marriage bill in the Malawi Parliament. There is rapid population growth which is putting the government under pressure to scale up social services to its vulnerable population alongside provision of quality, equitable and inclusive education. Even though scavenger communities are beneficiaries of the social protection services provided by the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare, scavenger children still

drop out of school in high percentages or do not enroll into school at all. It is assumed that this study will assist in scaling up governmental and non-governmental stakeholder involvement for scavenger communities to get the much-needed quality, equitable and inclusive education and other basic needs to access education.

iii. Ministry of Health

Ministry of Health has a role to play in the lives of all children in Malawi including scavenger children. Sustainable Development Goal Number 3 stresses on healthy living and promotion of well-being for all ages. Some of the sub-goals to be achieved in SDG 3 are by reducing maternal mortality rate, fighting communicable disease, and promoting mental health and prevention and treating alcohol and substance abuse. Genemo, (2010), explains that if the child scavengers continue to face the feeling of rejection in the school environment, their psychological status will be full of low self-esteem and insecurity, a thing which influences lack of interest in education and high dropout rates. Therefore, it is the duty of Ministry of Education in collaboration with Ministries of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare, Health and Youth to sensitize the masses on the need for awareness on health living, mental health issues and other areas of health care to scavenger communities and Malawi as a whole.

Young & Chavez, (2022), explains that scavenger children meet a lot of hazards while scavenging at the garbage site, as cited in Mohanty, (2014). Sometimes there are stories that scavenger children for falling off garbage trucks, they get injured with glass and metal resulting in cut wounds, sometimes snake bites and food poisoning after consuming rotten food from the garbage trucks. Some of the scavenger children get disabled or may lose their lives without a proper attention from their immediate families or the health clinics within their reach. So, while the Ministry of Health is striving to manage the child mortality rate; these communities are in dire need of proper health services as citizens of the country. They may not visit a hospital due

to their cultural and traditional beliefs, but they are healthy living. However, the Ministry of Education needs to engage different stakeholders to assist in the provision of quality. Equitable and inclusive education to scavenger children with reference to the Constitution of Malawi Chapter IV, where it is stated that, “*All Malawians have the right to Education.*” Ministry of Health frequently, embarks on a countrywide exercise providing vitamin A, zinc and iron to children in the infant section of primary school in Malawi to act as a supplement to their diets. There is also a door-to-door campaign for Polio and Cholera vaccines in all communities countrywide. Nonetheless, due to some deep-rooted traditional, cultural and religious beliefs, scavenger communities are among groups of people that frequently reject such free health services. Barre, (2015), discusses the need of sensitization and awareness campaigns to have the scavenger communities agree and come to terms with some interventions such as vaccinations provided by the government and other stakeholders. It is high time scavenger communities and families realize that vaccinations are beneficial to their children’s health well-being, regardless of their traditions and cultural beliefs.

2.2.6. Factors influencing high rates of dropouts and their effects on scavenger children

Drop out is usually associated with absenteeism, non-completion of a school education cycle, failing to sit for examinations or stopping to attend lessons for various reasons. Grant-Valldosera & Minguillon, (2014), describes dropping out of school as not completely defined as the situation does not describe the period one has to be absent from school or the reasons that qualify an individual to be categorized as a drop out. In other words, one is a dropout once they completely stop attending school and engage in other businesses. For example, getting into full time scavenging of child labor activities for the whole academic year or more. Some of the school dropouts in the scavenger communities do not even know the consequences of

being absent from school frequently or for a long time as they live in a community which does not prioritize education.

It has been observed that drop-out rates across the world for vulnerable children and especially scavenger children are on the increase due to the global rising poverty, natural disasters and the effect of COVID 19 Pandemic plus other natural disasters, such as cyclones, flash floods and volcanos. Mohanty, (2019), explains that around 40% of the scavenger children drop out of school because of several factors such as, environmental related to school and home factors, psycho-social issues including traditional and culturally related factors. These factors if not addressed, scavenger children will always drop out of school in large numbers. The 2030 agenda, United Nations (UN), newly revised Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), (2015), put emphasis on the empowerment and promotion of the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race and ethnicity, religious and traditional beliefs. It is assumed that the results of this study will assist in engaging both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in education to reduce dropout rates for scavenger children through filling the policy and strategy gaps that currently exists in the education system. For example, strengthening networking and making collaborative efforts between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in education to harmonize interventions to bring quality education to the garbage site through scavenger communities.

2.2.7. Environmental related factors

According to Nambissan, (2000), scavenging for survival has been reported to be a manual occupation for millions of poor people around the world though not formal in many instances. It is a routine that where there is a dumping site in any country, there is bound to be scavenger communities, either recycling the solid the solid waste or scavenging for survival. Nambissan, (2000), states that India alone has more than 10 million scavengers who survive

on scavenging after migrating from rural areas into urban areas or semi-urban areas. This group of people eventually form relations and turn into scavenger communities which are often marginalized in many places in the categories of school environment, places of worship and almost everywhere people gather for a purpose. The Malawi National Statistics Office (NSO), (2016-17), Integrated Household Survey, indicates that scavenger communities in Malawi have a similar trend of migrating from rural areas to settle in squatter areas to scavenge for survival. These settlements have children who automatically became child garbage scavengers ignoring their right to education as citizens of Malawi. The newly revised United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) stress the inclusion of vulnerable children to increase access to quality, equitable and inclusive education for scavenger children regardless of their status, origins and social class. It is in this respect that factors influencing high drop-out rates will be discussed in relation to scavenger children's environments and other aspects that affect both the school and home environment, and other elements that cause them emotional distress. Kanjere, (2018), observed that the impact of traditional and cultural beliefs often influence towards education mostly is negative on enrollment into schools within the scavenger communities. However, governments through the Ministry of Education and other non-governmental stakeholders in education are providing child friendly infrastructure starting from as low as basic education levels of education, teaching and learning materials, Guidance and Counseling through Life Skills Education (LSE) subject and engaging communities for good parenting skills. EMIS, (2023), somehow, indicates that these interventions only cover children that are in school while those that are out of school or have dropped out of school, are sidelined and completely marginalized since they frequent the garbage site.

2.2.7.1. School Factors

Ministry of Education provides basic education through primary schools that are built within a radius of at least 5 KMs from each other in urban areas. The Chief Education's office indicates that City of Lilongwe alone has a total number 57 primary schools and an average number of 2,700 learners per primary school. Mchitanjiru Primary School has been built near the Lilongwe City Council garbage site where child garbage scavengers have a chance to enroll into school. The Primary School has a total enrollment number of 3,400 against 10 classrooms and they have adopted an overlapping learner system whereby lessons start at different times. Mchitanjiru Community Day Secondary School has a total number of 288 learners but there are no traceable child scavengers as it is presumed that they all drop out before they reach secondary school education level; an indication that illiteracy levels could be very high in the scavenger community.

Different studies, including the Chisomo Children's home, have indicated that 25-50 percent of children have been bullied in one way or another, especially by their own peers. Peers become violent towards their own peers through bullying where harmful messages bring about very bad consequences on children psychologically as these messages reach out to a lot of people in a very short time. However, violence against children has not spared scavenger children who get enrolled in the main public school system and mix with other children who come from proper homesteads. Nonetheless, goal number 4 of the 2030 Agenda for SDGs stress on leaving no child behind in the provision of education by governmental and non-governmental stakeholders and it is non-discriminatory. It is therefore in this regard that Ministry of Education alongside other line ministries need to work together by bringing on board all stakeholders working in the areas of providing education to scavenger children and out of school youth to scale up interventions which will be beneficial to-children in these

categories in order to have meaningful and productive future livelihoods in their communities and elsewhere.

It has been observed that scavenger children face a lot of stigma and discrimination by their peers or school managers due to poverty and lack of basic needs. They struggle to buy school uniforms, notebooks and let alone food before they go to school. As such, scavenger children become prey to teasing and bullying by other well to do learners at the same school and such acts if not controlled may cause physical and emotional damage. There is also the use of bad language by fellow learners or some teachers, inconsiderate remarks by school authorities in sharing responsibilities and resources, learning materials or even service delivery. For example, non-inclusion in classwork and other notable activities in the classroom and the school within the environment. The outcomes of such treatment for scavenger children results in lack of interest in schooling, truancy and absenteeism, poor performance and an increase in low self-esteem. Mohanty, (2010), emphasizes that scavenger children would rather engage in scavenging for survival and begging in the street rather than attend or enroll into school or drop out of school where the environment is not favorable for them to stay and learn.

2.2.7.2. Home related factors

Scavenger communities are mainly composed of poor families that depend on scavenging or recycling solid waste to sell for their survival. According to Grau-Valldosera & Minguillon, (2014), settlement for scavenger families is mostly temporary and they always live in squatter areas around the garbage site. The type of families in scavenger communities range from those living with poor parents, single parents, and child headed families due to the impact of HIV and AIDS such that they become desolate with no proper shelter due to natural disasters such as heavy rains that periodically sweep away their temporally shelters including pandemics like COVID 19.

Grau-Valldosera & Minguillon, (2014), observes that scavenger homesteads require basic needs such as food, shelter, good clothing and safe drinking water to send their children to school. The situation at the garbage site is that scavenger children are forced to take on family responsibilities to fend for themselves and their families instead of going to school. However, parents have no option when it comes to comparing schooling and scavenging for survival. Others home factors that contribute high drop-out rates are piece work that are available in the building industry such as sand mining, stone breaking and molding bricks. These pieces of work divert scavenger children's attention towards staying in school. Others go hawking, begging or stealing on the streets defying enrolment into school. Girls are even more marginalized in scavenger communities due to issues of gender equality which is influenced by gender stereotyping and cultural beliefs. In the scavenger families and communities many girls are regularly forced to undertake the task of looking after their siblings and sick parents. Krantz, (2001), explains that some home related factors have proved that they have much influence for scavenger children to drop out of school and non-enrollment. For example, issues of Gender Based Violence (GBV) against women and girls and lack of necessities for the children to stay in school. When girl reach puberty, they need the availability of menstrual hygiene management facility at the school. Lack of such facilities as changing rooms forces girls to drop out of school in large numbers and opt for early marriages or they become victims of early and unplanned pregnancies.

2.2.7.3. Emotional related issues

The United Nations, (2006), report on violence against children, states that close to one billion children experience some form of emotional and physical violence annually. The report further explains that it is heartening to realize that one child dies due to violence every five minutes even though in most cases violence against children remains hidden but socially accepted in some areas. For example, child marriage and genital mutilation is accepted in other

cultures in Africa even though these are the biggest contributors to physical harm and emotional damage to a child, communities are still practicing these evil acts on children who are defenseless to such cultural norms. Children who pass through this pain may not immediately show that they are traumatized but could have hidden psychological issues in their later life which could result in mental health issues and anti-social behavior.

Scavenger children have not been excluded from violence against children which revolves around culture, status, education and an individual's origins and cultural beliefs. While school is a place where parents trust that their children will always be protected, in some instances violence is high through teasing and bullying. Such unacceptable acts do not spare the homes and online violence which is known as 'cybercrime or bullying'. Recently, there have been undocumented reports on social media that young boys are being sexually assaulted through sodomy especially in same sex boarding schools. It is reported that they are heavily threatened that if they reveal something very bad will happen to them. There is fear of being severely bullied and victimized if such bad acts are reported to authorities which result in loss of interest and serious dropouts for young boys. Others show signs of being traumatized and depression, while some manage to hide these emotional disturbances. For example, being emotionally upset may result in loss of concentration in class, being so frightened when joined by the older boys and sometimes peeing on the bed and self-isolation.

The low educational status of scavenger children's parents and guardians is also one of the reasons why scavenger parents do not show concern about whether their children are in school or not. For example, parents from the scavenger communities have little or no time to take care of their children's welfare. It has been noted that some of the scavenger parents do not attend PTA meetings as they may not follow the procedures due to high levels of illiteracy. According to Efendi, (2020), most children as young as 5-year-olds are forced to fend for themselves through begging or are engaged into child labor activities at the expense of

attending school frequently. Parents /guardians in the scavenger communities seem to be contented with such lifestyle for their young ones without any remorse. Firdous, (2022), states that there is no encouragement from scavenger children's parents for their children to aspire for meaningful and productive lives in future. When both boys' and girls' rights are violated, mostly they are ignorant of the reporting structures, and they suffer in silence. Kanjere, (2019) observed that violation of child rights comes from within the family of community. This is always the case especially when the violator is a close relative of whom they trust and expect to protect and provide for them such as stepparents, uncles, brothers and other close relatives. Scavenger children also face the same violation of their rights in their communities and homes, yet it is very difficult to report such acts due to their gender, disability, cultural beliefs, poverty levels and mostly in-depth knowledge about child rights violation and consequences. Usually, traumatized children end up in acts of criminal in nature and probably drop out of school at a very tender age.

The illiteracy of scavenger parents and poverty are a source of discrimination at school resulting in all sorts of negative behavior by their peers and some teachers. Barre, (2015), indicates that such situations may cause scavenger children to become emotionally disadvantaged, and it is assumed that many scavenger children are traumatized and depressed. If scavenger children are constantly traumatized, their behaviors could that lead to mental illness accompanied with teenage delinquent behaviors which are very common among scavenger children, but nobody notices. For example, scavenger children are associated by being violent, face withdrawal, involved in aggressive behavior such as street fights, and take part in organized crime which could result in substance and alcohol abuse. It is assumed that if both the home and school environment changed in favor of the scavenger child in having access to basic needs before enrolling in school then high drop-out rates for scavenger children will gradually be minimized.

2.2.7.4 Traditional and Cultural related factors

As already stated earlier, scavenger communities quite often are migrants from the nearest rural settings of the land filled by the city or town. In the City of Lilongwe, the scavenger communities are mainly from the Chewa tribe. The Chewas have their own traditional and cultural beliefs that portray their way of living and associations. Notable behaviors and cultural trends for the Chewas living around the garbage site is giving child raising responsibility to their uncle's *amalume*, (brother to the mother). The biological father has no say over his own children's welfare both at home and school and even when a child gets sick the father must seek the uncle's consent to take him to the hospital. In the absence of the uncle, the auntie takes charge. Most of the uncle's influence revolves around child marriages and dropping out of school as they can choose to engage the children in casual labor, sand mining and crop production manual jobs at their own will. According to the Chewa tribe, this is an accepted norm of life, and it is common and highly practiced by the illiterate families, hence the need for providing education to the scavenger communities to eliminate such negative cultural practices that hinder access to education for children.

For scavenger children that enroll in school, dropping out of school for them is a norm which is very difficult to break as they live in a poverty-stricken area, and their priority number one is to survive by fending for themselves. Child scavengers that have been enrolled at primary school are a series of the past 4 to 5 generations in a row. Barre, (2015), commented that this trend has been following the same pattern of dropping out of school and migrating to urban and semi-urban areas to survive on solid waste recycling to either use it for their own consumption or use it to benefit by selling for survival. Furthermore, unfavorable living conditions that scavenger children face everyday result in the breaking of cultural and traditional norms that bind their communities. Traditionally parents, especially the father, is

supposed to fend for the family; be it poor or well to do. Scavenger children who lack parental provision, participation and availability tend to find means for survival and mostly resort to stealing, begging or being involved in child labor where the risk of child abuse is very high. The public has come to generalize that scavenger children are thieves, and this attitude has caused a lot of stigma and discrimination sometimes without real cause. For example, the Anomie Theory, according to Melton, (2015), scavenger communities accept deviant behavior as normal provided they can achieve their goals regardless of how they attain their goals.

It is therefore in this respect that scavenger communities really need to be supported by governmental and non-governmental stakeholders around providing quality, equitable and inclusive education to their children for behavioral change and future meaningful livelihood.

2.3. Status of child garbage scavengers in the rise of criminality in scavenger communities

Due to the factors influencing high dropout rates among scavenger children, the state in which scavenger children are found remain pathetic whether they enroll into school or stay out of school. Scavenger children are just like any other child, and they have the right to all necessities as stipulated in the 1994 Constitution of Malawi with amendment in 2017; Article 23.1., on the rights of children states that,

“All children, regardless of the circumstances of their birth, are entitled to equal treatment before the law, and the best interests and welfare of children shall be a primary consideration in all decisions affecting them.”

However, this is not the case with scavenger children as they are a target for stigma and marginalization. They face child rights violations in and out of school, lack Guidance and Counseling, parental care and stakeholder involvement.

2.3.1. Child rights violations

The Convention of the Rights of Children (CRC) is an international treaty that was adopted in 1989. Malawi is ratified CRC in 1991 even though some sections of people still must deal with violation of child rights. CRC is supposed to protect the child's rights in all areas of their life, including their rights to life, survival and development, freedom from violence, abuse and neglect with the ability to give opinions on issues that affect children along with legal procedures. However, though child rights are backed up by the Constitution of Malawi and the ratified Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC); child labor, child marriage, Sexual Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV) and delinquent behavior are most common with scavenger children and their communities. Barre, (2015), stresses that non-enrolment for scavenger children will continue to be on the increase if child rights violations are not checked in the scavenger communities by gate keepers such as child protection officers from the social welfare offices.

2.3.2. Child Labor

The tough living conditions that scavenger children face both at home and in school, environment influence them to drop out of school or simply lack interest in enrolling in school as they lack necessities. Eric, (2010), explains that scavenger children as young as 5, are involved in all sorts of hard labor to fend for themselves and their families. Child labor in scavenger communities wears an ugly face especially when children are exposed to hazardous work that can be dangerous to their health, physical and mental well-being. There is no line of demarcation between child work and child labor in the scavenger communities and especially in their homesteads. It is very important to note that child work is when children are taught and given small tasks to perform in their homesteads as preparation for future lives. While, according to The International Labor Organization (ILO), (2020), child labor, is when the family benefits from the work that under 18 children undertake while compromising for the

child's chance to stay in school and access education. The ILO guidance on preventing, identifying and addressing child labor, explains that the worst forms of child labor include hazardous works which can harm the child or cause permanent damage or death, forced labor usually bonds of loans or other causes, sexual exploitation such as child prostitution and even forcing children to commit offences either for political or selfish benefits of influential individuals. Scavenger children fall off trucks, get pierced by sharp objects and are exposed to poisonous smells from chemical sprays in the agricultural sector and the garbage tracks. However, government and other stakeholders in the provision of education have emphasized awareness of the Free Primary Education (FPE) and the intention by Government to introduce compulsory education where it will be obligatory for parents and guardians to enroll their children into school. Social welfare and child protection officers work tirelessly to eliminate child labor in all sectors of development, but the intervention is minimal as compared to the number of children that do not attend school and frequent the garbage site daily.

2.3.3. Child Marriage

One of the notable harmful cultural practices among scavenger communities is child marriage. Even though Malawi under the marriage act Bill of 2013 recognizes a person under the age of 18 to be a child, there are still other cultures and traditions that condone the practice of marrying under-aged children. However, stakeholders in child protection are working tirelessly to bring awareness on the evils of child marriage and the legal consequences through local and traditional leaders. A total of 2000 Child marriages were dissolved by Paramount Chief Kachindamoto in Malawi, and the culprits were brought to book. Mweninguwe, (2022), states that scavenger children, especially girls are victims of child marriage and many other violations which could force them to either drop out of school to get married or they become victims of early pregnancies of which the mostly the end results are health problems such as

fistula and trauma. It has also been observed that scavenger communities have teens and child mothers who are within the school cycle age and need to be re-admitted back into school.

2.3.4. Sexually Related Gender Based Violence, (SRGBV)

Scavenger communities have not been spared when it comes to Sexual Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV) in their homestead and even on their way to school. Maluwa-Banda, (2018), describes Sexual Related Gender Based Violence, (SRGBV), as a form of gender-based violence concerning any sexual advances that are not wanted without taking into consideration of the relationship that exists between the people concerned in the act. It has been explained that SRGBV can be physical, sexual (rape), genital mutilation, forced abortion and sterilization. Sexual Related Gender Based Violence goes unnoticed in scavenger communities, and some have taken it to be the norm of the day because it seems it is a community where women and girls do not have a chance to complain on matters concerning Sexual Related Gender Based Violence, (SRGBV). In scavenger communities SRGBV is usually caused by harmful cultural, traditional, religious beliefs within their society. For example, when girls reach puberty, they are supposed to be in initiation camps for at least a month.

Due to the rampant poverty in scavenger communities, parents and guardians would rather have their children married early or engage in some sort of hidden child prostitution which is illegal. Mohanty, (2020), explained that children are trafficked to urban areas to work as maids and garden boys in well to do households and thereby dropping out of school. It is in these households where children working as maids are sexually molested, abused and assaulted by some of their irresponsible masters. The consequences of SRGBV are very bad as children get traumatized, some go through forced abortion and are left to fend for themselves if they bare babies. Some are infected with HIV and AIDS as victims of SRGBV. There are mechanisms by government and non-governmental stakeholders in education done through Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare such as using social welfare

and child protection officers to make follow-ups on such atrocities and used legal action against the perpetrators. Kanjere, (2018), observed that the interventions made by child protection officers on Sexual Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV), there are very little efforts targeted towards scavenger children. Even though a lot is being done to make sure that justice prevails for all such as penalizing sexual assaulters, marrying minors and child molesters, including rape, scavenger communities need sensitization and be given reporting structures on SRGBV within their communities.

2.3.5. Delinquent Behavior

Mostly, scavenger children are not given any psycho-social help in good time, this could be a recipe for trauma, depression and dropping out of school. There is an explanation that, when children are always traumatized through many causes such as, bullying, School Related Gender Based Violence, (SRGBV), emotional torture and lack of basic needs, they resort to anti-social behavior.. Medina, (2007) states that, such children join some cult groups that are involved in lawlessness acts. This could be referred to the Anomie /Strain Theory on 'teenage delinquent behavior. For example, there was a group named '**The seven bongos**' near the garbage site and it was very notorious. They operated on organized crime and reached an extent of beating innocent people, burglary and running battles with the law enforcers. For such children, abuse of alcohol and substances is normal, and they do not obey any authority. The Ministry of Education, through Life Skills subject included Guidance and Counseling as a way of dealing with delinquent behavior at school and community level. Other non-governmental organizations are the Development Partners who have pooled funds to give scholarships to 584 SRGBV survivors in six districts namely, Nkhata Bay, Mzimba South, Dowa, Ntchisi, Machinga and Mangochi. Spotlight Initiative Report, for, (2019), reports that on top of the bursaries, through UNICEF, Spotlight Initiative has constructed girls' Hostels which have the capacity to host 104 girls. Such interventions in tailor-made for the in-school children but they

become very difficult to reach scavenger children in their communities which have a lot of children who are out of school and frequenting the garbage site. The Education Management Information System (EMIS) data captures them in school and sometimes indicators on out of school youth where there is no specific targeting of scavenger children who are hard to reach due to their fluid way of settlements within the scavenger children. For example, scavenger families are nomadic, whereby some of them pay their rent on a daily and weekly basis. The daily payments are called “ku Chiimilire) meaning you just pay for a place enough for an individual to stay for a night.

2.3.6. Stakeholder and Parental involvement

There is supposed to be a role that both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in the provision of education and parents should take in lives of scavenger children education. However, experience has shown that there are fragmented efforts to offer Guidance and Counseling to scavenger children by non-governmental organizations, (NGOs) and some well-wishers through some religious groups and charitable groupings. Some of the efforts are provided by the Lions Club, Rotary Club and many others whose interventions may not be much, but the interventions are worth it especially at school level. Since scavenger children live with their parents, it has been noted that the parents should be exposed to good parenting skills. Mohanty, (2010), explained that some of the parenting skills and responsibilities are parental provision, participation, availability and protection of their children. Parents should be able to provide necessities for their children but with scavenger communities this is almost impossible due to their socioeconomic states which are usually under the poverty line of 1 dollar per day. It is only possible for the households that have been selected to be on the social cash transfer beneficiary list, otherwise this is not possible for everybody living in the scavenger community. Parents are also supposed to be trained in how to participate in their children’s education. For example, attending the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) meeting,

taking part in developmental projects of the school and assisting where possible with their children's homework and assignments.

2.4.0. Provision of Guidance and Counseling to Scavengers children

According to the Oxford dictionary, Guidance is information given to an individual with an aim of solving a problem from a person who is mandated and has authority as of suggesting to a concerned individual on what action to take. According to Sen, (2019), all forms of guidance assist in the development of a person's ability to cope with both positive and negative issues that are found as one grows and tries to make some achievement in life.

Guidance and counseling are an important aspect of an individual's life especially students as they pass through the "growing up" processes of emotions, hormonal changes and societal pressures. The state of growing up does not spare scavenger children hence the need for them to be provided with guidance and counseling whether they are in school or not. It should be noted that for every child the transition from childhood to adulthood is the most challenging one as there is so much influence from the family and the school environment. During this period, guidance and counseling plays the role of providing broader education for the life ahead. It is a therapy for individuals with specific issues which are attached to growing up in society. Sen, (2019), explains that most of the scavenger children miss these opportunities as they are mostly out of school and trying to fend for themselves as their childhood is being robbed by them. In countries like India, guidance and counseling is gradually becoming a mandatory factor in schools so that children a properly guided in their everyday lives. Still more, out of school youth are left out without any provision of guidance and counselling from their parents as they have no time to attend school. Nonetheless, The S.O.S Children's Village in Malawi has been taking children off the street and some of the orphans from scavenger communities to provide them with quality and inclusive education and vocational skills as stipulated in the objectives of their Child Protection Policy. According to Peterson and Smith,

(2008), guidance revolves around 4 major areas like educational Guidance, vocation guidance, personal guidance and social guidance in an individual's life. Mohanty, (2014), explained that all sections of guidance assist in giving help, encouragement, opinion and recommendations to solving problems of school children's issues as they grow up. However, the one giving guidance should be a certified professional counselor and should be conversant with the behavior of the client and in this case much reference is to when there is need for counselling and provision of psycho-social assistance. Scavenger children are bound to receive such help if they remain in school otherwise dropouts have difficulties accessing guidance and counselling at the garbage site.

2.4.1. Importance of Guidance and Counseling (G&C)

The main aim of introducing Guidance & Counselling to the youth is to enhance their academic, social, emotional and personal development so that they realize their self-actualization through a self-esteem lens and find solutions to their everyday life's challenges and as they meet discoveries while growing up. Sen, (2019), observed that this intervention is more realistic in educational institutions while for out-of-school youth such as scavenger children it is a difficult task as they are not always available within the school environment. There are instances whereby even approaching them one must be more cautious and careful as these communities are full of survival issues, and they are very suspicious of any intruders within their communities. Ojiambo, (2022), stated that, the major aim of Guidance Counseling Services in education institutions such as primary, secondary and tertiary education is to encourage the students' academic, social, emotional and personal development. To achieve this aim, guidance counseling services help students get to know themselves better and find effective solutions to their daily problems. However, such services do not reach scavenger children that are out of school and are hard to reach. UNICEF, (2015), reported that when efforts have been made by stakeholders to provide guidance and counseling services to

scavenger communities, they are assisted in discovering and developing their social and emotional potentialities. These interventions in turn enable them to achieve certain levels of personal happiness and social interactions with their peers in their communities. Nonetheless, if scavenger children remain outside the classroom, they are likely to miss out on a range of activities that makes it possible for individuals of any age to find out their capabilities, interests and competences. Barre, (2015), observed that the provision of Guidance and Counselling services in schools is likely to bring behavioral change in learners who can later be able to make important and sound decisions in their lives and choose their life pathways in the future.

2.4.2. Stakeholders' involvement in Guidance and Counseling

Under duties and responsibilities of parents, the Malawi Child Care and Protection Act, (2014),1. b. i. states that, “parents are supposed to protect the child from neglect, discrimination, violence, abuse, exploitation, oppression and exposure to physical, mental, social and moral hazards.” Apart from the 2017 amended constitution of Malawi, child protection issues are guided by the child protection Policies such as the one developed by S.O.S Village and the evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM), Child Protection Policies in Malawi. The underlying objective for both policies is to have children protected under the laws of Malawi and assist them get education as it is one of the basic rights in the Malawi Constitution. Some of the stakeholders that take part in providing guidance and counseling to scavenger children are UNICEF through the Community for Development (C4D), Plan Malawi, The SRHR Africa Trust (SAT) Malawi, United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UN Women and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The guidelines that are followed are tapped from the Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM) Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy and SOS Village Child Protection Policy. The areas of concentration for most of the interventions especially on guidance on skills and vocational training, Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR), Gender Based Violence

(GBV) and provision of education for all regardless of color, ethnicity and social economic status. The mentioned organizations work on empowering churches and Christian organizations for effective and efficient social and spiritual transformation through guidance and counselling of the Malawian citizens, The EAM's Policy seeks to make the country safe for all citizens by promoting gender and social integration using the human rights approach. On the other hand, the SOS Children's Village Child Protection Policy concentrates on rescuing destitute children, mostly those that are found on the streets to give them a new life by providing them with education and vocational skills.

With reference to the policies on child protection issues, Guidance and Counselling features highly on the agenda for vulnerable learners to stay in school, especially those withdrawn from the streets and child headed families and orphans. The Community of Practice Concept by UNESCO mainly deals with engaging communities on the issues of concern by stakeholders to harmonize efforts and deal with a common problem. For example, in dealing with early and forced marriages which is related to Gender Based Violence, (GBV), UN Women worked with Ministries of Education and Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare, Creative Centre for Community Mobilization (CRECOM) and local leaders in sensitizing their communities. The result was that the Chiefs came up with bi laws aimed at stopping child marriages and taking back to schoolgirls who dropped out of school due to child marriages and early pregnancies. The local leaders were trained in guidance and Counselling through formation of functioning mother groups at school level. The mother groups get in touch with girls who have experienced GBV at school or home and counsel them so that they stay in school.

However, despite such efforts, scavenger children and their communities are still being sidelined and marginalized due to their socioeconomic status and rough environment in which they live in and their fluid settlements.

i. Provision of education.

The government through the Ministry of Education provides education by construction of primary schools within a radius of 5 kilometers in the City of Lilongwe. However, this is not adequate intervention to cater for the basic needs of the scavenger communities. Scavenger children that enroll at the primary school near the garbage site, drop out of school due to lack of other basic needs which play a big role in a child's life. The headteacher reported that for every 10 scavenger children that enroll at the school, 8 drop out of school before the academic year ends and that out of these 5 are boys in the lower primary school. While in the upper primary school 7 out of 10 are girls and chances for them to return to school are minimal if counselling efforts are not available. Maluwa-Banda, (2020), observes that for those that stay in school still need provision of education guidance so that they are aware of why they are in school and what to expect in future.

ii. Skills development

Non-governmental stakeholders in education such as the SOS Village Malawi, Plan International and Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) work tirelessly to provide skills development using their concepts regarding this intervention. For example, St John Bosco, a Catholic Vocational Training Centre for vocational skills, in 2017, offered scholarships for ten (10) scavenger teenagers aged between 17 and 20 who tried to enroll into school and at least completed basic education level. All the scavenger teenagers completed their vocational skills training successfully which were in the form of carpentry and joinery, brick laying, tailoring and mechanical jobs. While the primary school scavengers drop out from school in large numbers, the teen scavenger children managed to complete their training successfully. The

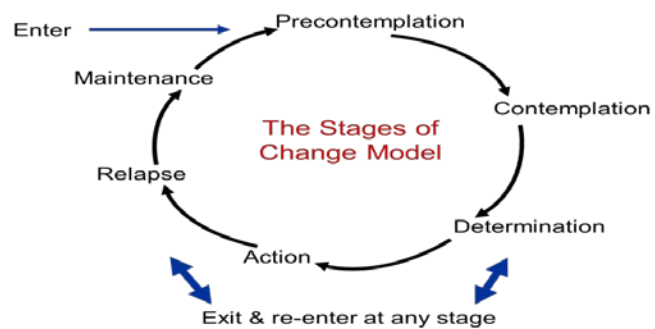
skills training center used a lot of guidance and counseling to keep the trainees in school from the time of entry up to the time they exited the vocational center.

iii. Behavioral Change

Ministry of Education and Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare in Malawi have been working tirelessly to offer guidance and counseling to the hard-to-reach children such as street kids, orphans and neglected children so that there is notable behavioral change as they grow up through Life Skills subject and use of clubs and societies at school and community level. The EAM Policy apart from using a human rights approach, they also use Christian values and approaches to assist the kids. In the Holy Bible, King James Version, (KJV), Proverbs 22:6 states that, *“Train up a child in the way he should go: And when he is old, he will not depart from it.”* while the SOS Village Policy mainly uses child protection strategies in keeping them in school by providing child friendly infrastructure, vocational skills and guidance as a way of bringing out behavioral change. Kanjere, (2018), explains that positive outcomes for such interventions have indicated that scavenger children who decided to comply to go through the process ended up becoming responsible citizens as entrepreneurs, teachers and medical personnel. However, providing counseling to scavenger children is not easy because there is a need for parental consent and the owner’s consent so that the sessions could be fruitful. It has been discovered that most of the scavenger children do not feel comfortable discussing their situation with outsiders. Barre, (2015), explained that change is not instant as it is gradual during the counselling process. Change may also depend on the counsellor and the one being counselled as there is a need for effort from both sides. For scavenger children during the counseling process for behavioral change can follow the stages of change model below.

For example, for alcohol and substance abuse, the victim must contemplate the consequences of being alcoholic, determine what to do and act like stop drinking or take part in other activities that can divert the attention on that behavior. The victim must be assured that change will eventually come even if there is a relapse, but the newly acquired behavior should always be maintained.

Figure 5
Stages of Change Model | School of Medicine



Source: <http://medicine.llu.edu>

Apart from the change model, The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) influences behavioral change. This theory psychologically connects to behavior while maintaining attitude, subjective norms and the belief of performing a given behavior which brings out an individual's behavior in the end. For example, influencing child garbage scavengers who dropped out of school to change their mind and be re-admitted back into school and rewarding them with either food rations or school uniform or learning materials. Raihan, (2021), explains that the theory of planned behavior has the capacity to support this study because there is a possibility of retaining more students back in school by using planned motivation acts as already mentioned earlier. This is a cognitive Behavior Change Theory by Azjen, (1985) and it has been cited by many scholars who deal with behavioral change patterns.

2.4.3. Efforts to maximize behavioral change for child scavenger's children.

As discussed in chapter one, scavenger children lack guidance and parental support as they enroll in school, especially in primary schools. For those that are outside the classroom

are in a much worse situation than school going children. Mohanty, (2010) - Barre, (2015) commented that scavenger children are being marginalized in many interventions, but there are some efforts that are being implemented by both government and other stakeholders in guidance and counseling especially behavioral change. Raihan, (2021), explains that during behavioral change therapy, there is behavior change steps to be followed, and the owner must move from denying that there is a problem to contemplating about it. He explained further that their willpower to change without worrying about a relapse is very important as this is normal. Guidance acts as a preventive measure while counseling and providing psycho-social support is a healing measure to individuals who have gone through trauma of Post –traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Corboz, (2019), observes that this is common for scavenger children and sometimes it goes unnoticed and mostly they resolve by engaging themselves in risky behaviors such as alcohol and substance abuse, fighting and indulging in many acts of crime in nature.

2.4.3.1. Educational Guidance

Learner’s characteristics play a vital role in the lives of children. According to Maluwa-Banda, (2018), educational guidance mainly deals with learner’s characteristics and mannerisms in assisting them to make wise decisions and choices and improve in the areas of poor achievement. Mostly this is connected to their curriculum in all aspects of development in their school life that will contribute to their educational achievement at different levels. Woods, (2022), observes that in-school youth have the advantage of getting educational guidance whilst out of school youth do not have such an advantage as they are not found around the school premises, and they are not attached in any way to the school activities. It has been observed that with scavenger children the story is different as even if they enroll into school, they do not stay for so long because of the different barriers they face both at school and in their homes. These barriers as already stated are harmful cultural and traditional beliefs, lack of food, proper clothing and shelter, parental care, clean water, writing materials just to mention

a few. Scavenger children who get in touch with non-state actors or in other words, non-governmental organizations that work on out of school youth may have the chance to get some educational guidance. However, the impact is minimal, taking into consideration the harsh environmental factors for scavenger communities and the guidance environment may not be conducive to their harsh living conditions. For example, the (2008), S.O.S Children's Village Child Protection Policy, stresses giving awareness on support and capacity building for parents, community and faith-based leaders as a way of extending knowledge on educational guidance to out of school youth. Barre, (2015), explained that scavenger children that frequent the garbage site and are not enrolled in school or they are dropouts and have no chance of getting educational guidance hence lack interest in staying in school. However, those that get assisted by stakeholders such as SOS Village have their lives change for the better as they have a chance of getting skills which they could use in future. If scavenger children were to be provided with basic needs in their communities, the outcome will be that they will have interest in enrolling in school or to be admitted back into school if they dropped out of school. It should be noted that every child, regardless of the status of their parents and communities, has the right to education, and other basic needs fit for a human being. The rights are stipulated in the Amended Constitution of 1994, (2013). Provision of education to scavenger children will reduce criminality levels and raise retention in schools and good performance at national examination level.

2.4.3.2. Vocational Guidance

Mainly, the choices are connected to the student's personal characteristics in relation to the occupational opportunities present. According to Woods, (2022), vocational Guidance is geared towards assistance to students in connection with planning in the areas of vocation and choices meant for future occupation and professionalism. For example, students that are athletic may be considering becoming law enforcers such as soldiers or policemen. This will

also depend on their qualifications and how they are going to achieve them academically. Ortega-Ritz, (2012), explains that while educational guidance aims at being persuasive even though not forceful towards students, vocational guidance assists students to assess their own interests, in born skills, capabilities. He further states that qualities which can assist them in choosing their profession. The baseline of all this process is informing the students about other job alternatives themselves. Accessibility for such guidance regarding vocational training is mostly available at school level which makes it difficult for scavenger children to participate unless non-governmental organizations engage the communities.

2.4.3.3. Personal Guidance

There is a need to engage the communities and especially parents to participate in their children's upbringing and preferences in their lives. Woods, (2022), clarifies this is the type of guidance where an individual is in control to overcome their own problems. These can be in the form of attempting to overcome their social, mental, health, morals and ethical problems. According to the Malawi Child Care and Protection Act, (2014), these problems revolve around a person's life and do not come directly under educational and vocational guidance. Scavenger children alike need intervention on their personal guidance, a thing they lack due to their situation. Mohanty, (2014), observes that parental participation, provision and protection ought to be mandatory in a child's life so that they are able to stay long in school and access education.

2.4.3.4. Social Guidance

This is a type of guidance that is given to assist individuals to know and understand how to behave and live with other people despite obvious differences. Sen., (2019), explain that social guidance is the other side of the coin with personal guidance since it deals a lot of assisting students to develop awareness on their self-actualization and improve on their self-

esteem which is always instrumental to their skills development and choice of careers. Further to this, social guidance is key to the development of responsibilities in improving survival skills, self-acceptance and others living around them. Further to this, Woods, (2022), explain, social guidance assists with negative issues of inferiority complex, dependency syndrome, antisocial behavior and deviant sexual behavior that come along with lack or limited provision of social guidance. In scavenger communities, social guidance is very important as the scavenger children need to meet with people if enrolled in school. However, experience has shown that there is a lack of concern from parents/guardians, the communities and stakeholders in making sure that scavenger children are assisted to get on with others in the lie of proper mannerisms, etiquette, understanding roles and responsibilities in developing family relationships.

2.4.3.4. Psychosocial Support

Mental Health issues are real, and they can affect anyone regardless of their age. Durkheim, (2015), comments that a lot of them have mental health issues, looking at the harsh conditions that scavenger children pass through in their communities and families. These are because of child battering, orphan hood, Sexual Related Gender Based (SRGBV) violence and child criminality. Most of the scavenger children resort to alcohol and substance abuse which gives a rise to breaking their traditional cultural norms. For example, children within a range of 10-15 years of age get involved in drinking and smoking weed. Such children engage in various bad behaviors which need to be addressed before they harm the children. However, for example, scavenger children that are in school get counseling services through mother Groups, clubs and societies at the school and mentor teachers. But for dropout scavenger children, the story is different. Genemo, (2010), explains that the consequences of alcohol and substance abuse are that these children go through trauma and depression as they may be victims of rape,

organized crime and rampant urban poverty. The Ministry of Health had a mental facility within the district Hospital in the City of Lilongwe, but it has been non-functional for almost five years. Most of the street and scavenger children and ‘others’ who were roaming aimlessly within the city were getting psycho-social support from the district mental health facility in form of medicines, therapy and referrals to the main mental hospital in Zomba. However, there is a mental health facility in Lilongwe and Mzuzu named St John of God but one has to pay for their services, a thing scavenger communities cannot afford. Chapman & Raye, (2007), observes that there are some notable cases of young men in the streets with signs of mental cases that emanate from excessive alcohol intake and smoking weed.

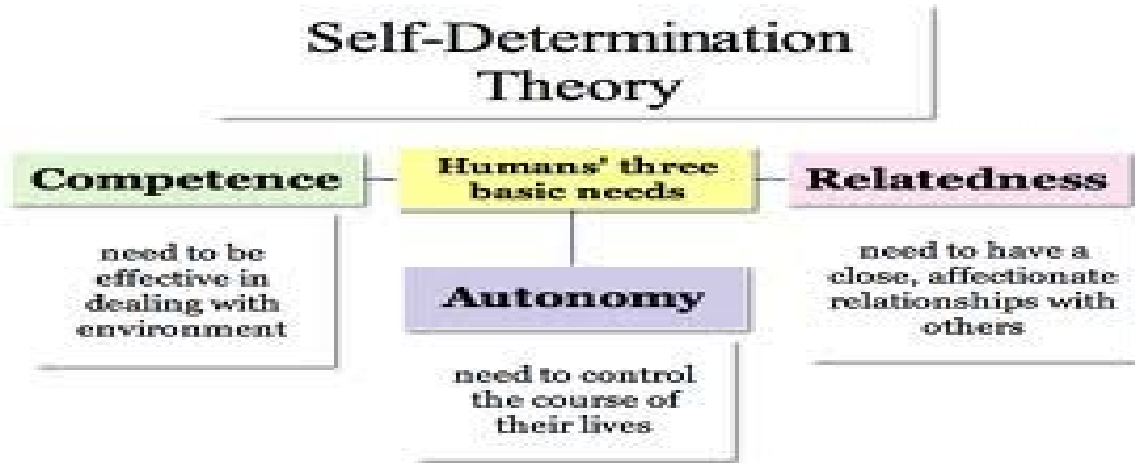
2.4.3.5. Engaging the communities

Scavenger communities are likely to shun efforts to enroll their children into school due to their already fragile economic status. According to Mohanty (2014), non-enrollment and dropping out of school is a major cause of negative behaviors by scavenger children which results in anti-social behavior like being violent towards their peers, abnormal sexual behaviors, criminality in form of burglary and being involved in organized crime. Interventions for the out of school youth can only be possible by engaging their communities. UNICEF Child and Youth Friendly Community Initiative (CYFCI) engage communities with the aim of safeguarding child rights through provision at community level in support of child wellbeing and protection from all sorts of abuse. In output 3 more work on resilience to climate change and economic shocks with a focus on dealing with child vulnerability. The engagement is also geared in output 4 to have government and local authorities supported to address vulnerable child disparities and deprivations such as education, child justice. Other stakeholders working towards over the same cause are NGO’s Faith based and Local Leaders and Communities. However, UNICEF concentrates on districts with low education indicators therefore leaving scavenger children who are found in the squatter areas of cities and towns. For example, the

City of Lilongwe garbage site which has a scavenger community of population of close to 4,000 scavengers.

2.5.0. Motivation factors to keep child garbage scavengers in school

Keeping child scavengers in school is not an easy task as there are so many barriers to letting them stay in school. Motivation in education is the act of assisting children or young people to concentrate on achieving a goal or an outcome so that they are not distracted in maintaining their attention for longer periods of time. Muñoz, A., et al, (2018), explain that learners who are motivated show signs of goal-oriented behaviors such as willingness to learn more and achieve high. Therefore, it is in this respect that parents and teachers should showcase some willingness to offer some help to their children to perform better in school so that barriers in accessing education should be eliminated. For example, scavenger children have barriers on lack of basic needs such as food, shelter, portable and clean water and health care. It should be noted that there are two types of motivation, namely, intrinsic and extrinsic whereby students are motivated internally and externally by inside and outside factors. Scavenger children are mainly motivated by extrinsic factors as most of them do not attend school regularly or drop out of school due to lack of basic needs or simply lack of interest due to poor performance and being overage within the recommended education cycle. One of the most recent well-known theories of motivation is the 'Self-Determination Theory.' (SDT)

Figure 6*Self-determination Theory.*

Source: Image from <https://positivepsychology.com/self-determination-theory/>

The Self Determination Theory. (SDT), is a theory concerning personality and human motivation which indicates that individuals could become self-determined when all their needs in the areas of competence relatedness and autonomy have been taken care of. It should be noted that contentedness is accompanied by environmental factors according to the individuals' situation. For example, for scavenger children, the provision of meals could be vital in the lower classes, while as they grow the need lessen. As cited by Deci & Ryan, (1985), it is observed that it is in human nature to seek growth and behavior in overcoming challenges that develop the sense of self-determination in an individual. However, it should be noted that individual's behavior is derived from self-determination and that people choose how to react to situations. Mostly motivation of students is rejuvenated from inside and outside factors. For example, money and fame are regarded as outside factors since they do not have a close connection with learning while inside factors like learning to acquire independence and the desire to prove oneself are regarded as inside issues. According to Silva, (2022), naturally when behavior comes from self-determination, it does not require rewards, but it emanates

from self-satisfaction, interest and enjoyment of the behavior itself. For example, the provision of sports equipment for students will enable them to acquire certain skills that they are going to enjoy later and master them as a hobby or a career. This can be in various sports disciplines, such as athletics, boxing swimming or football.

Motivation for scavenger children to stay in school is very important because it helps to get their attention and behavior during learning. For example, where motivation is present, tasks are done without distractions in performing an action like in experimental subjects in sciences. However, Efendi, e.t.a.l, (2020) acknowledges that there are factors that influence student's motivation in education which are found inside the school area and not outside the school premises such as, infrastructure, teacher attitude, teaching methods parental behavior and participation in their children's education.

i. School infrastructure

It has been noted that students learn better when there is a child-friendly infrastructure which is accommodative of the needs like Inclusive Education needs. When the infrastructure is solid and well-constructed, it provides a much-needed sense of security among learners, and they are motivated to stay in school. Silva, (2022), observes that even the seating plan within the classroom plays a very big role in motivating students to stay in school longer than anticipated. A school structure that has portable and clean water, good furniture, functioning toilets and playing grounds for recreation is a motivation for scavenger children to stay or reconsider re-entry after dropping out of school. Barre, (2015), explains that if all necessities for proper learning are provided in a learning environment, students' attention becomes focused on the learning aspect rather than distractors which are likely to lessen their attention while in class. However, it has been observed that in many rural and semi-urban areas some of the basic infrastructure is either in a dilapidated state or inadequate. Due to the swelling population, some

classes operate outside under a tree which is a demotivation to learners. As already stated, the nearest primary school to the garbage site from the scavenger community, (Mchitanjiru Primary school), has an enrollment of 3,400 learners against 10 classrooms only. Nonetheless, there are efforts to provide the much-needed infrastructure in both primary and secondary schools with the assistance of some Development and Implementation Partners. For example, during COVID 19 Pandemic, government used GPE Funds to build low-cost classrooms so that space could be created to reduce the spread infection among learners and teachers in schools.

ii. Teacher Behavior and Personality

In most schools where there is a mixture of children that come from well-to-do families and those from scavenger families, there is always fear of stigma and discrimination that scavenger children may have towards their fellow learners, teachers and support staff and vice versa. Firdous, (2020) and Barre, (2015), observed that if teachers or school management show any slight favors towards other children and neglect scavenger children, it will automatically reduce their motivation to stay in school or be in good books with their teachers. He further explains that the way teachers approach and talk to scavenger children becomes a source of motivation if it is in a positive way. However, if there is negativity, the school environment becomes a demotivation factor to scavenger children, and such actions could lead to serious drop-out rates especially in the lower primary school level. For example, use of inclusive and collective class instruction will reduce discrimination, giving group work by random selection and using a free seating type of seating plan. Mohanty, (2014), explains that acts of showing kindness, positive feedback after class exercises have a possibility of bringing motivation for scavenger children to stay in school because they feel that they are part of the whole class. Teachers are supposed to be exemplary in their personality and behavior both inside and outside the classroom, especially their approach towards vulnerable children. Silva, (2022),

commented that any negative behavior by the teaching staff can easily drive learners away, and scavenger children inclusive are not an exception in this matter.

iii. Teaching Methods

In a school setting the number of teachers may be adequate but teaching methods matter in motivating learners. Silva, (2022), explains that a variety of teaching methods brings about motivation in learners to participate fully in the lessons being offered at a school with reference to the approved curriculum. For example, the use of participatory methods in demanding subjects such as Mathematics, Physics, Biology and Chemistry motivates all learners with girls inclusive to acquire knowledge that can be transferred to their everyday lives. This can be used by local teaching and learning materials which could be in form of strings, seeds and household utensils. Malawi embarked on the provision of STEM education Milab App during the COVID 19 Pandemic. This is a technology that is readily available at a learner's fingertips allowing them to conduct unlimited virtual experiments in physics and chemistry. Efendi, (2022), explains that most learners get more confidence when they are taught in a child friendly environment and they learn better when they are involved and rewarded positively. It should be noted that the lack of better teaching methods is a demotivation factor to learners and has an impact on their performance, hence the need for inclusive education efforts for scavenger children to stay in school.

iv. Parental Habits and Involvement

It should be noted that there should be parental participation, provision and availability for their children both at school and home despite their status in the society they live in. Candaleza, (2020), observed that it is very important for parents and guardians to get involved in their children's education by developing parental habits and behavior that should be a source of their children's motivation to work hard and perform better in school. However, it has been observed that most of the scavenger children's parents do not have reading and numeric skills

hence the source of child neglect during school assignments and activities. Mohanty, (2010), describes schooling in scavenger communities to be associated with general characteristics by parents with low education status and high illiteracy levels. These could be child battering, engaging the child in child labor activities rather than attending school, and others are low-income situations within their environments that lead to lack of basic needs, poor infrastructure such as leaking roofs and mud floors when it comes to schools, dwelling places or shelter. These situations and schools are mostly in rural or semi-urban squatter areas where most of the scavenger children spend their lives. Firdous, (2020), believes that it is such environments that are a recipe for a depressing atmosphere for scavenger children or any other child who needs parental involvement especially with homework or school assignments. It should be noted that parental non-availability for their children's education may cause reasons for high rates of dropping out of school and loss of interest in staying in school.

2.6. Effects of lack of motivational factors on school dropouts and re- admission procedures

Children who drop out of school in scavenger communities need to be motivated to get re-admitted back into school. Melton, (2021), describes the effect of re-entrance or withdrawal as the act of engaging into deviant behavior whereby dropouts may resort to violence, joining gangs or looting. To avoid such acts, there is a need to investigate issues which need attention so that dropouts are cared for properly. For example, girls who dropped out due to teenage pregnancy will need all sorts of support to stay in school. Maluwa-Banda, (2010), suggested that there is need for counselling sessions with teen mothers before they are admitted back into school. Such learners need to be motivated to decide to go back to school, and in the case of teen mothers, there is need for financial support in terms of bursaries and scholarships and care for the child both at school and home. Craig-Dorough, (2020), states that, the already known

factors that affect motivation are lack of motivational factors or incentives at school, family issues and instability of scavenger parents, peer relationships, learning environment, community perception of education. The Ministry of Education and other governmental and non-governmental organizations developed and revised the re-admission policy with an objective to bring back to school learners who dropped off school due to multiple reasons. It is therefore the role of governmental and non-governmental organizations to sensitize parents and guardians plus school management to be aware of the policy's objectives and re-admission procedures.

2.6.1. Results of Lack of Motivational factors.

As already discussed earlier in this paper, motivation plays a very big role in the life of children as they get educated. It is a given fact that the absence of motivation in learners at any level may cause a lot of negative behavior in schools. For example, learners who lack encouragement from their teachers develop fear of failure and are likely to lose interest in the subject or can simply drop out of school. Brown & Esbensen, (2010), indicates that learners who drop out of school may stay at home or decide to join other groups of the same agenda and if not guided this trend can lead to adolescent delinquent negative behavior such as stealing, fighting and different types of unruly behaviors. Craig-Dorough, (2020), For scavenger children mostly the environment at home is not conducive enough for them to come back to school immediately after they drop out. For example, family issues and instability like divorce/separation and illness, peer relationships in decision making, the learning environment being very poor and unwelcoming, community perception of education by their community and marginalization and poor interpretation of the revised re-admission policy to scavenger communities and its implementation. It is therefore in this regard that all stakeholders must work on the inclusion of motivational factors to re-admitted learners, regardless of the cause

of dropout reasons. Such a move is likely to make out of school youth go back to school and stay longer while accessing education.

2.6.2. Family issues and instability

The family environment plays a very big role in a child's life, especially if they are not motivated both at home and at school. Parents need to motivate their children further by participating in activities that take place at the school. For example, Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and School Management Committee (SMC) meetings and other extra-curricular activities from time to time. These extra-curricular activities could be in the form of school open days for career counselling, cultural day, community meetings and educational visits. It has been observed that scavenger children lack such interventions from their parents and guardians, hence being affected in their attempts to access quality, equity and inclusive education. Maluwa- Banda (2019), explains that such children are emotionally affected and they lack self-esteem to perform better in their tasks in the classroom. Tome, (2012), observed that children who live with both parents perform better than those who come from the streets, child-headed families or broken homes which are always full of conflicts and disturbances such as, being subjected to insults, fighting and re-location for divorced parents. If such children are identified, it should be the duty of school management through social welfare child protection officers, governmental and non-governmental organizations to provide psycho-social support to ease or do away with their trauma, depression and anxiety. Candaleza, (2020), emphasizes that children who lack parental provision, participation and protection can easily drop out of school and may resort to anti-social behavior if they are not taken care of in times of need.

2.6.3. Peer Relationships

Peer pressure, according to Oxford dictionary, is the act of having a feeling that an individual must do the same things that others are doing in their group so that they are liked and respected by their peers even though their actions are bad. Candeleza, (2020), indicated

that peer influence may force individuals to take part in negative behavior which others may not be comfortable with such as, indulging alcohol and substance abuse, stealing, fighting and abnormal sexual encounters. Barre, (2015), states that most of the time, children who lack motivation resort to having peers of the same status and in the end, they succumb to peer-pressure and abnormal behavioral patterns as they interact with their peers. It is therefore recommended that parents and the school management should monitor any peer related conflicts such as teasing and bullying to avoid cases of stress and low self-esteem among scavenger children in the school environment or at home. Efendi, (2020), observed that friends with good behavior have a chance of preventing violence and risk behaviors whilst on the other hand the higher the number of peers the higher the probability of engaging in negative behaviors. For example, such as influencing each other to miss classes, steal, fight, abuse of drugs and alcohol, share inappropriate videos on social media if not guided and probably risk being blackmailed by the perpetrators of sexual violence on social media.

2.6.4. Learning Environment

The school environment has a direct effect on students' motivational factors and can easily affect their performance if not monitored. Barre, (2015), and Mohanty (2014) agree that it is right and proper for the Parents, Teacher Association / School Management or Board of Governors to put in place rules and regulations so that the school norms should be followed correctly by all learners. For example, school rules and regulations on teasing and bullying should be clear and displayed for all to see, read and understand fully. However, some of the rules and regulations put in place by the Board of Governors have been challenged if they clash with the legal framework. For example, dress code in relation to Christian values and cutting of hair by other religious platforms. Learners coming from families with such religious affiliations like head covering and Rastafarian beliefs have been allowed to practice their faith in public schools in Malawi. It is also mandatory that the school management should make sure

that all learners and parents understand and sign for the rules and regulations before they register and enroll into the school. Muñoz, (2018), emphasizes that positive school environment makes students feel safe and secure and has influence on their performance in schoolwork especially when the environments meet their basic needs such as provision of school meals for vulnerable communities. Thus, such environments provide a platform for learners to build healthy and sound social relationships while attending school among peers and can adjust according to school rules and regulations. Kanjere, (2019), observed that decongesting the classes and allowing students to play can also increase motivation levels for school children, hence the desire for them to stay in school. It should be noted that persistent harsh learning conditions for scavenger children such as lack of teaching and learning materials, poor teaching methods, stigma and discrimination make them lose interest to participate and stay in school for a long of time. Therefore, creation of conducive learning environments should be a priority if scavenger children must be made to stay in school.

2.6.5. Community perception of education

According to the Oxford dictionary, a community has been defined as mainly composed of a group of people dwelling in the same place with similar behaviors, attitudes and interests. Scavenger communities fall under the same category, and they have similar attitudes and perception of education. Mohanty, (2010), states that schools are built in communities where children easily access education and they come from different communities with different perceptions of education. In scavenger communities, education is not on the top of their priority as they face a lot of barriers to access quality and equitable inclusive education. Efendi, e.t.al, (2020), explains that the social economic status of a community determines the kind of interpretation they have of education with regards to their culture, beliefs and traditions. Since scavenger communities are composed of people who have migrated from the rural areas, cultural and traditional beliefs are deep rooted in their everyday lives. However, scavenger

families' negative perception of education is driven by the harsh environment they live in and education is not a priority when it comes to survival against getting access to quality education. Scavenger communities do not motivate their children to stay in school but would rather engage them in activities which can bring food to their homesteads rather than attend classes and thereby increasing rampant child labor activities in the communities they live in. Candaleza, (2020), concluded that scavenger communities' perception on education is that education is for the elite and those that have connections for one to succeed and have a meaningful life in future. The effects are that scavenger children are not motivated to enroll in school, or they drop out of school when there is lack of motivation and basic needs for one to access education from primary school level.

2.6.6. Revised Readmission Policy

The (2018), Malawi government Re-admission Policy for Primary and Secondary Schools, was developed with an aim of bringing back learners to school that might have dropped out of school due to different reasons. The policy identified some of the reasons for learners dropping out of school being, early pregnancy, forced and child marriages, lack of school fees, broken homes, relocation due to natural disasters, terminal illness, or simply lack of interest especially for street children and scavenger children. In the revised re-admission policy of (2018); the government strives to promote equality in education opportunities for both boys and girls through its implementation in both primary and secondary schools where most of the learners drop out of school due to multiple reasons as already stated earlier.

The re-admission policy had a lifeline of 5 years since 2018 to 2024, it contributes to the achievement of the Malawi 2063 agenda, which stresses on building Malawi into an inclusively wealthy and self-reliant nation. However, even though the policy is being implemented, there are some challenges that derail the aims and objectives of bringing dropout children back to school. For example, children that drop out due to child marriage or lack of

interest need professional counselors before they are re-admitted back to school and enter the classroom. Craig-Dorough, (2003), acknowledges that counselling is a prerequisite for any re-admitted child before they start normal learning. Experience has shown that dropout children who do not undergo pre-readmission counselling face a lot of emotional challenges and can easily drop out of school again. However, in many instances re-admitted children are not guided on what to expect and how to conduct themselves once they get back to school, hence they easily drop out of school again and lose interest in school. Mohanty, (2014), as cited in Barre, (2015), mostly re-admitted children become a target for stigma and discrimination, teasing and bullying if the school management does not take responsibility over such children. Therefore, these children need to be motivated to stay in school and given some basic needs such as food, shelter, financial support and provision of guidance and counseling plus psychosocial support especially in the areas where trauma and depression are rampant.

It is in this regard that re-admission of dropouts needs to be planned for properly; otherwise, it can be a demotivation factor and issue for a school to register or just to re-admit students who cannot stay in school due to other influencing factors apart from the act of going back to school.

2.7. Socio-cultural effects on accessing education at home and school for child scavengers

Schools have been constructed worldwide to make sure that children in the areas with different socio-cultural beliefs access education as their right according to Sustainable Goal Number 4 and individual country's national constitutions. Globally, according to United Nations Human Rights (UNHR), Convention on the Rights of a Child (CRC), was adopted in 1989 and State Parties agreed to ratify CRC with one of the aims to protect a child against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of their status, activities, opinions, beliefs of the child's parents/guardians or family members. According to UN Women, (2015), it is

reported that Malawi is among the State Parties which ratified the CRC and has been promoting education for all by introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) for all in 1995.

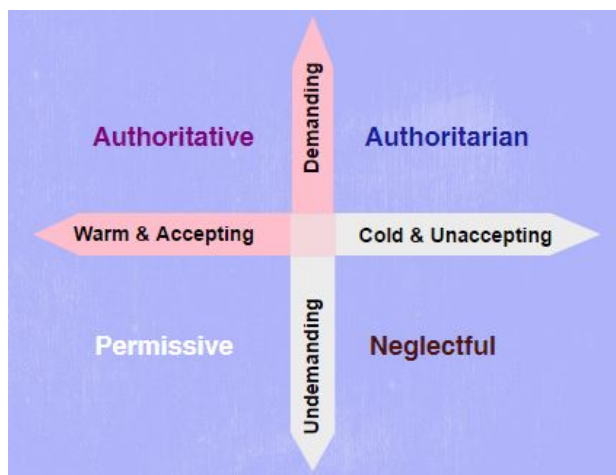
According to the (2023), Malawi Education Statistics, Malawi currently has 958 public secondary schools and public 5,806 primary schools which caters for over secondary and primary 425,000 and 5,274,819 learners respectively, with different attitude, expectations and backgrounds. As a country, Malawi is not different from other Sub-Saharan Africa countries whereby there are different levels of socio classes that depends on income levels. However, the Malawi Multidimensional index report, (2021), indicates that Malawi is a multidimensional poor nation, 61.7% is living under the poverty line which is over half of the population that lives under the poverty line with rural areas and urban poverty contributing to the those without meaningful income for their livelihoods. According to Wickert, (2022), socio-cultural factors are composed of lifestyles that are outcomes of education levels attained by parents, type of religious affiliations and beliefs, gender equality and societal attitudes and socio class related habits and behavior towards education. However, for scavenger children to access education the following factors have a very big role to play. These are education levels of parents, religious affiliations and beliefs and habits and behavior towards children.

i. Education levels of parents

They live through the same socio-cultural factors that are barriers to their chances of accessing quality, equitable and inclusive education. As stated earlier in chapter one, Barre, (2015), states that scavenger children are a generation of previous generations of scavenger families that have been patronizing and dwelling from the same communities depending on the same resources for a period. Davis-Kean, (2005), explains the proportion of households with children whose parents have no proper income or means of survival has been growing alongside the population and that unemployment levels have fallen beyond realistic measures. Scavenger children fall into the same category with no proper means for survival from their

parents as it is usually a trend in their everyday lives. Mohanty, (2010), explains that scavenger children fail to enroll into school due to pressure from their parents or guardians as they prioritize feeding for food than accessing education. Mowder, (2005), in his 'Parent Role Development Theory,' (PRDT), explains how people have different thoughts and ideas on parenting for a period, for example, for scavenger families they do not really care if their children are in school or not provided, they are able to feed themselves. Arnett, (2000), stresses that the lower the education levels for parents the less they care about their children's education and how their children behave both at home and elsewhere. Davis-Kean, (2005), explains that children's education and behavioral patterns are determined by their parent's level of education and this can be measured by their socioeconomic status in the society they live in. For example, parents who do not have basic numeric and literacy abilities may find it awkward to participate in Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings at the school. Therefore, they opt to ignore their responsibility to participate and provide for their children's education and may undervalue the importance of parental availability in their children's/ward's education.

Figure 7
Baumrind's Parenting Styles Theory.



Source: *TheBump.com*

There are four parenting styles as indicated in the figure and these are the categories of Authoritative, Authoritarian, Permissive and Neglect. In any society all these parenting styles

are present, but they may also determine socio-cultural status of a parent or community. According to Baumrind's Parenting Styles Theory (BPST), as cited by Candelanza, (2022), While the other three parenting styles are democratic, disciplinarian and indulgent, the neglectful parenting styles portrays the non-participatory or the "I don't care" attitude of parents. It should be noted that characteristics of such parenting styles revolve around competing priorities, being uninterested, neglectful and being passive in whatever their children are going through whether mental or physical difficulties. For example, scavenger parents would rather force their children to look for food and other basic needs instead of having them in school where they will need financial support. Experience has shown that a lot of scavenger children get hurt at the garbage site with sharp objects such as rusty nails and other sharp metal objects and sometimes they eat poisonous material from rotten food items. These injuries remain untreated since the scavenger communities usually do not have access to proper medical care even though it is free in public hospitals in Malawi. In most of the times scavenger parents let their children heal by themselves and it is the expected and normal habit in their community.

ii. Religion affiliations and beliefs

Religious affiliations and beliefs go together in an individual or a society attitude and practices. According to Azjen, (2019), as cited by Young, (2013), religious beliefs are practiced by individuals or groups of people which include rituals or meditation within their society. While a belief can be practiced by many, the same belief can have different affiliations according to tradition and usual habits in society. For example, Christian and Islam beliefs and affiliations in a country and community just to mention a few have their own beliefs, practices and expected behavior when it comes to accessing education. For instances, Moslems do not expect girls and boys to learn together in one classroom, whilst Christians have no problem with this type of set up and scavenger communities have not been spared of these beliefs and

affiliations. It is a given fact that some of these religious affiliations and beliefs have a direct impact on education for the scavenger children as well.

Bernet, (2022), stresses that every community, whether rich or poor, is characterized by its faith and beliefs. Mostly, religious affiliations determine how society behaves and carry out its daily lives without considering their social class. Young, (2020), explains that more people who are involved in religious activities do not have many indications of depression and anxiety than those who do not engage in religious activities. Meaning that meditation or praying assist to reshape their brains to cope with stress. However, despite being affiliated with various religious groups, scavenger communities deal so much with beliefs that they have their own way of living about their religious beliefs. For example, there are some religious beliefs that do not allow their children / wards to learn some science subjects, cut their hair short and educate a girl child. Such beliefs directly affect scavenger children's education and discourage them from enrolling into school. Therefore, it should be noted that religious influence is deeply significant in the lives of scavenger families and scavenging children. They are highly influenced by their parents' religious affiliations and beliefs as they have inherited this through birth. Some go to the extent of denying access to medical attention even if there are pandemics such as COVID 19 and Cholera. They shun free vaccinations and child spacing clinics for fear of going against their religious beliefs.

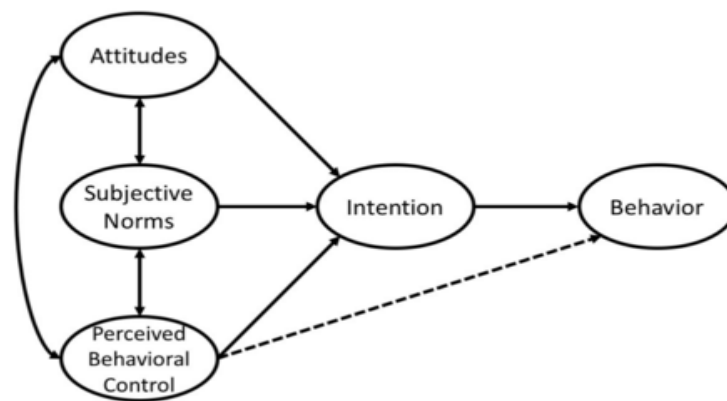
iii. Habits and behavior towards education

According to the Oxford dictionary, habits are generally things that an individual does repeatedly to the point that they may be identified with the habit. For example, coughing before contributing to a serious conversation or reporting late for any occasion; while on the other hand, behavior refers to actions within the living environment which can be a result of external forces or influences such as lack of food can force individuals to go begging or scavenge in garbage sites. According to Ajzen, (1991), Theory of Planned Behavior, (TPB), it has been

explained that habit has an influence on an individual's behavior in such a way that it can bring repeated performance or overcome reasons in such performances unless there is strong self-control to stop the behavior. It has also been noted that behavior is influenced by intention, which is accompanied by external forces such as attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control as indicated in the diagram below.

Figure 8

The Theory of Planned Behavior model adapted from Ajzen 2005.



For scavenger families, attitude ranks high on their behavioral control in and outside school environment whereby most of them believe that education is for the elite by just considering their socio-economic status with regards to the environment they live in, considering lack white color jobs for proper income. Experience has shown that scavenger families survive on casual labor, hawking if they find capital and scavenging at the garbage site. Barre, (2015), confirms this by stating that scavenger communities have already placed themselves in low ranks of society and their attitude towards education is just to attain literacy and numerical skills. According to Ajzen, (1991), the repeated actions that become habits for individuals are done unconsciously and important decisions are made which are influenced by their attitude, hence negativity towards education by most of the scavenger families in their community.

Scavenger families are affected in such a way that their decision to enroll their children into school depends on their habits and behavior. For example, it is normal for scavenger children to drop out of school and frequent the garbage site, since they get their livelihoods from scavenging. They may not be able to explain their behavior and attitude towards education but there are some other factors that influence such habits. These can be their poverty levels, lack of sensitization on the importance of education and many more. Therefore, there is great need to empower the scavenger communities to move from low esteem to self-actualization whereby individuals can unveil their full potential without comparing from their past experiences and current economic situation.

2.7.1. Community and parental involvement in providing education to child scavengers.

Community and parental involvement in the provision of education to child scavengers is very important. Children grow up in a specific community, and they acquire certain traits for their immediate environment. Mohanty, (2020), stresses that low-income households go through a lot of harassment of negative attitudes due to their societal norms and demands. The following plays a big role in community and parental involvement in their children's education. Such as, gender equality and societal attitudes, women and men inequality in leadership positions, traditional and cultural beliefs, access to education and provision of social services to scavenger communities.

2.7.1.1. Gender equality and societal attitudes

The Malawi Gender Equality Act, (2014), states that, "Gender Equality is when people of all genders have equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities." In every society because of attitudes, beliefs, traditional and cultural values, almost everybody is faced by some gender inequalities which happens in the everyday lives of women, men, sexual minorities, children and families of different levels of social class. All the above-mentioned categories of people are available in the scavenger communities and have issues that affect them according to their

environment. The act stresses preventive measures that come around due to discriminatory actions by society based on gender. The UNFPA-ESARO, (2023), October, newsletter, GBV, is a global problem and that one in three women face GBV from either their partners or non-partners. World Health Organization, (WHO), reports that, women and girls aged between 20 to 24 years of age are the most affected when it comes to inequalities worldwide. For example, discrimination between women and men, boys and girls that take place in the areas of religion, traditional and cultural beliefs, accessing education, health and socio services within the scavenger communities. Even though there are women and girls who live within the scavenger communities, it is evidenced that at the garbage site the presence of women and girls is almost zero.

2.7.1.2. Gender inequality

Young, et.al, (2016), describes gender inequality as the moving away from the parity in the representation of women and men in key dimensions of social life. For example, there are smaller numbers for women in decision making positions in the church, community leadership, political and job positions. Most of the times it is men that hold topmost positions while women come out just as members of such institutions or followers of men.

The role of Religion

Inequality issues for boys and girls in school

Religious practices and beliefs play a very big role in any society. The results can either be positive or negative depending on the beliefs being practiced. In most cases children inherit their parents' religious affiliations and beliefs and scavenger communities are included in this trend with regards to enrollment of boys and girls in school. Dorious, (2010), observes that in faith based owned schools, boys are allowed to enroll in school without any problems while the girl child is expected to consider her code of dressing by aligning it with religion values of that religion. Dress code is strictly monitored adhered to so much so that in some instances it

becomes obligatory for learners to join the religious faith and belief being practiced at the institution. Most girls also face challenges when it comes to participating in lessons as they must align some of the subjects with their religious faith and beliefs. Further to this, Dorious, (2010), continues to observe that other religions do not allow girls to be very talkative in public hence they are given fewer challenging tasks by teachers than boys, they cannot choose STEM subjects since everybody including teacher believes that these subjects are for boys and believe they require the male ego.

However, the same religious values at some point encourage girls to take leading roles and make decisions. For example, on a positive note, Mohanty, (2014), comments that churches recently have been acting as a mouthpiece in announcing dates for enrollment at the school and even encouraging parents to enroll their girl children in a timely manner. Other religious institutions have been ordaining female congregants as reverends just as a way of boosting their women members self-esteem and confidence. Recently, some religious institutions have assisted government in the construction of schools, such as, all female teacher colleges and nursing colleges. This is one way of encouraging and empowering girls and young women to get educated and lead meaningful lives in future.

Therefore, scavenger communities, even though they are affiliated with religious groups with negative thoughts about the girl child education, there is need to mainstream gender through local leaders, faith-based organizations and community welfare officers.

Women and Men inequality in leadership positions

Some religious beliefs do not consider women as important individuals of the society due to their gender and sexuality orientation. The inequalities for scavenger families occur in the homesteads, houses of prayer, in political representations, in the informal sector and right at the garbage site.

Home based gender inequalities

In these homes women are expected to perform their gender roles such as cleaning, cooking, washing and looking after children whilst men take scavenging as their main roles in the family. Mohanty, (2014), states that scavenger families mainly live in squatter areas around the garbage sites and their homes are made of temporary infrastructure without any form of permanency as mostly they are nomadic within the outskirts of the cities. For example, in some religions women are not allowed to preach, attend religious gatherings when in menses or breast feeding or even to take leading positions. However, men also face inequalities when it comes to providing for their family. Barre, (2015), discusses that most women in the scavenger communities wait upon the men to fend for their families and even go beyond to the extended family which is not possible due to the kind of they live in. Candaleza, (2022), observed that mostly such men are usually depressed and may resort to anti-socio behavior such as becoming violent or commit end up using alcohol and substance abuse as a way of defensive mechanism or may end up committing suicide due to depression. Nonetheless, it is the duty of the church/religious institutions to make sure that its members are sensitized on gender equality and that all people are equal before God.

House of Prayer

In churches, mosques or traditional cult's men always take a leading role in almost all activities of their organizations and they make decisions without consulting their women in the first place. For example, Darious, (2010), observed that if it is a committee, positions of chairperson, secretary and treasurer will go to men while women are just be given committee member positions. Women are expected to carry over household chores to the place of worship, such as cleaning, cooking and serving food. In some prayers houses women are not allowed inside but outside and they cannot preach and even dress code for women and girls is strictly controlled. However, men face hardships too if their religion allows women to leading roles.

Mostly, if men are outnumbered by women and this becomes a source of discrimination in sharing of responsibilities and resources.

Political representation

Scavenger communities face lack of political representation for women who also constitute a bigger number of the population among the garbage scavengers. Politicians use the church/religious outlets as their hub for delivering campaign messages, but when it comes to incentives, they leave them with male leaders hence making it difficult for women to access them. According to UN Women data, (2022), the Malawi political structures are male dominated while giving excuses that women are always busy with looking after their families and children ranking high on the priority list. Experience has shown that where political leaders are women, issues of health care, portable and safe water are addressed with speed because women know the importance of having these facilities in their homes and communities. Women would always want to seek means to sustain peace and security while men might opt for violence and war. If there is peace in the home, church and community, there will be a lot of women empowerments and reduced Gender Based Violence (GBV) in scavenger families and communities.

Therefore, it is the duty of the religious institutions and Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) to empower women and men to do away with gender inequality unconscious practices in their communities.

Informal sector

In the informal sector there is a lot of gender inequality practices as more women dwell in low paying jobs and extremely low small-scale vending. Kanjere & Tilley, (2015), explain that there are so many insecurities the women face being mothers to scavenger children, who in turn develop low self-esteem while in school and perform poorly in class. For example, women in scavenger communities would rather go for low paying jobs that do not require

expertise and professionalism due to their low levels of education and lack of skills. According to UN Women, (2011), women face a lot of GBV in the workplace, ranging from sexual harassment and assault to poor working conditions. Such women cannot look after their children properly as they are mostly traumatized by the injustices of work-related gender-based violence. For example, in mini recycling warehouses, there are reports of sexual harassment, men demanding sex for women and girls to get recruited, losing their jobs due to pregnancy, no maternity leave, poor working conditions such as standing for long hours, in the dark and smelly environments without protective wear like gloves, shoes and masks. Despite such hardships, some women are not allowed to work due to their faith, and they suffer emotionally a thing that affects their families as well their children. However, there are instances where religion has promoted gender equality in such a way that it has brought tolerance among women and men when it comes to taking leading roles within the church and the communities. Some churches grant small scale business loans to women and men as an empowerment strategy for survival amidst urban poverty.

Therefore, it can rightly be stated that gender inequality affects everyone in any society, including men. Bartley, (2017), explains that society expects women and men to behave in a particular manner in relation to their gender, but it is worth noting that inequalities differ with individual's age, sex, environment and beliefs and in some instances ethnicity and race.

Traditional and Cultural Beliefs

Even though the aim of the education Act is to promote Gender Mainstreaming to the citizens so that all forms of inequalities are addressed and reduce Gender Based Violence, (GBV), it has been reported there are still some harmful traditional and cultural practices which aggravated Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and belittle female occupants. For example, some

traditional practices encourage child /forced marriages as part of their culture and tradition ignoring child rights violation and its consequences when it comes in conflict with the law enforcers. Since most of the scavenger communities migrate to the urban areas from the rural areas they carry along such practices and if not checked girl children are married off while the boy child is in school. Once in school and the community also expects the girl child to look after her siblings and do household chores during school hours. For example, cooking, fetching water and cleaning. Others would prefer to educate a boy child other than a girl child, giving reasons that she will get married and be looked after by her husband. Davies-Kean, (2005), observes that some cultural practices have fueled sexual assault, rape and defilement resulting into the spread of HIV and AIDS on women and girls. For example, such as wife cleansing whereby in the near past a widow was forced to sleep with one of her husband's brothers before the burial ceremony in some remote areas in Malawi. However, there have been fragmented efforts to eliminate such harmful traditional practices by other stakeholders by engaging traditional chiefs to put in place bylaws within their communities. For example, widow cleansing, child marriages, sexual assault and rape; the offenders are now being brought to book, and it is punishable by law in Malawi nowadays. Nonetheless, these acts of GBV are rampant in low-income areas such as the scavenger communities and sometimes they are not reported due to lawlessness that exists in these communities. Therefore, there is still there great need to bring awareness and sensitization to the masses that they must report to the proper reporting structures once their rights have been violated regardless of who is the offender. Mostly a lot of women and girls are victims of such acts and there is little or no support from those in authority in their communities.

Access to education

According to UN Women, (2015), it is evidenced that girls and women face a lot of barriers in accessing education rather than boys starting from financial assistance, lack of role modeling and mentorship and a lot of school factors such as girl friendly infrastructure. For scavenger children, mostly financial support for their girls is not available and they do not seem to exist as the garbage site it is only the males who are visible. For the girls who enroll into school also face challenges such as, walking long distances to school, unfriendly school infrastructure where there are no toilets, changing rooms and discriminatory attitude due to socio class levels and negativity towards girls' education. Barre, (2015), observes that the environment in which a child grows has a lot of effect on her education starting from pre-schooling years where mental development is critical and has an impact on the child's future life. For instance, some parents do not value education due to their low levels of education and in turn they have a strong belief that it is a waste of time and money to educate girls and special needs children, especially those with diverse needs.

UN Women, (2015), reported that, Malawi continues to face a lot of Gender Based Violence (GBV), at workplace, homes, churches and communities the scavenger communities not being spared and especially for women and girls who are always at the receiving end. Girls who would like to be in school stay at home due to religious affiliations and beliefs while boys from the same households are allowed to go to school without any barriers. UN Women, (2015), in its Essential Package for Women and Girls on GBV, explains that a wider section of females suffers from emotional disorders such as, low self-esteem and withdrawal when faced with gender inequalities. To this effect, more NGOs, CSOs and other stakeholders working on the promotion of Girls' Education have embarked on role modelling activities and mentorship to bring awareness to the masses. However, there is no proper and tangible help to get the girls

found in the scavenger communities out of such situations especially when those in authority are gender blind towards vulnerable populations who might be out of school situation.

Provision of Socio services

Government through Ministries of Education, Health and Gender is supposed to provide socio services to scavenger communities and engage them if there is need to forward an agenda on the vulnerability of the out of school youth in the provision of education and other basic needs. In many instances, according to Mohanty (2010), experiences have shown that scavenger communities have been deprived of essential services such as properly functioning schools with all teaching and learning materials and infrastructure as compared to schools in urban areas. Additionally, Mohanty, (2020), explains that locally found health facilities, recreation centers where sports and skills development can be easily accessed by all are also a fallacy to scavenger children in their communities. It is either the dilapidated infrastructure which is present but lacking medical personnel and readily available common medications in the likes of pain killers and ant-biotics. However, UN Woman data, (2022), suggest that if these services are provided, mostly they are accessed by men and boys leaving women and girls struggling or being sidelined unless there is intervention for gender mainstreaming. Usually, such interventions are carried out by the local NGOs and other stakeholders through awareness campaigns and sensitization meeting on the importance of mainstreaming gender equality into activities at all levels and platforms which are not exhaustive. For example, during church, school, community meetings and even when sharing resources within their communities.

2.7.2. Effects of Socio Class on Community and Parental Involvement

Scavenger communities are hard to reach in terms of community engagement with objectives of promoting provision of education to scavenger children. Distance may be reachable, but scavenger community attitudes and behavior deserve a lot of planning to become accessible. Efendi, (2022), discovered that scavenger communities are not very welcoming,

especially when an NGO or government intends to implement a project. Mostly these communities are in squatter areas of the city and approaching them at the garbage site has proved to be futile as the parents are engaged in scavenging for their survival and they seem not to like any outside interference. Whiteson & Keller, (2004), indicates that the environment at school has a huge impact on the survival rates of children from different socio class levels at any education institution. It has been noted that mode of communication plays a big role in children patronizing the school facility and there is need to find strategies which can accommodate all children despite where they are coming from. For example, the language of instruction determines the socio class of a learner in the very first grade. This usually occurs especially in the infant section and pre-school categories where learners indicate the income levels of their home through communication and other behaviors unconsciously. For children whose parents having a meaningful income and school levels are high and they can communicate in the official language such as 'English' fluently while scavenger children lack the necessities to enroll in either pre-school that communicate in English and the schools are expensive thereby determining their socio class level.

Other indicators that bring about socio class discrimination, according to Barre, (2015), are the type of dressing, food, type of housing and etiquette which is a learned behavior from parents and society. The curriculum content being offered in schools may encourage or discourage parents to enroll their children in school. Some community members may not be in favor of its content regarding their beliefs and tradition. For example, UNESCO Malawi, (2023), reports that, the curriculum on comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), has caused a lot of mixed feelings and reactions for parents to expose their children to issues they do not believe in and detest according to their beliefs and values. While on the other hand there is a section of people, especially the learned one who believe that children are supposed to be exposed to age-appropriate Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) starting from as low as

standard 2 using the subject of life skills and it is a core subject. According to the current curriculum in Malawi, CSE has been embedded in Life Skill subject after the curriculum audit which made sure that all aspects of CSE were taken on board.

It is in this respect that the socio-economic status of a family or a community has the potential to determine to influence a child's access to education. Genemo, (2010), lamented that sometimes families whose children are engaged in child labor activities do not have much of a choice, as survival becomes a priority when it comes to accessing education. Therefore, there is a great need to assist scavenger children access quality, equitable and inclusive education despite living in poverty-stricken areas of the scavenger communities which are around the garbage site.

According to Craig-Dorough, (2003), all issues of school dropouts occur with reasons, and they have effects on those who drop out of school. In the scavenger communities' children drop out of school because of several reasons such as urban poverty, lack of basic needs and sometimes lack of interest in education and most of the times marginalization by government and stakeholders in education. For example, non-enrollment affects children in the way that they end up engaging in bad behavior due to staying idle while their fellow children are in school. There are a lot of consequences that occur due to non-enrollment or dropping out of school and lack of parental involvement. It has been repeatedly mentioned that some of the consequences for dropping out of school are child marriages, early pregnancies, joining gangs that indulge in robbery and terrorizing people including alcohol and substance abuse by under-aged children who should be in school.

2.8.0. Policies and strategies guiding government and stakeholders in providing education to out-of-school youth, (scavenger children)

According to Collins dictionary, (2015), a policy document is an agreed upon document that is legally binding, and it outlines definitions and roles within its content to support an

intended action of a given issue. In general, according to Google scholar, “policies and procedures are designed to influence and determine major decisions and actions to be taken in a specific area of interest, and these take place every day in the operations of organizations.” It should be noted that policies fall in four different main types such as, public policy which includes regulatory policy, constituent policy, distributive policy, and redistributive policy. The difference between these four types of policies is their goals, impact and benefits. Whereas according to Collins Dictionary, (2015), a strategy generally involves goal setting and priorities that determines actions to achieve the goals by means of resource mobilization and implementation. Some of the policies and strategies that are used to provide education to in school and out of school youth are the National Education Policy (NEP), National Gender Policy (NGP), National Youth Policy, Re-Admission Policy, the National Girls’ Education Strategy (NGES), Inclusive Education Strategy, National Education Sector Investment Plan (NESIP) and National Educational Standards. Therefore, according to the UN 2030 agenda, provision of education to all citizens especially children is a multi-stakeholder responsibility, and it is a fundamental human right as stipulated by various countries’ constitutions. It should be noted that policies are deliberately designed to influence decision making and change for the scavenger communities.

Apart from policy development and implementation by various stakeholders to provide education to citizens, countries are also obliged to international conventions and charters on the rights of children. These are the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, (1989), The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, (1999), the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, (2006), Jomtien World Declaration on Education for All (1990), Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994), Dakar Education for All Framework for Action, UNESCO, (2000), and UN Sustainable Development Goals (2015) and the Malawi Vision 2063.

Despite the development of the policies, strategies and UN declarations it has been observed that out of school youth in the category of scavenger children are still being sidelined and discriminated against in most areas. For example, in Malawi, there is no compulsory education and even if there is Education for All (EFA); Parents in the scavenger communities do not take enrolment and dropping out of school of their children seriously since there is no law enforcement on the issue. Currently, compulsory primary education is not available in Malawi, but there is an intention to make it mandatory.

Some of the policies and strategies that assist in the provision of education to the youth in the country are: -

i. The National Education Policy.

The NEP, it has been designed to respond to the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II by then and other national, regional and international policies and protocols on education. It has been observed that the NEP recognizes issues of Early Childhood Development (ECD), basic and secondary education are critical foundations to further education. It also recognizes the importance of inclusive education and out of school youth by providing Complementary Basic Education (CBE) and adult education in the education sector. The policy attempts to provide education in a holistic way through the three education pillars of access and equity, improved quality and relevance and improved governance and management. However, on out of school youth it is the Priority Area 1 of the NEP, provides for: “Quality, accessible and equitable basic education, the policy gives the mandate to ministry of youth to deal with issues of provision of education, but it does not specifically pinpoint to the scavenger communities which are a separate entity all together.” Barre, (2015), indicates that there is much talk about causes of non-enrolment and drop out such as poverty and orphanages whilst all these observations are for the disadvantaged and urban poor but not specifically for the scavenger children.

ii. The National Youth Policy

On education for the youth the National Youth Policy highlights education as a major priority in the development of both young men and women to prepare them for a meaningful future life. The Constitution of Malawi provides for education for all and the (NYP) refers to the Ministry of Education Policies and Strategies and Frameworks such as the (NESIP) as well as the recommendations of the National Conference on Education (2005).

Despite having the supportive instrument highlighted in policy, a lot of challenges and bottlenecks remain noticeable especially for the scavenger children. For example, with reference to the National Youth Policy (NYP), (2013), EFA goals have been indicated with the following groups but are not scavenger children specific: - (Orphans, Youth with disabilities, Youth living with HIV, Young people on the street, Youth in conflict with the law, Unemployed, under-employed and working poor youth, teenage parents, Adolescent girls, Pupils and Students and Out of School Youth)

Even though there is need to lobby for compulsory education which will be mandatory attendance for primary education, scavenger children continue to miss basic education due to their socio-economic status and lack of other basic needs for them to stay in school. The other disadvantage is that scavenger children lack instant role models within their communities.

iii. National Gender Policy

The National Gender Policy promises to deal with challenges and issues that arose during the implementation of the previous version of the policy of the 2000-2005. The policy states that, there has been continuous unequal power sharing between men and women, boys and girls because of patriarchal attitudes, unceasing gender-based violence, spread of HIV and AIDS with high infection rates especially for women and girls. UN Women, data, (2022), outlines specific areas which indicates inequalities among people in Africa, such as small percentages of male involvement in reproductive health, continued high dropout rates for girls,

poverty levels particularly amongst women, limited participation and representation of women in decision-making positions, inadequate enforcement of laws; and huge disparities in access and control of resources by the majority of women.

However, it has been observed that Gender Based Violence (GBV) is on the increase despite intensified campaigns and legislation against malpractice. The consequences are rampant poverty for women and girls, high suicide rates and poor health especially in areas with lower incomes. Nonetheless, scavenger communities still face being sidelined and discriminated against as most of the real time data showcased in the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) concentrate on those that are in school or have dropped out, leaving children that did not enroll unattended to. For example, the Education Statistics, (2022), indicates that the Gross Enrolment ratio between boys and girls at primary level is currently almost 1:1, but only 25% of the girls make it to the final year of primary school (standard 8) as they keep on dropping out because of the reasons already mentioned earlier.

The drop-out rate according to the Education Statistics, (2022), 22.74 for girls while only 8.61 is for boys, resulting in low transition rates for girls into secondary and tertiary education. While this trend is worrying for the government and other stakeholders in education, the scavenger communities do not worry so much if their girls do not access education.

The NGP has highlighted several international conferences and United Nations Conventions that have led to governments and State Parties promoting gender equality and equity. Malawi Government has shown its commitment and political will on empowerment of women through gender equality through ratifying and being a signatory to several regional and international instruments and commitments. Some of the most notable commitments are: -

The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development; Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC); the Vienna Conference on

Human Rights; and the Beijing Platform for Action. The Malawi National Inclusive Strategy, (2017),

All these protocols and instruments are human rights important key tools for the advancement of women and children, for example, CEDAW, CRC and the African Protocol on Women Rights provide a leeway for a woman to appeal at regional and international levels against any violation of her human rights. The international and regional instruments provide useful reference material for the development of national instruments particularly the Malawi Constitution which upholds the principle of gender equality and women's rights and related national laws on gender equality. There is a great need for gender mainstreaming in scavenger communities to do away with gender blindness and stereotyping which is always to the disadvantage of women and girls at the garbage sight. For example, cases of sexual abuse and rape continue to rise every day even though it's a criminal offense punishable by the law. Nonetheless, the (2000 to 2015) Ministry of Education Policy and Investment Framework (PIF), clearly states that, "high priority would be given to the gender imbalance and inequity in the education system at all levels. The PIF recognizes the need for gender sensitivity in education through appropriate educational policies and practices."

iv. Re-admission policy

The re-admission policy of Malawi, (2018), has been developed to address the issue of high dropout rates due to pregnancy and other reasons barring school going age children to complete the basic and secondary education cycle. Priority Area 1 of the policy states that, clearly states, "that all schools shall ensure that there are simple and conducive guidelines to allow learners who drop out of school due to pregnancy, early marriages to be readmitted. The schools shall have an environment that is free from stigma and discrimination for readmitted learners. Further to this, the policy explains that at present there are the procedures which are

not easy to follow for learners and parents who drop out of school due to pregnancy and child marriages for re-entry into school. It is a procedure which denied students, especially girls, to stay in school. The trend was that, if a learner gets re-admitted back into school, girls were usually bullied, discriminated against by fellow learners, teachers and the community at large due to lack of understanding of the policy interpretation, requirements and re-admission procedures.

However, sensitization and dissemination of the policy was done at National, Education Division, District and Cluster levels to education officials and some the Parents Teachers Association Representatives (PTA), which did not include the environments in the categories of scavenger communities whose most of their children are out of school and are in dire need of assistance to get education. For example, in the scavenger family's parents do not actually care whether their children enroll into school or go back if they drop out of school. Mohanty, (2010), describes scavenger parents as individuals who already have preconceived negative ideas about education and getting their children enrolled into school seems to be a waste of time.

v. The National Girls' Education Strategy (NGES)

This National Girls' Education Strategy (NGES), is aimed at facilitating the pace at which Malawi may achieve the Millennium Development Goals 2 and 3 plus Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 4 and 5 which emphasize on Universal Primary Education (UPE), promotion of gender equality and empower women respectively with reference to The Malawi Constitution, (2013),

The strategy has a clear outline of activities that have been deliberately planned to be undertaken for a 5-year period (2018 -2023), whereby MoE provides the technical know-how and guidance to stakeholder in education to promote girls' education at all levels in Malawi.

The strategy is in line with the National Education Sector Investment Plan (NESIP), which adheres to the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS II) and promotes a harmonized approach to the improvement of girls' education. The strategy also galvanizes actions from the Civil Society Organizations (CSO), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), line ministries and the academia in its implementation plan including monitoring and evaluation.

Therefore, it is the hope of the Ministry of Education that all stakeholders in the provision of education adopts the strategy even after its review and ensure that adequate funding, personnel and working modalities are in place to ensure effective realization of the National Girls Education strategy objectives, which includes increased girls' enrolment and retention, improved performance and the creation of an enabling environment for girls' education. With guidance from the NGES framework, it is assumed that girls' education will be taken from a human rights perspective whereby issues of gender equality and equity shall be observed. However, experience has shown that there are still emerging issues with regards to the girl child education within the scavenger communities. The programming, resource mobilization, allocation of resources and reporting of issues have been well coordinated and measured towards meeting the EFA goals and national strategies for the country but with much focus at the school going populations. For example, school feeding programs are strictly for the in-school children and take-home rations target children that are in school. Mohanty, (2019), explains that scavenger girl children who have not enrolled due to poverty, bad cultural practices and early/forced marriages continue to be sidelined and discriminated against.

vi. Inclusive Education Strategy

In Malawi the education sector comprises of five sub-sectors namely, Basic Education which consists of Early Childhood Development, Complementary Basic Education, Adult Literacy and Primary Education: Secondary Education, Teacher Education, and Tertiary

Education (the Universities, Technical and Vocational Education). Inclusive Education provides so many forms of special provisions for the less privileged and disadvantaged children and youth, including those with special needs. This terminology is new to the Malawian setting since IE has been associated with SNE while excluding other forms of vulnerability.

However, in this strategy the term “inclusive education” has been defined as a way of reforming the education system through policies which give direction on cultures, and practices that hinder marginalized children to access quality and equitable education. Nonetheless, the existing policies, strategies and even protocols concentrate on those that are already in school or those that have been labeled as vulnerable while attitude towards scavenger children is more on the negative side. Efendi, (2020), education has been referred to as a humanistic process which assists in accessing education so that vulnerable children to become human beings in the real sense in terms of survival. The Inclusive Education (IE) strategy indicates that some categories of children who are included in inclusive education are Children with disabilities, from poor families, the girl child, orphans, street children, child headed households, children suffering from chronic diseases, Children from geographically disadvantaged areas, abused and neglected children, teen mothers and children in conflict with the law. It is therefore, in this regard that scavenger children are included in this category of out-of-school children who face multiple barriers to access quality, equitable and inclusive education.

In addition, Action Aid, (2015), states that there is no monitoring mechanism in the scavenger communities that can cross check thoroughly if this category of children is reached out and assisted. Mostly, scavenger families keep on moving from one shelter to another as they have no proper means of permanent housing and stable families. With reference to the Anomie Theory, most of the scavenger children are abused and in conflict with the law hence negativity from some of the stakeholders to assist them accordingly. They believe that lawlessness is a normality in obtaining their goals in society and their community as well.

Action aid, (2015), reports that children as young as 6 years of age often face discrimination as they daily strive for survival and work in rubbish dumps at the garbage site. It has also been observed that these children are at the right age to enroll in school but are found outside the school premises for scavenging purposes. Barre, (2015), observed that scavenger children know that they are associated with garbage smell, which is overpowering, and they are identified before they can talk to anyone who lives outside their community as the smell becomes a source of stigma and discrimination in the school environment. Whenever discrimination intensifies, it becomes a source of dropping out of school for scavenger children and bringing them back to school is not an easy task.

vii. National Education Sector Investment Plan, (NESIP 2020-2030)

The National Education Sector Investment Plan (NESIP) is a long-term strategic document deployed with the aim of guiding planning and implementation of all educational development programs, projects and activities in the next ten years from 2020. Emphasis is put the same areas targeted in Inclusive Education (IE) such as, Early Childhood Education (ECD), Primary Education, Out of School Youth, Adult Literacy Education, Secondary Education, Higher Education, Technical and Vocational Education with issues of girls' education and Special Needs Education (SNE) included in the plan. Even though scavenger communities may seem to be included in the plan through Out of School Youth category and adult learning initiative, scavenger communities are always busy with scavenging and recycling garbage to the point that the inclusion might suffer non-attendance. Scavenger families need to be engaged using the motivational Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen, (1989) by planning to build good infrastructure, provision of incentives such as take-home rations or to give them capital for small scale businesses apart from intensifying social cash transfers in poor and vulnerable households in the scavenger communities. Therefore, the National Education Sector

Implementation Plan (NESIP) objectives would be achieved to reach scavenger children who are hard to reach due to their vulnerable situation as regards to getting primary education. These vulnerable children are inclusive of school dropouts who could at least get literacy and numeric skills through Comprehensive Basic Education (CBE) and adult classes from the community being offered by adult literacy classes which are supposed to be offered for free by Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare.

viii. National Educational Standards

According to the National Education Standards (NES), the main aim is to set expectations of providing quality, equitable and inclusive education in all the important aspects of school education in Malawi. The key features for the standards revolve around effective leadership found in the school's management, teaching and learning, in connection with the expected outcomes. The main areas of focus are learning in schools, students' outcomes in the curriculum, attainment across the school, student's participation in school, student's behavior in school life and safety and protection. Marcos & Alicia (2022), observe that fulfilling Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), 4, which emphasizes providing inclusive and equitable education and promoting lifelong opportunities to all citizens, is not an easy task as it requires joint efforts to reach all deserving children and youth. Therefore, for SDG #4 to become a reality it requires strong strategies which are aimed at promoting the right to education to increase school retention through regardless of social status, gender, geographical location, religion and social identity. Efendi, (2020), observes that while there are some improvements in enrolment in education globally, there are still vulnerable communities whereby children are left with very minimal opportunities to enroll into school and enter the work force as expected for those that have had the chances to have access to quality, equitable and inclusive education. The strategies revolve around learning in schools, students' outcome in the curriculum,

attainment across the school, student's participation in school, student's behavior and involvement in school and student's safety and protection.

a. Learning in schools

This Standard aims at student's active participation in the learning process while in class. However, it must be accompanied by good teaching strategies so that even students who do not perform well can pass examinations and have their literacy, numeracy and social skills improved. Therefore, it is the teacher's responsibility to make sure that all children learn equally and that the children should be able to use the skills gained later in life. Ojiambo, (2017), commented that an educated youth are an asset to the Nation. Therefore, it is very important for children to get education as a steppingstone to their meaningful future livelihoods.

a. Students' outcomes in the curriculum

This Standard looks at what students have achieved regarding the new national curriculum. It measures the level of achievement at the expected level. For example, acceptable literacy skills in class 3; a student is expected to read fluently at this level. Sood et.al, (2022), observed that skills acquired in education have an influence of an individual's behavioral change. However, it should be noted that behavioral change is gradual, and it takes time for a complete transformation.

b. Attainment across the school

These standard measures learning effectiveness with regards to positive statistical outcomes such as examinations results at examinable levels. These examination results are a measure in the context of completing education in the school cycle, such as primary and secondary education. However, with most of the scavenger, children have no chance of staying in school due to absenteeism and dropping out of school due to the many barriers they face in their everyday lives. Therefore, the success of the standard in students completing education

on which they embarked will work only for those that stay in school but there is not much for the scavenger children as they are not found in these examinable structures.

c. Student's participation in school

These standard measures the school's effectiveness in making sure that students acquire much from their school experience as much as possible by completing the education cycle. The National Education Standards use examinations as a yard stick on who should repeat at what level and who completes their education at what level and proceed to the next level. Wickert, (2022), explains that the diminishing of old principles in a society weakens the social cohesion and brings disorder. For example, those who do not complete their education are full of negativity about enrollment into school and despise the education system for reasons best known to themselves if they are not guided properly.

d. Student's behavior and Involvement in school life

The Education Standards mainly cover student behavior and involvement in school life. It measured the extent to which students can develop social skills because of their school education. This is an attempt to enforce good behavior which is not passive and to develop the good habits into self-disciplined and responsible young people as is required by the National Youth Policy in Malawi for turning the youth into responsible future citizens and leaders. The application of the Theory of Social Change could help scavenger children change their behavior through cultural and traditional adaptations in the school setting.

e. Students' safety and protection

This standard makes sure that there is effectiveness in keeping students safe in the school environment by dealing with attempts at abuse and harm of any nature such as physical, sexual or emotional abuse. There have been attempts to make schools safe for learners by the

social welfare and child protection officer from Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare, Child rights campaigners and human rights advocates by creating safe spaces for learners. For example, provision of secret boxes where learners can report any violation, they come across within the school premises. These boxes are opened in the presence of the school management committee, police and child rights advocates. The school provides a reporting mechanism for any kind of abuse in the form of suggestion or complaint boxes. However, Sood, et.al, emphasizes that scavenger children mostly face abuse outside the school premises and in their homes and this influences their behavior. However, if they enroll in school, they also become victims of circumstances through discrimination and stigma which is mostly triggered due to their low socio-economic status in their society.

2.8.1. Possible solutions to lack of education for out of school youth in scavenger communities

The scavenger communities seem to have given up on future meaningful life to come up with good education. They believe education is for the elite and that they are a forgotten group of people even though their lifestyle does not allow them to be in school all the time. Some of the possible solutions to lack of education for the out of school youth and in this case scavenger children by government and non-governmental stakeholders in education could be, advocating for compulsory education in Malawi, strengthening of Complimentary Basic Education (CBE), provision of Guidance and Counseling and parenting skills. Mowder, (2005) suggests that parenting styles such as involvement in a child's education assist them to perform better in school. For example, assisting children with homework and assignments, attending Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings and always participating in school activities.

i. Compulsory Education

The Malawi Government introduced the Free Primary Education (FPE) in 1994 as a response to the Universal Primary Education (UPE). The main objective of the initiation was

to increase access to quality primary education by all citizens. Through this effort the government removed fees and abolished school uniforms so that many children could be able to enroll in school. The situation as of now is that primary education has not been made mandatory in law hence there are other children that are not attending primary school due to various vulnerability issues like the scavenger children. However, EMIS, (2020), observes that if primary education could be mandatory by law, then enrolment rates would be high.

ii. Complimentary Basic Education and Out-of-School Youth Functional Literacy

Complimentary Basic Education and Out of School Youth (OSY) Functional Literacy programs provide alternative learning pathways for school dropouts that are within the education cycle and literacy and numeric skills to adults in specific communities respectively. Most of the scavenger children drop out of school before they attain basic numeric and literacy skills and introduction of CBE could assist in providing education for their survival as they may decide to get re-admitted back into school.

iii. Social Cash Transfers

According to the Social Cash Transfer Program, (SCTP), The Malawi Social Cash transfer (SCTP; (*Mtukula Pakhomo*), “Is unconditional transfer targeted to ultra-poor, labor-constrained households.” SCTP main objective is to increase enrolment in school, and it was piloted in one district in 2006 and then to 6 other districts in 2007. The program has benefitted 777,000 individuals and 174,500 households across 18 districts as of September 2017. The STCP, (2022-27), strategic plan indicates that the program will be expanded and become operational to 28 districts that was by 2018 and that there is a strategic plan which will guide on working towards achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), 1: to end poverty in all its forms everywhere. However, it is not everybody that accesses the Social Cash transfer Program, especially the scavenger communities, which most of the time their settlements are not permanent as a result racking them becomes difficult.

iv. Provision of Guidance and Counseling and Parenting Skills

Provision of G & C and parenting skills can assist in the provision of education to scavenger children despite their low-income status. Once children have enrolled in school they need to be guided in the areas of education, social, personal and career at a very young age. Barre, (2015), explained that if out of school youth enroll into school, they have a chance of being guided properly by their teachers. For example, schools hold career days whereby students dress according to the careers they want to pursue in future. However, Grant, (2014), observes that scavenger children's parents may not be able to afford internalize such a type of thinking, let alone be able to buy the attire but might assist in explaining to their children if they are exposed to good parenting skills. It should be noted that Guidance & Counselling brings about positive behavioral changes in students and can lead to good performance in school. However, it should be noted that behavioral change is gradual, and having a relapse should be considered normal.

In cases whereby children face abuse of any kind, they might go through trauma or depression which requires counseling or psycho-social support. Therefore, it is an obligation for the Ministry of Education to provide such services by linking and networking with other non-governmental stakeholders such as Civil Society Organizations (CSO) who can provide child protection services to scavenger communities for them to stay in school and complete the school education cycle at their level.

2.9. Summary

To sum it all this study on examining the role of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in the provision to scavenger children; there are areas that need to be discussed to bring out the issues that affect both parties, thus the providers of education and the recipients who are in this case the out of school youth (scavenger communities) where scavenger children

spend their everyday lives. Lack of basic needs for scavenger children to get education are many but some of the noticeable barriers are food, shelter, portable water and good clothing to enable them to stay in school comfortably without facing any discrimination while schooling. However, even if they may have the mentioned things as home factors; there are also school factors that hinder scavenger children access to education such as dilapidated infrastructure, teaching methods, stigma and discriminatory acts by both teachers and other children who do not frequent the garbage site for their survival. Other studies carried out by researcher on waste pickers and management such as Kasinja & Tilley, (2015) and Mohanty, (2014), that have been carried out concentrate on waste picking and an informal economy issue while other on issues of dropouts without critically looking into the issues of governmental and non-governmental stakeholder involvement on the need for a examine their role in the provision of quality and accessible education to the scavenger children in their communities.

Theoretical models for the study revolve around and theories that could assist scavenger communities get the much-needed services for their children to access education and stay in school for future meaningful lives. The societal Anomie/strain theory may result in the following, rebellion, retreatism, ritualism, conformity and innovation. However, the Anomie/Strain theory has been linked to the study with the conceptual variable independent and dependent models. For example, change in the school environment could affect dropout rates and enrolment numbers; meaning that the school environment is an independent variable which influences the rate at which scavenger children drop out and enroll in school. Grant & Osaloo, (2014), gives guidance on theory driven thinking. For example, in this case, both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders should be in the forefront to achieve inclusion of scavenger children in quality and equitable education programs. Nonetheless, Ministries of Education, Health and Gender, the Lilongwe City Council through Local

Government intervention and other NGOs and Development Partners working in the areas of vulnerability have paid very little attention to cater for scavenger children's quality and equitable education.

However, conceptual models are concept driven and have the potential to bring the much-anticipated change to the scavenger communities. There are issues that derail progress in the provision of education to the out of school youth (scavenger children) such as, state socio-economic of child scavengers, attitude towards education, behavioral change, motivation factors, parental involvement and policy and strategy gaps.

The socio-economic status of scavenger children contributes a lot to the attainment and access of education in scavenger communities. Scavenger children live in the most vulnerable communities of our society, and it should be noted that they belong to the informal sector, an area which is very difficult to task stakeholders to provide the much-needed basic needs in their everyday lives. There are so much negativity and discrimination against scavengers because of the delinquent and anti-social behavior whenever they are in contact with others within their society. On the contrary, scavenger communities may be aware of the importance of getting basic education, but they do not know that it is their basic human and constitutional right to be provided with education by government and other stakeholders in education. The Malawi 2063 vision and the 2030 MW implementation plan stresses on leaving no child behind in getting education. That is why despite the development of policies and strategies in education to cater for all sectors of the economy, the scavenger communities remain discriminated against in all areas. The case of Lilongwe City Council and other stakeholders like Ministry of education and other line ministries bring awareness to all stakeholders that scavenger communities have been forgotten for a long time. The children would like to have a meaningful livelihood in future but there are a lot of barriers. Scavenger children get economic independence at an early

stage while engaging in anti-social activities for them to survive. For example, scavenger children are involved in stealing, joining armed robber gangs and organized crimes, GBV mainly against women and girls and child labor which is always accompanied with health hazards.

Poverty plays a very big role in the negative attitude that scavenger communities have towards education. It is one of the factors influencing high rates of dropouts and has so much effect on scavenger communities. While parents are especially men are busy scavenging at the garbage site, children engage in all sorts of activities like begging, stealing or work as child laborers to earn a living. If they engage in scavenging as well, children are exposed to hazardous substances that affect their health. These can be poisonous food items, sharp objects which might cut their hands and feet and fall off garbage trucks. Once they enroll in school, scavenger children lack teaching and learning materials, school uniform, food and they are discriminated against by their fellow peers and even the teaching staff. Mohanty, (2020), expressed concern that whatever innovative interventions are done at school level, there are still related factors that go along with poverty.

Due to the negative effects of discrimination and being sidelined within the school environment, scavenger communities develop a negative attitude towards education against their survival needs. For example, if they go begging or engage in child labor activities, they get a little something for food and survival whilst if they go to school, they stay hungry for the rest of the day. Sood, et.al, (2020), explain that scavenger families have a negative attitude towards education, and they believe that education is for the elite only. Therefore, stakeholders need to find ways and strategies to address such situations or develop deliberate policies that would give a mandate to stakeholders to intervene. On the contrary, most of the current intervention target the in-school children while those who have dropped out and are out-of-school are not considered. This is the reason why scavenger communities are sidelined and

forgotten meaning that all the protocols Malawi has ratified on the rights of the child and achievement of the SDG goal number 4 is a non-starter, unless the policy gaps should be identified and addressed accordingly.

There is a great need to provide guidance and counseling to scavenger communities and especially scavenger children who face a lot of hardships starting from the home and to school environment. Children are traumatized and face depression due to discrimination acts they face at school in the form of teasing and bullying and negative handling sometimes by the teaching staff. Mohanty, (2014), expresses concern that there are several factors like illiterate parents, lack of guidance, financial constraints, non-commitment of teachers and lack of seriousness in service delivery, home factors and domestic responsibilities and peer influence that raise the rate of dropout amongst scavenger children. There should be institutional capacity to make efforts to bring about behavioral change as a way of engaging the scavenger communities for change of attitude. For example, establish a Behavioral Change Centre (BCC) within the scavenger community where G & C, psycho-social support could be provided with some incentives to motivate both parents and children. The incentives could be taking home rations, provision of school meals and extra-curriculum activities in form of sports, debates and drama. The study finds would give direction as to whether there is need for further studies if scavenger children have to access quality and equal education within their communities.

Motivation factors will also play a very big role to keep scavenger children in school if they enroll. Candezeza, (2020), explains that lack of interest among parents is one of the factors which are attached to tradition and cultural beliefs which influence dropout and non-enrolment among scavenger children. Lack of motivation by parents to be available for their children's education creates a very big emotional gap between children and parents. Dorious, (2010), emphasizes that broken homes are a source of demotivation for children to perform better in school since children are always exposed to conflicts and parents quarrelling in their presence.

Lack of parental participation, provision and availability in their children's education is a very big setback to scavenger children to stay in school. According to Bennet (2022), the lifestyles and social-cultural beliefs of scavenger families are determined by the educational levels attained by parents, and they have much influence on their children's education. Other factors having influence on parental involvement are religious affiliations, beliefs, gender equality and societal attitudes towards education. However, for scavenger children to access quality and equal education there must be real time data to bring out evidence-based facts to take the needs of scavenger communities into consideration.

Even though it is a fundamental right for every child to get education, policies and strategies are deliberately developed so that they can guide decision-making in the service delivery of education. Therefore, the provision of education to all citizens, especially children is a multi-stakeholder responsibility, and this is supposed to reach every child regardless of their status, color, race and gender. However, it has been observed that even though Ministry of education has put in place policies and strategies to guide implementation of provision of education to the citizens, there are some policy gaps that make it impossible to cover out-of-school-youth who might not have enrolled into school and EMIS data does not capture their existence. Therefore, it is in this regard that there should be more policy reviews and development to capture and fill in the gaps that exist. For example, the re-admission policy only covers students that enrolled earlier into school but for those that have never been to school are not covered. On the contrary, the policies highlighted in the literature review have stated a little something about out-of-school youth, but it is not adequate to address the issues of scavenger children. Stakeholders in education like the LCC are not showing their full potential in their social responsibilities to serve the communities around the garbage site. Therefore, it is assumed that this study will bring out issues that will bring stakeholders in education to think through and provide the much-needed education to scavenger children and begin to address

some of the barriers to like basic needs and economic empowerment of the scavenger communities through provision of knowledge and sensitization campaigns on the importance of education to a nation.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

3.0. Introduction

This study seeks to examine the role of stakeholders in education on how they ought to provide education to scavenger children living around City of Lilongwe garbage sites who are marginalized in accessing quality education hence they dropout in large numbers. Aloise-Young & Chavez, (2020), indicates that most students in scavenger communities choose to drop out of school for a variety of reasons. Scavenger children are a generation of garbage scavengers who have been frequenting the garbage site for so many years. They have a lot of reasons why they do not pay attention to accessing equitable and quality education due to their vulnerability. The intention of this study is to find solutions to the increasing number of schools dropouts by engaging stakeholders on the level of their interventions and implementation of policies. For example, the National Education Policy (NEP), Re-admission Policy and The Malawi 2063, enabler number 5 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) number 4 which emphasizes of leaving no child behind in education. Kim, (2014), emphasizes that, the reason for high dropout in schools depends on several factors and that there is lack of commitment by government and civil society. This is also the same for scavenger children as they are also affected by several factors attending school. The study proposes to engage stakeholders in education, school management, parents, the community and the in and out of school youth (scavenger children) to get an in-depth knowledge on how no access or limited education affects their children's future livelihoods. In addition, the study seeks to explore strategies and policies that can assist and increase the enrolment and retention rates in the garbage scavenger communities. Mohanty, (2014), stresses that it is the role of government to influence implementation of policies and strategies that provide access to education for scavenger children and out of school youths to enroll and stay in school.

In this chapter, the researcher reports on a given research design and methodology that has been used in the context of this study. The researcher intended to gain an in-depth knowledge in the fields of scavenger children's education and to examine the role of different stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children who frequent the Lilongwe City Council (LCC) garbage site for survival. To gain such knowledge and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon, the following research questions are supposed to be responded to: -

- i. What is the role of different stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children at Lilongwe garbage site?
- ii. To what extent are the different stakeholders engaged in implementing policies and strategies in providing education to child scavengers.
- iii. How effective is the provision of Guidance and Counseling and good parenting skills at reducing dropout rates for child scavengers?

This chapter provides a detailed explanation of the research paradigm and design with the adopted research methods for both qualitative and quantitative data collection strategies and procedures. The research study included methods in the areas of sampling, data collection methods and processing techniques, considerations and measures that were adopted to test the research validity of the data collection tools that were used. These were the development of questionnaires, school records, and information from policies and strategies developed by different line Ministries on issues concerning access to education in case of quantitative data. As both quantitative and qualitative research methods have been used, this is sequential mixed research for the examination of stakeholder involvement in the provision of education to scavenger children at the Lilongwe City Council garbage site. Participants were selected through purposive (convenience) and random sampling methods so that experiences of out-of-school scavenger children should be understood by the researcher in a particular context that

they are not able to stay in school despite having for some of them enroll in school. Gill, (2020), explains that the rigor of a chosen specific research method is enhanced by the sampling choices since they are presented with the pros and cons of as portrayed by each of them.

In this chapter there will be an inclusion of the study's research methodology which will portray the research approach and design, population and sample of the research study, materials/instruments of the research tools, and operational definition of variables on the quantitative part, description of the construct /variables, study procedure, ethical assurances, data collection and analysis and summary.

The design of the research approach is appropriate for the study because it allows for both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Thus, the study used positivism and interpretivist research paradigms which quantitative approach with research tools such as questionnaires and checklist interviews in face to face. While for the statistical analysis, qualitative research approach used observations and focus group interviews which were administered through questionnaires both structured and semi-structured were conducted to all the targeted respondents such as parents, local leaders, selected learners from the school, City Council and other stakeholders in education. It should be noted that data collection through observation yields rich and very important information which offers a lot for the researcher to understand about how people do things in a particular environment but also that quantitative data provides a platform for generalizing the research findings after the study; therefore, the combination of the two research methods turns the study into a mixed research paradigm. Gibbs, (2023), stresses that it is a good idea to plan and collect information in several ways from different sections of participants which includes methods such as interviews, focus group and surveys both face to face and online. There was a maximum use of research design in the areas of data collection techniques, analysis procedures, sampling and sources with much focus on analyzing real life problems for scavenger children. The respondents have been sampled

from different categories which will require different sampling procedures such as purposive and random sampling for stakeholders of the community respectively. The study mainly concentrated on a total of 404 population samples, which was calculated from a population of 3,750 plus 290 stakeholders, total 4,040. The questionnaires and check sheets for quantitative interviews and FGD for qualitative data were made available prior to data collection as some of the questions were adapted from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1133596.pdf> and verified through a pilot study. The study procedures included booking appointments, debriefing participants and obtaining both verbal and written consents.

The problem is that stakeholders in the provision of education to the marginalized child garbage scavengers who drop out of school due to multiple reasons. Experience has shown that over 90% of children around the garbage site drop out of school or do not have access to education due to negligence by stakeholders in education.

Therefore, the study assumes that the City Council will be obliged to provide space at the garbage site that could easily be converted into a Behavioral Change Centre (BCC) where interventions on education and survival skills for out-of-school youth, (scavenger children), could be provided if they do not opt to be re-admitted back into school. It is also assumed that research gaps in this study would be addressed as areas for future study like poverty, lack of portable water and health care.

This study will involve a mixed research approach method that will involve both qualitative and quantitative research methods because some information will need quantification and some interviews through face to face and focus group discussions. Both research methods will frequently bring out themes and hypotheses for later quantitative research. The study will use sampling methods such as convenience using random and purposeful methods. Data will be collected through observational and experimental methods using interviews, observation, questionnaires, face to face and focus group interviews.

Theory indicates that illiteracy due to lack of equal access to education for garbage scavengers will cause a huge rise in criminality for inhabitants around the garbage site over gradually. Among the dropouts are a few successful but most of them cannot without education. Possible supporting theories for out of school youths are Social Responsibility Theory, Anomie /Strain Theory, Cognitive Behavior Theory of Planned Behavior, Human Capital Theory, Rational Decision-making Theory, Social Learning Theory and Poor family theory for future research.

3.1. Purpose, Research Aims and Objectives

The study will seek to engage stakeholders in education and skills development within the City of Lilongwe to assess their level intervention in addressing the issue of vulnerability and lack of access to education and provision of guidance and counseling plus psycho-social support to the targeted group at the garbage site. The engagement will aim at dealing with stakeholders' responsibility in education to decrease the number of schools dropouts at the expense of scavenging for survival.

The aim and overarching goal of the study is to investigate the level of involvement stakeholders take to provide education to the out-of-school youth who in this case are scavenger children that frequent garbage site in the city of Lilongwe. It is assumed that the study will bring out interventions that could possibly solve the problem of dropping out of school for scavenger children and bring awareness to the community on good parenting skills which will involve provision of Guidance and Counselling as a way of bringing out behavioural change and probably reduce the high rates of criminology in the scavenger community.

3.2. Research Approach and Design

According to Ellis & Ley, (2009), describes research approach and design as methodology in short and defines it as the plans and procedures which bring out phases from a

wider assumption to methods that are detailed with regards to collection of data, analysis and its interpretation.

3.2.1. Positivism and Interpretivism

This study uses mixed research methods, and it follows positivism for quantitative components and interpretivism for the qualitative components. Quantitative approach used questionnaires with checklist interviews face to face. While for the statistical analysis, the qualitative research approach observations were used and interviewer administered focus group interviews.

Park, *et.al*, (2020), describes positivism as a paradigm that has its origins depending on measurable knowledge with reasons and can easily be quantified during an observation activity or reaction from the study participants. It is believed that if a phenomenon is not measurable then it cannot be known or exist. For example, data collection in any quantitative research approach is appropriate since by the end of the study the findings will be required to be validated and generalized for example, it cannot be generalized that scavenger children will end up being criminals unless backed by real time data or school records rather than the researcher's opinion. It has been observed that Positivism and Interpretivism are the two basic approaches to research methods in Sociology and that Positivists prefer scientific quantitative methods, while Interpretivists prefer humanistic qualitative methods. The table below provides a clear presentation of the two methods when used in a research study.

Table 4*Positivism and Interpretivism approaches to research methods*

Positivism	Interpretivism
<i>Relationship between society and the individual</i>	
Society shapes the individual - <i>'Society consists of 'social facts' which exercise coercive control over individuals'</i> People's actions can generally be explained by the social norms they have been exposed to through their socialisation.	Individuals have consciousness and are not just puppets who react to external social forces as Positivists believe. Individuals are intricate and complex and different people experience and understand the same 'objective reality' in different ways
<i>General focus of social research</i>	
The point of research is to uncover the laws that govern human behaviour, just as scientists have discovered the laws that govern the physical world. Prefer quantitative methods which allow for the researcher to remain detached from the respondents.	The point of research is to gain in-depth insight into the lives of respondents, to gain an empathetic understanding of why they act in the way that they do. Prefer qualitative methods which allow for close interaction with respondents.
<i>Preferred research methods</i>	
Quantitative Require research to be valid, reliable and representativeness	Qualitative Prepared to sacrifice reliability and representativeness for greater validity

Source: <https://revisesociology.com/2015/05/18/positivism-interpretivism-sociology/>

The quantitative research method or positivism research design is appropriate for the study because there will be a need to measure the variables properly and to have an in-depth understanding of the research problem. As explained in table 4, quantitative research methodology is concerned with the reliability and validity and representation of the results while qualitative research method deals with the reliability and representation for a greater validity of the results. For example, while using positivism in this study, the belief was that scavenger children have been shaped to be what they are due to social facts that surround them and their individual actions which prompted further investigations in their environment. Park, et.al, (2020), stresses that on the use of large surveys to obtain good reliability and representation and to discover social trends such as levels of education attained by the respondents and their social class. The survey in positivism mainly has been conducted using

of the research sample interviewed through structured questionnaires and official statistics which are quite reliable when it comes to collection of real time data. Adoption of such techniques has enabled researchers to discover some of the laws that govern societies and communities in the real world. Even though there is a need to conduct large surveys in a positive research method to obtain the required patterns and trends of society, experience has shown that it is not easy to acquire the desired processes in the scavenger communities where appointments may not be respected by some sections of the research study. However, the relationship between educational achievement and social class still exists in the scavenger communities. It should be noted that education levels for individuals in society determine the social class level of individuals and it could also become a source of stigma and discrimination for those that have been deprived access to education.

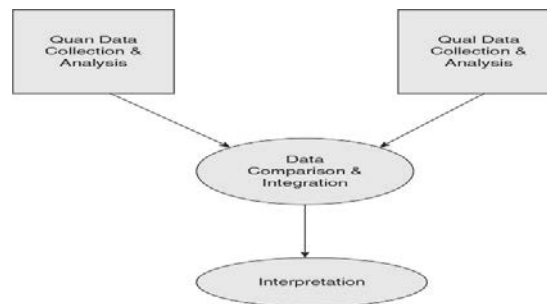
3.2.2. Interpretivism

The qualitative part of the study took the interpretivism research approach which is mainly derived from the social action theory. According to Gorton, (2010), the aim of the interpretivist on social inquiry is to understand the meaning of the social world as opposed to the explanation of a social problem in a very simple way which may not bring an in-depth understanding and knowledge. However, there are different individuals with different lines of thought and reactions to a common social problem. For example, poverty in the scavenger community can lead to high rates of criminology, dropping out of school and non-enrolment, abuse of child rights and child labor. Nonetheless, an interpretivist approach is much more qualitative in nature which uses unstructured interviews with open ended questions and follow-up questions alongside observation of the participants in their natural setting as a way of inducing empathetic understanding while looking at individual's actions in the research setting. A combination of positivism and interpretivism research paradigm which are quantitative and

qualitative in nature plays a very significant role in a research study. In case of this research study, both research methods have been used, and it has become a mixed research study following a research case study on scavenger children lack access to education at the garbage site.

3.2.3. Mixed Research (MRM)

Qualitative methods and quantitative research methods may have similar objectives, but their methodologies are quite different as the process of gathering information is different. According to Smajic, (2022), mixed research implies using more than one method of gathering information in a research study with the aim of getting valid answers to research questions. However, it must be noted that all the research approaches used and, in this case, both qualitative and quantitative studies have been tailored to understand and explain the behavior and events of their research processes. It should be noted that the advantage with mixed research is that other discrepancies between research outcomes using both research methodologies of qualitative and quantitative are carefully interrogated thereby increasing the chance to control some threats of a lot of causes influencing research outcomes. For example, in dealing with access to education for out of school youth (scavenger children); quantified data in terms of how many lack access and case studies information from the qualitative research approach has a role to play in influencing research results hence the need to have research using where information is mostly qualitative play a big role in influencing research results. Strauss and Cobin, (1998), Yin, (1994) and Denzin, (1970) are some of the many researchers to have concluded that mixed research methods designs can provide pragmatic advantages when exploring complex research questions.

Figure 9*Mixed research Methods*

Source: Sage Research Methods: Sage Publication

Statistical analysis on research outcomes can bring out detailed assessment of designs of feedback. The Castro, (2010), and Smith, (2019), agree on the fact that qualitative data provide a deep understanding of survey responses. However, the analytic process of combining qualitative and quantitative data has proved to be time consuming and costly a problem that researchers working under tight budgets might face. Further to this, the sample sizes and interaction with research participants could be drastically reduced and the results might be affected negatively. For example, data collection of the role of stakeholders in education to scavenger children became difficult mainly for stakeholder in line Ministries and NGOs as it proved that they always have busy schedules, so they kept on postponing appointments. Nonetheless, the researcher chose the mixed research approach simply because these potential limitations could easily be overcome by the strength of each method as they are able to compensate for each other's weaknesses by enriching the research findings. Tashikkori and Teddie, (2003), acknowledges that the appropriate skills of the researcher can contribute to the quality of a mixed methods study and that it might be essential to involve other researchers

with complementary research skills to optimize the benefits of using triangulation within the qualitative research.

Case study

This research study is based on Examining the role of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in providing education to scavenger children: the case of city of Lilongwe garbage site.

This a case study and experience have it that case studies often deliberately focus on unusual, neglected, or outlying cases which may shed new light on the research problem. In other words, Heale, (2018), describes a case study as having no proper definition but can be associated with an intensive study of an individual or a group of people seeking to gain a better understanding of a subject under study. It is further explained that case studies involve in-depth research into a given subject, to understand its functionality and successes. The purpose of a case study is to learn as much as possible about an individual or group so that the information can be generalized to many others. For example, during qualitative interviews, open ended questions provoke follow-up questions which bring out emerging issues. However, Heale, (2018), observed that most case studies have turned out to be highly subjective, and it is sometimes difficult to generalize results to a larger population. Nonetheless, one of the greatest advantages of a case study is that it allows researchers to investigate things that are often difficult to impossible to replicate in in a research study. However, there are some other benefits of a case study such as allowing researchers to collect a great deal of information which gives them the chance to collect information on rare or unusual cases. For example, it is not easy to collect information at the garbage site as the scavenger communities might not be very friendly to intruders. By referencing Anomie Theory, this research study's, case study blends well with the different Anomie theory outcomes in the institutionalized means on the new means of rebellion such as unruly behavior. Candeleza, (2020), explains that individuals could end in

rebellious behavior against authority which may in turn be disastrous, such as crime ranging from mass shooting, looting, vandalism and terrorism. Therefore, case study helps the researcher in exploring unique or recently discovered problems which may help in the development of additional theories and study questions for future research.

The case study has proved to be the best for this research study on the role of stakeholders on the provision of education to scavenger using the mixed research method.

Some of the justifications for choosing case study are: -

- It allows for a deep understanding of the different challenges and opportunities scavenger children as they try to access equitable and quality education amidst challenges of basic needs.
- The case study approach will allow the researcher to unpack factors that affect scavenger children, and their communities go through with regards to the impact on education mainly caused by their socio-economic status, tradition and cultural influence.
- Case studies assist the researcher to take a holistic approach to investigate a lot of issues scavenger children face in education such as the learning environment, access to basic needs, family and community support. Thus, this approach is very crucial for the development of effective interventions after the research. For example, limited teaching and learning materials can be assessed and provided from case studies. And ensures that solutions are adapted to the specific needs of the population.
- On ethical considerations case study method allows the researcher to gain the trust of the participants especially with the vulnerable populations such as scavenger children who need well calculated approach to avoid harm of any kind. This study needed observed all forms of ethical considerations during data collection especially in the areas of privacy and confidentiality.

- A policy checklist was developed with an aim of checking policy implications that could follow in findings from case study methods. These could be limited policy implementation, out-dated policies and strategies. However, case studies have the capability producing evidence on barriers to education for scavenger children and therefore they can influence deliberate policies that can assist in reducing challenges met by scavenger children in accessing education such as the Free Primary Education (FPE) Policy introduced in 1994 in Malawi. This policy has met the global economic shocks which have forced the introduction of hidden costs under the Universal Primary Education (UPE). Thus, case studies have what it takes to influence specific interventions to benefit the scavenger communities.

In conclusion it can be rightly stated that a case study approach is very suitable for the mixed research method on scavenger children as it mostly brings up real life stories and narratives which make research finding more reliable and valid. Mohanty, (2019), explains that case make it possible to follow the scavenger children's turbulent journey which includes their development over a period and their changing circumstances in their attitude and behaviour. Heale, (2018) describes a case study method as having influence that produces informed interventions and policy reviews that can bring about a deep understanding of the multiple issues that surround access to equitable and quality education for scavenger children who are often marginalized by stakeholders in education

During the pilot study, data collection was conducted in Malawi; key primary setting is a Community Day Secondary School close to Lilongwe Garbage site, namely, Mchitainjiru (CDSS) and the surrounding community on the other side of the garbage site. Participants from the schools included teachers and their heads, those from the community included Parent Teacher Association Members (PTA), Faith and Community Leaders, parents and guardians,

parents and guardians of out-of-school youth. Beyond the community, the researcher also included stakeholders from the national level (Education Line Ministries, City Council personnel responsible for the garbage site and other key stakeholders)

Table 5

Population Sample breakdown for the pilot study

Category	Population	Sample	Method	Category	Population
Education Officers	80	8	Purposive (Convenience)	Interviews	Thematic Analysis
Community Leaders	140	14	Purposive	Focus Group	Thematic
School Managers	120	12	Purposive	Focus Group	Thematic Analysis
Teachers	120	12	Random	Questionnaire	Descriptive statistics
PTA representatives	140	14	Purposive	Interviews	Thematic analysis
Parents	150	15	Random	Questionnaire	Descriptive statistics
Out of School children	140	14	Random	Questionnaire	Descriptive statistics
Total	890	89			

For the researcher to gain in-depth understanding of the phenomenon, data was conducted using 3 questionnaires, namely, School Management Questionnaire, Community Questionnaire and Stakeholders Questionnaire. In each, participant background data was collected, including key questions that were very responsive to the objectives, for example, “It is the primary responsibility of Ministry of Education to facilitate linking and harmonization of efforts to provide education to scavenger children” which speaks to Objective 1 “Roles of different stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children at Lilongwe garbage site”; “Yes, I have or I know someone who has ever worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth” which speaks to objective 2 “Level of engagement

of different stakeholders in the implementation of policies and strategies”; “Presence of teacher counselors helps to maintain discipline in the school” which spoke to objective 3 “Determine the effect of guidance and counseling and good parenting skills to child scavengers”. All questions across the 3 categories were measured on a Likert scale. Interviews for the community level participants were interviewed and those for school management were self-administered.

Prior to the survey data collection, a pilot test was conducted to test for Feasibility and Acceptability of the study. Feasibility was aimed at ensuring that the questionnaires were flowing logically and completed in the estimate time. Overall acceptability was aimed at estimating whether participants would consent to the study. The pilot was done at random at Mchitanjiru CDSS, which is situated near to a similar environment of the scavenger community garbage site. The community around the CDSS is slightly different from the community within the garbage site. Due to urbanization, the city boundaries have been shifted, hence the mix-up of the urban poor (scavenger community) and owners of plots that are being allocated by the City Council in Area 38. This community can send their children to school even though there is some struggle and the literacy levels are a bit higher than the scavenger community proper at the primary school. “The researcher surveyed a total of 250 participants cumulatively in course between April and May 2023. 43 randomly selected schoolteachers (Primary and secondary), 207 randomly selected community and stakeholder members”

Table 6

Cronbach’s Alpha Results for pilot study

See Appendix B for the details of Cronbach’s Alpha Results for the pilot study.

DATASET	N	CRONBACH’S ALPHA
Stakeholder Questionnaire (Variables/Questions similar across all the 3 samples – community, stakeholders and school management)	55	0.8864
Community Questionnaire	22	0.7585
School management Questionnaire	16	0.6551

From table 6 above, the researcher runs the Cronbach's alpha test to further validate the reliability of the Likert scale and questionnaires used in the data collection across 3 samples (stakeholders, community members and school management members). With an alpha of 0.8864, the most reliable was the stakeholder questionnaire compared to the other 2, indicating a high level of internal consistency and reliability in the stakeholder measurement instrument. This suggested that using one unified questionnaire across all the samples (community, stakeholders and school management) so that individual groups can be compared effectively as this would eradicate high levels of missing data for some sample categories.

During the administration of the forms, missing categories were noted and some repetitive questions, all of which were corrected prior to the actual data collection.

When conducting data using the qualitative research method, there are some case studies that indicated issues of early marriage and poverty as barriers to scavenger children to get education. These were FGI which meant first there was an appointment booked, then briefing the participants about the aim of the research study, getting informed consent and the interviews followed. The following is an example of part of a case study from the responses: -

"I can see that most learners are dropping out of school. Most of these children start dropping out of school from when they start reaching standard four, five, six, seven... There are usually many learners in standard the lower classes... but these figures drop when coming to higher classes. The cause of this is sometimes early marriages, poverty, some piece works..."

Therefore, as indicated, the research methods chosen are appropriate and suitable for this research study on scavenger children as it is mainly concerned with examining the role that stakeholders ought to take in the provision of education to scavenger children. Barre, (2015), observed that the marginalized children from the scavenger community have unique problems and cannot be compared to any other group of individuals outside their community.

For the results of this study to be taken seriously, there is need for it to be replicated. For instance, data triangulation is mainly concerned with data sources in qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Smajic, (2020), explained that the advantage of data

triangulation is that it increases confidence in research data, and it reveals unique findings. For example, in a situation where the researcher is trying to examine the role of stakeholders in the provision of education to out of school youth, especially for the garbage scavengers; data collection can revolve on the provision of education whilst as in triangulation, unique findings like other issues that goes along with vulnerability can be discovered, such as, need for basic and fundamental needs in form of food, water and shelter. Therefore, collecting data from different sources and at different times assists in the unveiling of unique findings that can work to the advantage of helping upcoming researchers to call for more research in the same area. It should be noted that validation of research results mainly is dependent on the information gathered through appropriate methods and proper sampling that has critically observed all necessary measures to do away with any biases. Smith, (2019), comments that the advantage here is that the research results become helpful in filling research gaps that might be found and calling for another research becomes is justifiable

3.3. Population and Sample of the Research Study

Population and sample of a research study is determined by the people who are central to the studies generalization of the outcome of the research study. Brandit, (2020), pp, 224-226, describes population and samples as part of the earmarked population who are representatives of the whole population. The research study examining the role of stakeholders in the provision of education to out of school youth, (Scavenger children), targeted the population which lives around the Lilongwe City Council garbage site, (the scavenger community), the school management and students, and stakeholders from line Ministries, City Council, Development and Implementing Partners and the Civil Society. The National Statistics Office, (2017), has indicated that the number of street children and garbage scavengers is escalating very fast every day, and the entire Malawian population is at a projection of 20 million. Medina, (2005), explains that up to 2% of the urban population survives by scavenging from the garbage sites

in developing countries. Chisomo Children's Centre (CCC), (2015), reports that there were 3,000 garbage scavengers in Blantyre and 2,500 in Lilongwe, with a population of 1,250 parents living around the garbage site of Lilongwe City Council. The population has almost doubled as the national population is growing very fast compared to the population growth rate in the past 10 years. The study recruited a total of 404 research participants who represented different units of the respondents. Participants have been calculated from a population of 3,750 plus 290 stakeholders, giving the researcher a total of 4,040. All in all, the researcher recruited 10 % of the total population of 4,040, which came to 404 sample participants.

3.3.1. Description and Appropriateness of the Sample

The scavenger community is important to this study because they are a representation of the new generation of the past generation of garbage scavengers that live and have been surviving on garbage alone. Garbage scavengers cover individuals of all ages, starting from old, middle and young ones who are either male or female. Barre, (2015), explains that Scavenger children come from different types of families, some from female headed families, others from families where both mother and father are alive but live in absolute poverty while others live with terminally ill parents and very old grandparents, The worst form of family is whereby scavenger children come from a child headed families and mostly such children become homeless/street kids and are prone to being heavily abused. The majority have migrated from rural areas to the semi-urban set up in search of survival due to the rampant poverty that exists in the rural areas of Malawi. They have settled in illegal settlements whereby there are no proper roads networks, no portable and clean water and the inhabitants live in temporary shelters. Kasinja & Tilley, (2018), explain that the responsibility of managing solid waste lies in the hands of city councils worldwide and Malawi is no exception starting from collection, transportation and disposal at designated dumping sites in the boundaries of the city. However, it has been observed that most governments and stakeholders neglect this

responsibility including their social responsibilities to the scavenger communities. In instances where city councils attempt to manage the garbage sites, there are challenges such as limited garbage disposal equipment/ vehicles including work force. Katulkar, (2018), emphasizes that the reason for high dropout rates by scavenger children is lack of commitment by government, other stakeholders and civil society. Scavenger communities have no proper means of survival hence being associated with criminology and delinquent behavior by the scavenger children. Barre, (2019), comments that it is necessary to examine the involvement of stakeholders in providing education and other services to scavenger communities. If scavenger children are enrolled into school, they usually drop out of school due to lack of some other basic needs such as food, shelter and clean water.

The sample size was categorized as follows: - There were (20) stakeholders in education, (140) school management and students (40) and faith-based leaders (40) municipal council local assembly, (20) social welfare officers, (70) parents/guardians and (76) out of school youth for qualitative approach of Focus Group Interviews FGI) and observations on individual behavior. This sample selection criterion fits the sample description, and it will use positivism and interpretivism research paradigms. The quantitative approach used tools such as questionnaires and checklist interviews face to face. While for the statistical analysis, the qualitative research approach used observations and interviewer administered Focus Group Discussions:-

The table below gives a picture of the sample size and sampling procedures that were taken to conduct data collection.

Table 7

Sample size and sampling procedures

Category	Total Population	Number	Method of sampling	Method of data collection
municipal council local assembly	500	50	Purposeful random	Interviews Observation/ Questionnaires Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

Principal secretaries	40	4	Purposive	Questionnaire
Directors	60	6	Random	Questionnaire/ interviews
Deputy Directors	79	7	Random	Questionnaires/interviews
Chief Executive Officer	1	1	Purposive	Face to face / Questionnaire
Mayor	1	1	Purposive	Interviewer administered Questionnaire
Social Welfare and Child Protection Officers	150	15	Random	FGD, interviewer administered Questionnaire
School Management	1,500	150	Random and purposive	Observation, face to face and FGD
Local and faith-based leaders	400	40	Purposive	FGD
Parents and guardians	800	80	Random	FGD
methods used for all the sampling Out of school youths	800	80	Random and purposive	FGD & Observation
Grand Total	4040	404		

3.3.2. Sampling Procedures

Sampling procedures used in this study were purposeful, random and purposive sampling methods.

- i. **Purposeful:** Patton, (2020), explains that this is a technique which is mostly used in qualitative research, and it looks for identification of and selection of cases which have rich information while using limited resources. The choice of scavenger community leaders as respondents is one example of purposeful sampling. The community leaders were contacted through the Parent teacher Association (PTA) meetings with the school management. Scavenger community leaders were chosen because individuals are powerful in the scavenger community and have some property obtained through in any way fit to put them in power. Mostly, the scavenger community leader is called the president and may defy any rule of the laws when circumstances arise.

- ii. **Random:** This is a type of sampling whereby each participant has a chance of being selected. Usually, data is collected from a large percentage as much as possible as it is a type of probability sampling, McCombes, (2019), states that random sampling minimizes and removes all hints of bias because individuals are selected at random. Participants were chosen randomly but strictly looking into their contribution at the workplace. For the line Ministries, participants were mainly technical officers such as Chief Education Officers (Ministry of Education), Child Protection Officers, and Deputy Directors who are very familiar with child vulnerability and policy interpretation. As for the KOBO toolbox, the purpose of selection was used because most of the stakeholders are busy people and meeting them in person proved to be futile. KOBO toolbox proved to be handy and instant as participants were able to respond and submit promptly. The stakeholders the researcher sent the link at random and targeted especially those that work with child vulnerability and in poor communities.

The instruments for data collection used for the sampling procedures were questionnaires which were tailored towards Focus Group Interviews / discussions, observation and face to face interviews.

3.3.3. Sample and study design relevance

The scavenger community is a home to scavenger children who are on the receiving end of being marginalized and discriminated by both the stakeholders in the provision of education and fellow students at the school in the attempt to access equitable and quality education. McCombes, (2019), describes the targeted population in a research study as having some relevance to the research problem and purpose of the research study. Hence in this case, it is right to obtain the population sample within the scavenger community. Barre, (2019), observes that school dropouts from the scavenger community find it difficult to return to school

due to stigma and marginalization from teachers and fellow students. The school management, the scavenger community and students in or out of school are also appropriate to the research problem since these groups form part of the scavenger community facing challenges to access education. To this study, it is a given fact that the school management deal directly with issues of drop out and retention at the school and as the school is situated in the research area demographically. Line ministries are the policy makers and holders, while the donor and implementing partners and civil society have the capability to use existing or new policies to make deliberate efforts in dealing with challenges that infringe of the rights of scavenger children in an attempt in accessing equitable and quality education. The city council is supposed to show its social responsibility to the scavenger communities by addressing some of the problems scavenger communities face especially the school going age such as basic needs and discrimination at the school as they come from the area around the garbage site.

It should be noted that the selection of both qualitative and quantitative research method approach was done with reference to the supporting power analysis for statistical significance of responses. These were calculated to determine the sample size or the sample for both research methods and were determined after the saturation levels were reached to avoid repetitiveness in the responses.

The recruitment of participants from line Ministries, Development and Implementing Partners, Municipal Council officers and Social Welfare & Child Protection officers was done through emails, phone calls and physical appointments. While for the school Management recruitment was done through seeking approval from the Education Division Office: Central West Education Division (CWED). Students were recruited through the engagement with Parents and the scavenger community through the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and School Management Committee (SMC) meetings at the school. Contacts were obtained

through Social Welfare and Child Protection offices, Personal Assistants, Public Relations Officers and the Education Division Manager's offices.

3.4. Materials and instrumentation

The research study on examining the role of stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children is unique because most studies that have an element of scavenger children mainly concentrate on waste management, garbage recycling, behavioral change, and Occupational Health hazards. Dropout rates, child labor and child trafficking. There has been very limited data on the provision of education to scavenger children whom it is assumed have been marginalized for a long time. Adapting a questionnaire from these research studies could have a possibility of derailing the whole study data collection and processes. However, in the course of searching for proper instruments and materials for data collection, an attempt was made to adapt from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1133596.pdf>. Georgeta & Lopez, (2022), describe a questionnaire as a research tool which seeks to produce evidence-based information and influence decision making after the results of a particular study. Adaptation of the questionnaires proved to be difficult as most of these studies either targeted schools only or a particular sample which did not include scavenger children with regards to provision of education to scavenger community specifically children. Nonetheless, the researcher embarked on the development of the questionnaire but with reference to the link provided earlier for partial adaptation.

3.4.1. Development of the questionnaire

The development of a questionnaire in the quantitative research was based on the identification of research aims and goals of the questionnaire, for example, giving a brief definition of the targeted respondents of which in this case were the community and parents for scavenger children, school management, thus the school near the scavenger community and the

stakeholders in the provision of education such as, Line Ministries of Education, Gender, Youth and Health.

The questions were developed with reference to the research aims and objectives, including the research hypothesis, and these were scaled questions using 5-point likert scale.

A pilot study was conducted on 89 respondents which belong to the categories from the community and parents, school management, and stakeholders and data collection were conducted either online or by face-to-face interviewer administered appointments

3.4.2. Data collection process

For online interviews, such as the questionnaire for stakeholders in education, participants were booked by either through phone calls or emails. Those who agreed to take part in the research study as respondents were sent a link to respond to. In this case the following link contained the questionnaire. <https://ee.kobotoolbox.org/x/3vpcwo6U>

Summary of RQ and Data collected

Table 8*Data collection process*

	Research Question	Participant category (Who responds to this)	Data collection Tool	Proposed Data Analysis technique
1	What is the role of different stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children at Lilongwe garbage site?	Min of Ed Min of Health Min of Social Welfare	Policy Document Questionnaire FGD	Document analysis Thematic analysis
2	To what extent are the different stakeholders engaged in implementing policies and strategies in providing education to child scavengers.	School Managers PTA	Checklist Questionnaire FGD	Document analysis Thematic analysis
3	How effective is provision of Guidance and Counseling at school	Parents Drop out students Community	Questionnaire	Descriptive statistics SPSS/Stata
4	How effective is provision of Guidance good parenting skills	Parents Drop out students Community	Questionnaire	Descriptive statistics \SPSS/Stata
5	How effective is provision of free meals at school	Parents Drop out students Community	Questionnaire	Descriptive statistics SPSS/Stata

Questionnaires for community and parents and school management, and phone appointments were made through the head teachers of both primary and Community Day Secondary Schools. For example, for the parents, members of the Parents Teacher Association (PTA) were informed of the date and time of the interviews through the head teachers. On the date of the interviews each participant underwent the process of debriefing, and they were assisted to

obtain a certificate of consent before the real interview. Finally, the real interview was administered.

3.4.3. Design of the questionnaire

The questionnaire included the following: -

- UNICAF University Logo
- Heading and specific type of group to be interviewed
- Informed Consent Form: Containing the researcher's and supervisors' details

Part 1:

- Research Project title
- Debriefing of research participants about the aim and significance of the study

Part 2:

- Certificate of consent
- Section 1: Demographic Background
- Section 2: Main questionnaire

3.4.4. Heading and specific type of group to be interviewed

The heading of the questionnaire contained the specific target of participants earmarked to respond to the questionnaire. For example, the scavenger community and parents, including the type of interview to be conducted by the researcher and in this study the scavenger community means occupants of temporary shelters which have been turned into permanent dwelling places for individuals who live and rely on scavenging at the garbage site for survival. Scavenger communities include poor households who comprise of parents both old and young, children, local and faith-based leaders including those with special needs. According to Mohanty, (2014), vulnerable children, including scavenger children, should be taken as a priority when it comes to giving them a chance to access education with reference to the international protocols signed by their nations.

3.4.5. Informed Consent Form: Containing the researcher's and supervisors' details

In each study questionnaire obtaining informed consent from the participants is a must and it is obligatory. Cleave, (2021), describes informed consent as the permission granted by the person being interviewed while they are aware of the possible consequences of the responses to be given to the researcher. In addition, the respondent is in full knowledge of the possible consequences communicated to them. In the case of this study, the informed consents were provided by research participants. It should be noted that the research participants were informed of all the details of the research and supervisor, contacts and title of the research study. The research participants were also informed that should they were allowed to stop participating in the research should they want to discontinue.

Part 1:

3.4.5. Briefing

This is an act of informing the research participant's full knowledge about the aim and the significance of the research study.

The aim of the study is to investigate the level of involvement stakeholders take to provide education to the out-of-school youth (scavenger children) that frequent garbage site in the city of Lilongwe and interventions that could possibly solve the problem of dropping out of school with parental involvement in behavioral change. The significance of the study is that it is assumed that there will be a lot of positive changes in the community for scavenger children such as economic and environmental benefits after the study. It is believed that the provision of education could reduce the high rates of school dropouts and health risks to scavenger children.

Such as, that: -

- i. Scavenger children who drop out of school due to several reasons such as poverty, lack of interest and child labor will benefit through identification of stakeholders in education who have the capability to assist in the provision of school or classroom blocks, libraries, teaching and learning materials and school feeding programs. Such actions will minimize absenteeism and truancy by scavenger children.
- ii. Parents and the community will benefit through mentorship, guidance and counseling sessions while students will benefit from positive behavioral change.
- iii. The community around the garbage site will benefit through the provision of water, electricity, child protection interventions and accessible roads.
- iv. There is a possibility that after the study the community will benefit by getting portable water and even a health clinic from the City Council

The research participants were assured that they were chosen to participate in the study because they play a very important part in the investigation on the provision of education to scavenger children at the garbage site.

Part 2:

3.4.6. Certificate of consent

This is a form whereby the research participant is supposed to sign or if they cannot sign then there must be parental consent of a gate keeper as witness. The certificate of consent is very important in data collection because it is done with respect to research ethics. It is obligatory in research that participants must enter research voluntarily provided with full information about the aims and significance of the research study and that they should give their own consent before they participate in the study.

3.4.7. Demographic Background

Demographic information or background is collected as a way of getting to know the respondent well before real questioning. The section contains sex, age marital status,

educational qualifications and employment status. This information assists the researcher on how to approach the research participants, make decisions and level of conversation during the interviews. Cleave, (2021), explains that demographic background helps individuals understand some of the characteristics of the targeted population and changes that may happen in future for proper decision making.

There were three categories of questionnaires for each group of participants for the community and parents, school management, and stakeholders in education.

3.4.8. The community and parents' questionnaire

The community and parents were in one group of research participants due to them forming the community where scavenger children live. The scavenger community is influenced by culture and tradition. Nambissan, (2000), as cited by Mohanty (2014), observed that scavenger children are stigmatized based on secular criteria that they dwell much on their old tradition and impure identity which has often been associated with negativity by other social classes.

This category of questionnaire used the likert scale for responses to the questions. For example,

At the end of each survey the researcher thanked the research participants for taking their time to complete the survey. They were assured that their responses will be stored properly and that anonymity will be a priority, such that instead of mentioning names, codes will be used. Further to this the researcher stressed that responses will be valuable in understanding the perceived consequences of a high number of out-of-school students (scavenger children) and possible strategies for addressing this issue. For example, participants were informed on how stakeholders ought to take their social responsibility in providing school infrastructure, bursaries and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in their community. A small token was given to the participants for taking part in the interviews as this study has not been able to secure financial support. This study was offering a drink and a snack plus a small stipend to each of

the participants for the face-to-face interviews and Focus Group Discussions. The researcher made sure that the token was relevant to the activity took place.

3.5.0. Validity and Reliability of Pilot Study

A valid and reliable instrument was a requirement to measure the role of stakeholders in the implementation of education to scavenger children. According to Ghazali, (2016), the verifiability of a mixed study is based on both the qualitative and quantitative data gathered from the research sample. In this study the researcher sampled 89 respondents. Srinivasan, (2017), explains that trustworthiness was tested through finding the true value, applicability, consistency and neutrality research criteria.

The validity and reliability of the pilot research was done through careful sampling procedures, such as random sampling and purposes to avoid biasness. The researcher made sure to circulate preliminary findings of the pilot study to the participants to cross check if their views and opinions were correctly reflected by the researcher. Finally, there was the use of a tape recorder and the process of transcribing the recorded data into text for each group which was interviewed. There were emerging issues which were later referred to by the interviewed groups to check if the emerging issues were truly coming out of their community. Some of the emerging issues were stigma and discrimination at the school for scavenger children, children being hit by unregistered garbage vehicles, issues of mob justice and Gender Based Violence (GBV) and literacy poverty in scavenger communities. If the participants identify these emerging issues, it will improve the validity of the results and compare the results with other findings in some similar studies. For example, a research study by Mohanty, (2019), indicated that stigma and discrimination by teachers and fellow learners contribute to high dropout rates for scavenger children. While Berre, (2014), explains that there is a high rate of literacy poverty among parents in the scavenger community which is a barrier for the parents to contribute meaningfully to their children's education. It is therefore in this respect that such

strategies ensured the truth value, applicability; consistency and neutrality were achieved in the pilot study by the researcher. Further to this, verifiability of a quantitative data collection can be confirmed valid if the study can be replicated.

3.5.1. Data Analysis

Data was collected using phenomenological and Focus Group Interviews first from 90 respondents from the pilot study and then 266 in the mixed research method design. The researcher used a constant comparative analysis which involved a cyclical process of data collection by reading and re-read, coding, analyzing and comparing with the aim of having the study replicated.

The study was conducted in Lilongwe City in the community surrounding the garbage site where unfortunately education levels are low and the inhabitants' mode of communication is the local language, which is a mother tongue to most of the Malawians hence the study was conducted in Chichewa. However, information collected was later transcribed and translated into English language for easy segmenting and coding.

i. Segmenting:

During data analysis, the information was divided according to the responses from the research questions. For example, the process involves categorizing data into meaningful units by analyzing words and sentences with similar responses. Such units were bracketed according to their similarities and differences.

ii. Coding:

The identified units by categorized names were given symbols during data transcription. For example, on the question on the role of stakeholder's responsibilities to provide education to scavenger children; (I), represent Interviewer and responses by respondents to (R) are indicated in a sequential manner as follows: - R1, R2, R3 and R4....

The master list was developed using all the category names with their symbolic codes while adding new codes if discovered. There was checking of consistency in the appropriate codes between the researcher and the external analyst to cross-check the reliability of the data collected. Enumeration will be used to identify prominent themes emerging in the research study through observations noted.

As already stated earlier, the study was conducted in Lilongwe city, particularly in Mchitanjiru Community, an area encompassing the Lilongwe garbage site. The community is located approximately 25KM away from the Central Business District (CBD). Tilley and Kasinja, (2019), commented that the scavenger communities in Malawi have the majority in the lower socio-economic status living under 1 US Dollar a day. Mchitanjiru community has two main government schools, namely Mchitanjiru Secondary School and Mchitanjiru Primary School, which are located within the community, and they are approximately 5 Kilometers away from each other. Mchitanjiru primary school has a total of just over 60 teachers (both interns and full-time teachers) and the secondary school has slightly over 18 teachers who teaches classes 1 to 8 and form 1 through 4 respectively. These numbers of teachers served as sampling frame for School Management. Each school is headed by a school head teacher and the community surrounding it is represented by a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) who interfaces with each school management on issues pertaining to education within the community. The Lilongwe garbage site is the main waste deposition site for the entire city of Lilongwe and all waste from the city's Central Business District is deposited here.

To address the objectives of this study, the researcher employed a mixed method design. And to understand variation across several demographic covariates (education, employment, sex and organization), quantitative data was collected to understand key outcomes such as roles of

the government and key stakeholders in providing education to out of school youths, factors that may be associated with keeping children out of school and factors that may also be associated with motivating the children to go back to school. The survey questionnaire was structured at 3 levels; (1) stakeholder questionnaire (targeting those at the national level, especially policy makers such as education line ministries, city council and organization partners), (2) school management questionnaire (targeted teachers that are associated with schools in the community where the Lilongwe garbage site is located) and community questionnaire which targeted community members in the community where the Lilongwe garbage site is located. Mchitanjiru village members and the surrounding communities (area 24, Area 23, area 36 area 38, 6 miles, falls) served as a sampling frame for the community. For the qualitative aspect, the researcher then purposively selected Key Informants (KIs) from each level (Stakeholders, School Management and community) for scheduled Focus **Group Discussions (FGDs)**.

For the quantitative aspect, Interviews for the community level participants were interviewer led through household visits and self-administered for school management and stakeholders. The researcher reached out to stakeholders through contacts with line ministries who provided phone numbers of randomly chosen participants, a kobo collection link was then sent to all consenting participants to take the survey. “The researcher surveyed a total of 250 participants cumulatively in course between April and May 2023. 43 randomly selected schoolteachers (Primary and secondary), 207 randomly selected community and stakeholder members.” A follow up qualitative FDG was also conducted for each subcategory, 6 purposively selected school administration members (3 from secondary and 3 from primary) formed members of the school management FGD, 6 purposively selected Parent Teacher Association (PTA) members 3 from Primary school and 3 from secondary school). These were conducted in Chichewa, which is a mother language to most of the Malawians hence the study

was conducted in Chichewa. However, information collected was later transcribed and translated into English language for easy segmenting and coding. For stakeholders, a KII face to face interview was conducted with senior members of the city council to follow up on pertinent issues from the 2 FGDs while the rest of the interviews were done online due to time constraints and tight schedules in their office work.

3.5.2. Operational Definition of Variables for Mixed Study

An operational definition can identify on how a variable is calculated or recorded as a numerical value. Enfold, (2022), describes operational definition as being closely related to theories that are based on what can be measured to prove validity and reliability even if the study is to be replicated. Further to this, constructions have been described as broad concepts or topics for a research study that have a meaning in theoretical terms and are abstract. For example, these can be in the form of life satisfaction or intelligence. Creation of variables can range length, scores and age such as for this research study the respondents ranged from 10-60. Variables are created by the development of ideas or theories into a measurable form of some emerging issues.

3.5.3. Constructs and Variables Measured

Constructs and variables emerge from the Conceptual Framework of the research study.

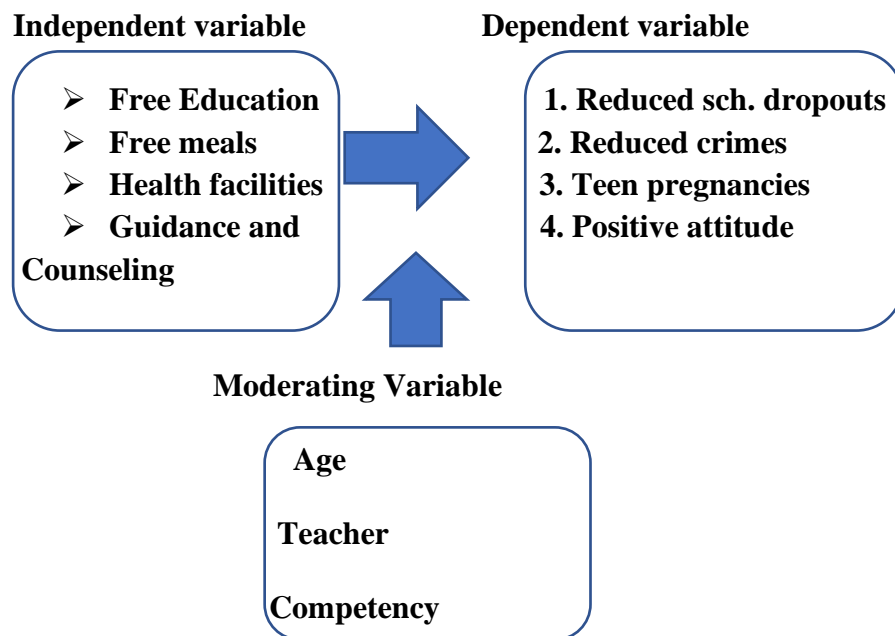
Bhandari, (2022), defines constructs as broader concepts which may be abstract, and they need to be directly observed such as intelligence and are measured through reflective indicators while variables are measurable and can be in form of height or years using numeric value. Bhandari, (2022), explains further that a variable is concrete while a construct is abstract. This research therefore attempts to measure the construction of power, trust, fear, self-esteem and satisfaction that revolve around the lives of scavenger children as they attempt to get education within the scavenger community amid so many challenges. It should be noted that the

constructions mentioned emerge from the dependent and independent variables in the Conceptual

Framework Model in the role of stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children. For example, the statuses of scavenger children in the community solely depend on the provision of education by different stakeholders whereby the moderator value is for them to be given a chance to stay in school. If the stakeholders provide independent variables such as free education, meals, health facilities and Guidance and Counseling considering the moderator variables of age and teacher competency, then there will be reduced school dropouts, crimes, pregnancies and increased positive attitude towards provision of education to Scavenger.

Figure 10

Independent and Dependent Conceptual Model:



Source: Grace Kafulatira, Unicaf University in Malawi. 2023

3.5.3. Construct/Variable 1

The researcher used 1 main variable and 5 other covariates as explanatory variables. The one main explanatory variable was Var010 “Creating alternative education programs, providing financial assistance and partnering with community organizations to provide educational opportunities is a measures schools can take to provide education to out-of-school youth”. This variable was a domain header across all the questionnaires (Community, stakeholder and school management) and this comprised 3 screening questions (A. Creating alternative education programs is a measures schools can take to provide education to out-of-school youth, B. Providing financial assistance for education is a measures schools can take to provide education to out-of-school youth and C. Partnering with community organizations to provide educational opportunities is a measures schools can take to provide education to out-of-school youth). These 3 screening questions were all measured on a 5-point Likert Scale (1. Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Don’t know, 4. Agree, 5. Strong). The summing up of the scores for each specific category of these 3 screening questions were the scores for var007, making var007 a categorical variable with 5 points as well. The other 5 explanatory variables were Education, Employment, Organization and Sex; all of which were categorical variable.

The research also runs regression analysis to understand the variations of key response variable against the explanatory variable. These variables were categorized into main 2 parts, Explanatory variables (X_{i_s}) and Response Variables (Y_{i_s}). From the data, 3 key outcome variables were selected to address each objective. For objective number 1 (Identify the roles of different stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children at Lilongwe garbage site), the researcher created 1 variable “var001” (labelled “Government ministries such as Gender, Youth and Education should lead in the provision of education to scavenger children in connection with government policies and strategies”) which represented domain 5 in all survey data collection questionnaire. Since this domain had 2 screening questions under it

namely, “Ministry of Gender should lead in the provision of education to scavenger children in connection with government policies and strategies” and “Ministry of Youth should lead in the provision of education to scavenger children in connection with government policies and strategies” all measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1. Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Don’t know, 4. Agree, 5. Strong), the researcher then summed similar category responses across all the questions, this then in turn created a categorical variable “var001” with 5 points.

3.5.4. Construct/variable 2

Outcome variable number 2 was aimed at addressing objective number 2 (Determine the level of engagement of different stakeholders in the implementation of policies and strategies to provide education to child scavengers). This variable was named “var002” within a label “Stakeholder engagement” which was also a domain header. This domain had 3 questions under it (A. Yes, I have, or I know someone who has ever worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth, B. Yes, I have, or I know someone who has ever worked with a government ministry to provide education to out-of-school youth, C. Yes, I have, or I know someone who has ever worked with a national level stakeholder to provide education to out-of-school youth). These were aimed at screening if a respondent has ever worked with any stakeholder or they know someone who has ever worked with a stakeholder to provide education to out of school youths. The sum of these 3 screening questions just as the rest of variables made up values for the category for var002.

3.5.5. Construct /Variable 3

Outcome Variable number 3 was aimed at addressing objective number 3 (Determine the effect of guidance and counselling and good parenting skills to child scavengers.). Data was populated using question “Providing Guidance and Counselling to scavenger children for their future meaningful livelihoods is a motivational factor to keep students in school” and this was

converted to “var003”. This variable was also a categorical variable (5 point-Likert scale).

Table below summarizes these entire variables.

Table 9

A summary of variables

EXPLANATORY VARIABLE			RESPONSE VARIABLE		
	Variable name	Description		Variable name	Description
1	X var010	Creating Alternative education Programs, providing financial assistance and partnering with community organizations to provide educational opportunities is a measures schools can take to provide education to out-of-school youth	Y ₁	var001	Government ministries (Gender, Youth, Education) should lead in the provision of education to scavenger children in connection with government policies and strategies
2	X education	Education level attained by the respondent	Y ₂	var002	Stakeholder engagement
3	X employment	Employment status of the respondent	Y ₃	Var003	Providing Guidance and Counselling to scavenger children for their future meaningful livelihoods is a motivational factor to keep students in school

3.6.0. Study Procedures and Ethical Assurances

Study procedures for this study have been conducted in stages, and each stage has a specific task. For example, stages 1 to 4 for the dissertation and in this case this research study is at stage 3, which is the research methodology and design.

The study was granted by UREC before collecting data. The approval was granted on 10th May 2023, and the offer identity number was ID/Group ID: 059636G61108. It was stressed that for individuals to take part in the study it should be clear that it will be voluntary and that it will be obligatory for participants to sign a letter of informed consent before the interviews.

Further to this, it was also stressed that underaged participants from the ages of 10-17 years shall require informed consent from their legal parents / guardians or gate keepers. In case of the study on stakeholder's role in the provision of education to scavenger children, the age range provided earlier includes scavenger children both in and out-of-school who come from different categories of families within the scavenger communities such as child headed, female headed and those with terminally ill parents including poverty-stricken homes. During data collection, the researcher also made sure to obtain informed consent from the respondents themselves. The study procedures involved briefing of participants on the aims and significance of the study. For example, it is assumed that the significance of the study could bring a lot of positive changes such as environmental and economic benefits in the scavenger community. Newman, et.al., (2019), stresses that access to equitable education can be achieved if parents are involved. This research will contribute to high retention and survival rates in school, bring basic needs in form of infrastructure development and provision of motivation factors at the school, improve behavioral changes in students and parenting skills, implementation of government policies and strategies by stakeholders in education and create an in-depth

knowledge of the research problem by the researcher. Scavenger children, (students), School management, Community and policy makers will benefit from the study.

Bassey & Owan, (2019), stresses that researchers must equip themselves with knowledge and enough experience on ethical issues that make up the conduct of research in education and beyond. As a pre-requisite, researchers should be aware that participation in a research study during data collection. Participation should be voluntary and always respondents are required to sign a letter of informed consent before the interviews. For this research study, all the ethical procedures and assurances were part of the researcher's knowledge. However, it is obligatory to follow some ethical procedures and assurances before data collection.

Jennings, (2003), refers morality to beliefs concerning ideas like good and bad or right and wrong. According to William, (2004), there are five different approaches that have been developed by philosophers to values in dealing with moral issues in research approaches such as, the Utilitarian, Rights, Fairness or Justice, Common-Good and Virtue approaches. Resnik, (2020), explains that approaches revolve around the following ethical principles on the need to do good known as beneficence and no harm known as non-maleficence. For example, ethical approaches and considerations in medical research cannot be the same as the approaches in educational research. The ethical principles are obtaining informed consent from participants, debriefing participants after the conclusion of the research process, protection of participants by respecting their privacy and confidentiality, deception on some of the research procedures in order to get the right information, provision of justice to research participants and the right to withdrawal for participants from an investigation even after obtaining an informed consent. It is worth noting that ethical approaches have been operational since 1990's with the aim of protecting research participants under beneficence and non-maleficence.

Haggarty, (2004, p, 392), cited Beck, (1992), that, "Concerns about the ethical quality of research are characteristic of a society where anxieties about the unintended consequences of

science and technology are increasingly common.” This study, therefore considered the scavenger community and their social economic status by engaging the community and parents without any emotional or physical harm. Therefore, to make sure that ethical procedures and assurances were followed by the researcher, the ethical principles mentioned earlier were put into use.

Informed consent is a procedure through which participants are given information mostly about the purpose of research. Katz, & Webb, (2016), explained that participants are supposed to understand all the research related information so that they can voluntarily agree to participate in the research study without being forced but through procedural informed consent. For this study, such information included the purpose of the research study and anticipated risks that could be faced by both the researcher and the participants. For instance, in focus groups interviews, the researcher made sure that teachers and parents were mandated to give consent for learners who are minors to take part in face-to-face interviews. The researcher took time to meet research participants to inform them about the research process. To maintain the research ethical approaches without compromising on the research implications the researcher made sure that participants signed an informed consent form that was given to them before the interviews. The researcher informed participants that it was possible for them to change their minds even after signing the informed consent form as 3 days after signing as this is regarded as the “cooling off” period. However, Katz & Webb, (2016), emphasizes that an informed consent is only valid if the respondent is 18 years of age or above, otherwise those below 18 are regarded as minors and only their parents or guardians can give informed consent especially in medical research where participants are human subjects.

Debriefing is a very important part of any research process, and it is essential to conduct the procedure soon after the conclusion of the study. The aim of having this discussion is to give the participants to seek clarity where they do not understand and need more information on

topics that concern them. However, the action that researchers must take to maintain research ethics is to follow a debriefing structure which follows a trend of making an appointment with the participants and preparing and creating conducive atmosphere which did not cause anxiety among participants. The researcher made sure that their discussion did not betray the trust of the participants. For example, bringing in issues of criminology in nature which are attached to the scavenger community as this could likely cause discomfort in the participants. Gilsto, (2015), stressed that it is not proper to mention names of the perpetrators within a particular community, but suggested that coding would be the best option. Therefore, debriefing is important in such a way that the researcher can have an opportunity to identify and address issues of physical or emotional harm that might have occurred during the research process.

In this research study, the researcher made sure to protect the participants through anonymity and confidentiality by not using their names but codes and kept the information as confidential which is obligatory as such actions triggers trust from the participants. Resnik, (2020), explained that research participants mainly require to gain the researchers' trust by assuring them of confidentiality, especially information of a private or sensitive nature. Whilst it is possible that research participants may be hurt in some way if the data collection methods used are somehow insensitive, there is perhaps a greater danger that harm can be caused once data has been collected. Joseph, & Newman, (2010), states that, in most cases loss of confidence occurs during data processing when such information leaks. However, it may be possible to disclose the identity and views of individuals at various stages of the research process. For example, the findings of the pilot study were shared with the research participants in order to cross-check if it was a true picture of what was happening on the ground. Nonetheless, the researcher sought permission from the research subjects before such confidential information was disclosed but in other instances anonymity was used by not disclosing real names and location to avoid stigma and discrimination that could have followed within the scavenger

community. For example, for this study, the researcher used codes for comparing responses on specific age groups and categories while the recorded communication during FGD have been protected using passwords for voice recorded, locked drawers for papers, photographs and office records. The same goes with respect for privacy, it is believed that privacy occurs when personal information such as attitudes, opinions, beliefs and records are shared without the consent of the participant. David & Resnik, (2020), observes that the researcher's action in such circumstances can be assured in protecting their privacy in the areas that are regarded as very personal by the participants. Hence the researcher found it of paramount importance to inform the research participants that information collected through audiotape or video be destroyed before submission or kept under lock and key to avoid ethical implications. Therefore, the researcher assured participants that all the information will not be shared with anybody without their approval.

Resnik, (2020), emphasizes that in any type of research justice between different members or groups in society should be observed. The main idea is that there should be equal treatment in relation to justice. He continues to state that justice is an act of showing respect for people and that injustice occurs when people's benefits are denied without cause and bear unjustifiable burdens. With regards to these sentiments, in this study, the researcher strictly considered careful consideration to the overall community impact of the research both in the selection of participants and the benefits and burdens arising from it. For example, the researcher made it clear that incentives given to the participants were an equation of their involvement in the research study and were given to them in a proper manner such as a drink and transport stipend after the FGDs. During sampling there was enough scrutiny to determine whether some groups of people were included intentionally, such as racial minorities, sexual minorities, or persons confined to institutions. Efforts were made to systematically select participants disregarding their easy availability or compromised positions and not necessarily for reasons directly related

to the problem under study. For example, poor participants should not be selected due to their status so that they can be earmarked for benefits because data could be compromised. However, David & Resnik, (2015), indicated that ethical implications may differ from different disciplines and institutions due to different standards for behavior with particular focus to suit their aims and goals.

During debriefing research participants, it is risky to deliberately mislead vulnerable communities like the that of the garbage scavenger, some researchers may not inform participants of what is going on but can use other research approaches that might compromise privacy and confidentiality. For example, observing minors in a school situation without getting consent from their guardians. David, (2020), observed that whilst, deception by omission is accompanied by not being able to provide detailed information about the purpose of the research which might cause harm to the participants, and it is unacceptable. It is therefore the researchers' responsibility to provide information while debriefing or get informed consent from the research subjects to avoid harming the participants or risk the research being rejected. Nonetheless, Sims, (2010), explains that participants have the right to freedom from harm and discomfort and the rights to protection from abuse as well, hence the right to withdrawal from a research process. This study followed all the ethical procedures to avoid harm and to promote confidentiality and privacy.

In conclusion it can be rightly stated that ethical approaches assist researchers to maintain confidentiality and privacy of participants in any research situation. Despite having a number of ethical principles and approaches, it has to be noted that these are meant for the good of the research process whilst the ethical implications that follow will always depend on circumstances of the research process between the researcher and the participants. Shamoo, & Resnik, (2015), explain that duty and rights-based ethics are almost similar. Therefore, it is

recommended that ideas that stress on how humans should behave toward each other enable individuals to be confident that their human rights will be acknowledged and respected at all levels. Hence the need to follow the fundamental ethical principles and approaches for any research that is being carried out regardless of the nature of the participants. Therefore, it is the duty of researchers to take action to maintain the established ethical approaches to minimize harm especially in human participants in the research process.

3.7.0. Ethical Considerations

Ethical has been defined as understanding the principle of morality by the oxford dictionary while ethical considerations refer to the guidelines which researchers must follow for the researcher to conduct the study in a proper and responsible manner. Resnik, (2020), emphasizes that the ethical considerations are obligatory as they ensure that the research participants have their rights, safety and well-being protected. Thus, the integrity and credibility of the research study is protected as well. Further to this it can be explained that individuals who are ethical exactly understand the difference on what is morally right or wrong and decide to behave in a morally correct way. For example, this study concentrated on ethical considerations such as informed consent and voluntary participation, data collection and analysis, privacy and confidentiality and cultural sensitivity.

i. Informed consent and voluntary participation

Researchers must obtain informed consent from study participants which means they must inform participants about the study's purpose, procedures, risks, benefits, and their right to withdraw at any time.

ii. Data collection and analysis

Data manipulation: Researchers must not manipulate data to support a particular hypothesis or agenda. They should report the results of the study objectively, even if the findings are not consistent with their expectations.

Intellectual property: Researchers must respect intellectual property rights and give credit to previous studies and research.

iii. Cultural sensitivity:

Researchers must be sensitive to the cultural norms and beliefs of the participants. They should avoid imposing their values and beliefs on the participants and should be respectful of their cultural practices.

iv. Confidentiality and anonymity

Confidentiality is the situation whereby the researcher protects the identity and data collected from participant's unauthorized access and disclosure. In protecting confidentiality, in this study, by keeping data collected locked in drawers under lock and key and files on the computer were secured with passwords. In addition, when reporting the findings the researchers will make sure that there will be aggregate findings reporting rather than reporting on an individual level to the public.

v. Clear intent of the research

Anonymity means removing any information that may lead to the identification of a research participant from the research data and reports collected. Saunders, (2015), describes anonymity as removing any leads that may identify a respondent in a research study using codes or generalizing age, location, occupation or religion. For example, emerging criminology issues could be protected in such a way. In the case of the qualitative data, the research participants were coded as (R) for respondent R1, R2, R3 and (I) for interviewer. The locations were

generalized as school management, scavenger community and parents, stakeholders and scavenger children and the questionnaire did not ask the participants to mention their names in respect of the participant's privacy.

3.7.1. Relevant ethical issues and how they were addressed

Every study must have ethical issues observed and to consider especially when collecting data. This study considered ethical issues in such a way that all the precautions were followed. On inclusive and exclusion criteria, it was decided that all participants were eligible to participate except those that had situations which could compromise data collection. For example, issues to deal with underaged participants. It was indicated to UREC that those aged between 10-17 will be given special treatment because they are minors. They were not allowed to participate without parental informed consent and their own consent. Before the research and development of questionnaires, for example, at the school, the researcher had to check age ranges before interviews with the school administration, while in the community, those with defects and barriers to giving reliable information were excluded. In other words, it can be rightly stated that inclusion and exclusion criteria were followed. Thus, all participants were eligible to take part in the study, except those who had not obtained informed consent, the traumatized, mental health victims with other ailments which could compromise data collection. For example, this research study strictly collected data from participants who met the selection criteria during sampling, such as they should be within the age range and those without any compromise on mental well-being. The researcher made sure that there was a maximization of possible benefits for the study community and participants such as learner motivation at the school through school meals to reduce dropout rate and absenteeism by scavenger children. Crain-Dorough, (2003), stressed that one of the consequences of dropping out for scavenger children is that it brings out the worst negative economic impact on their lives. For instance, scavenger children might resort to indulging in criminology such as organized crime in the form of armed robbery,

rioting and use of physical violence among their peers. These activities will only bring stagnation to the scavenger generation to lead meaningful and reproductive livelihoods in future.

3.7.2. The role of the researcher

During data the researcher had a role to make sure that all individuals and, in this case, participants should be treated fairly as each study has either a scientific or social significance. However, it should be stated that research that has human subjects or participants in any form responding to the questionnaire through interviews must have the hypothesis being tested provide a platform for the researcher to gain an in-depth knowledge about the research area. For example, during qualitative data collection, the participants were assured of a conducive environment such as the school premises or their home environment. They were asked if a recording was comfortable for them then assured them that their names were not necessary as this interview was confidential to the public. Nonetheless, the mode of data collection also has a big impact on the information being sought from the targeted population and beyond. There were incidents where participants did not want to go in detail such as emerging issues of violence or those that were criminal in nature.

i. Amount of data collected

It should be noted that this research study collected data from a smaller sample of respondents for the pilot study where most of it was quantitative in nature. The information was collected from a different school on the other side of the garbage site targeting the school management, community and parents and stakeholders in education. Data collection for the pilot study was collected soon after UREC approval in May 2023. After the pilot study, the researcher collected some more data from 207 participants using the same mode of data collection procedure. Since this is a mixed study; first data was collected using quantitative research method using a questionnaire and later for the qualitative part, the researcher used a

research tool in form of a questionnaire using Focus Group Interviews and recorded the discussions. The researcher assured all the participants that during and after data collection anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained while handling data and after research findings.

ii. Avoid biasness

During data collection, research was as impartial as possible, by making sure that there was no relationship with the participants or with their own beliefs and reasons according to personal opinions. Avoiding biasness according to Pannuchi, (2010), is the best practice that ensures that the researcher has followed all the procedures during data collection in terms of considering all the ethical risks. For example, religion, culture and tradition have the capability to derail the focus of a study so much so that it might impact the findings of the research study. There were times during data collection that the researcher used research assistant as a way of avoiding biasness and becoming emotional especially when data was being collected from the scavenger children. The use of standardized protocols and proper data collection tools which were based on the research objectives and the hypothesis with an aim of ensuring consistency. The research data collection involved the community and parents and school management to give their insight and feedback on the open-ended research questions. Such involvement unlocked more emerging issues which helped the researchers to identify bias and ethical concerns, such as time limits, rescheduling appointments due to unforeseen circumstances and dealing with negativity and opinion for scavenger community. Another strategy that would assist in avoiding biasness could consider how the research findings and recommendations are going benefiting the research participants and the community in terms of dealing with the research problem. For example, in this research study, it is assumed that the scavenger community will benefit in getting motivational factors at the school for their children to enroll and stay in school. As for doing no harm, biasness would be avoided by using empathy during

face-to-face interviews and probably avoid any situations that would cause emotional harm to the participants. Data interpretation should also be handled with cautiousness as it minimizes stereotyping based on societal routines and habits of scavenger communities. However, the most important of all the techniques used to avoid biasness is ethical review. It is obligatory for every researcher to seek approval from an ethics review board and in this research study it is the UREC. It should be noted that the ethics review board has the expertise that helps to identify and address potential biases and ethical concerns before data collection approval is given. Pannuchi, (2010), stated that bias can happen at any stage of research including design, data collection as well as in the process of data analysis or even publication. Therefore, it is very important to take all the precautions to avoid biasness in research methodology.

3.8. Summary

In summary it can be rightly stated that research methodology is the most important part of any research study whether it is qualitative, quantitative or mixed research study design. In this research study the research methodology was based on a mixed study which used both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The sampling methods that were used were purposive and convenient sampling techniques using 89 participants in the pilot study and 207 in the research study. Minors at school aged between 10 and 17 were given parental consent and the use of gatekeepers; while for the community and parents, school management and stakeholders, the age limit was 60 years of age. There were some in-depth interviews for qualitative data collection which used recording in the local Chichewa language for focus group interviews and then the data was transcribed in English then used SPSS for the analysis, and questionnaires. For some stakeholders there was use on online interviews that were administered through kobo toolbox face to face interview administered. Reliability and validity of the data collected was obtained through proper sampling procedures of the convenience and

purposive sampling methods and this assisted in gaining in-depth knowledge of the research problem.

It is very important to note that every research should seek approval for an approved board such as UREC. In the case of this research study, approval was granted before data collection on the proposed ethical assurances. Bhandari, (2021), emphasizes that it is a must for all researchers to adhere to instituted code of conduct when conducting information from people. The considerations to protect participant's rights, improve validity and maintain the integrity of the academic institution. Further to this, it is the role of the researcher to make sure that the participants are not exposed to any harm either emotionally or physically. It is also very important to note that participants are assured that their personal information is protected and that they have the right to transparency and privacy.

Collecting data on scavenger children typically involves a systematic and ethical approach to understanding their living conditions, challenges, and needs. All in all, the following must not be missed in a research methodology; the research design, ethical considerations, sampling, data collection methods which include research objectives and the population under study. In terms of the actual survey and questionnaires the researcher made sure that they were well created to collect qualitative and quantitative data about scavenger children living conditions, health and the role of stakeholders in providing education to the scavenger community. Thus, the chapter includes interviews with the sampled units so that relevant insights should be gathered as part of the scavenger children's experiences and aspirations, observation in the natural setting of the scavenger community, organized FGD's to obtain more of the social dynamics and perspectives. The pilot study has been an essential part of the methodology since it assisted in the refining of the research tools and improving on the reliability and validity of the data collected. Data collection followed the planned methods without compromising on the openness of the research participants and their safety during the process whereby analyzing of

policy documents such as National Education Policy and Re-admission Policy and other strategies assisted in the contextualizing the research and identifying the research gaps especially with a lot of emerging gaps. In the final place the data was analyzed with the use of emerging gaps and derivation of meaningful insights from the research methodology in chapter 3.

CHAPTER 4:

4.0. FINDINGS

As already discussed in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study is to engage stakeholders in education and skills development within the City of Lilongwe to assess their level intervention in addressing the issue of vulnerability due lack of access to education and provision of guidance and counseling plus psycho-social support to scavenger children at the garbage site. The engagement aims to deal with stakeholders' responsibility in education to decrease the number of schools dropouts at the expense of scavenging for survival for vulnerable children. Efendi, et.al, (2020), explains that scavenger children prefer to go scavenging and hawking because they make a little something for survival than going to school without food to eat and other necessities such as notebooks, writing materials and proper guidance. The key components of the study included in the overview of the study are engagement of stakeholders, assessment of intervention levels, targeted group at the garbage site, addressing school dropouts and scavenging for survival, stakeholder's responsibility in education, decreasing vulnerability through education and support for guidance and counseling plus psycho-social support where necessary.

i. **Engagement of Stakeholders:**

The study aimed at involving various stakeholders in the provision of quality and equitable education and skills development to scavenger children. The stakeholders included firstly Government line Ministries which are directly involved with child vulnerability such as, Ministries of Education, Gender, Children and Social welfare, Youth and Sports. Secondly, non-governmental organizations that work in the promotion of education and child rights to education such as United Nations International children's Educational Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Women, United Nations Development Program, (UNDP), Norwegian Church Aid, Save the children, Plan Malawi, Campaign for Female

Education, (CAMFED), Old Mutual, Press Trust, Oxfam, World Relief Bicycle, World Vision, Care Malawi, and finally, Civil Society Organizations, (CSOs) such as Creativity Centre for Community Mobilization, (CRECOM), Forum for African Women Educationalists, (FAWEMA,) Civil Society Education Coalition, (CSEC), and Action Aid Malawi. These are some of the stakeholders that have taken responsibility for assisting the government in the promotion of access to equitable and quality education starting from pre-school, primary, secondary up to tertiary levels. However, most of these interventions have been conducted within the school systems and premises of which many times disregard the out-of-school youth, who are scavenger children in this case. Ghazali, (2016), observed that the impact of rampant urban poverty has accelerated non-enrolment of scavenger children who are mostly found at the garbage site rather than in schools and cause high dropout rates within the scavenger communities. The Malawi 2063, MPI first 10 years, enabler 5, stresses on leaving no one behind in terms of access to quality and equitable education including those with special needs and out of school youth. Nonetheless, the mentioned stakeholders have been providing bursaries and entitlements to vulnerable learners, improving infrastructure such as classroom blocks and change rooms for girls, providing Teaching and Learning Materials, (TLMs), conducting role modelling and mentorships activities especially for the in-school learners but scavenger children have been marginalized as their situation does not allow most of them to be in school. Wahyun, (2019), explains that the cost of living in scavenger communities with regards to schooling, housing, food, utility cost, and health care is much higher than that of the rural areas from which most of the scavenger families migrate from hence the high dropout rates from school. For example, in my study, scavenger children would rather fend for themselves rather than wait even for their parents to provide for them.

ii. **Assessment of Intervention Levels:**

According to the 2003 Education Statistics data, some districts which were heavily affected by cyclones and droughts experienced huge declines in enrolment rates. The result was that there were a lot of school dropouts than those in school. Barre, (2015), explained that the introduction of school feeding programs assisted to have some of the out of school children get re-admitted back into school. In the case of my study, the current interventions by stakeholders in the provision of education to out of school youth are minimal, considering that most of the interventions being implemented in the country are not scavenger children oriented; and adding to the fact that primary education is not compulsory in Malawi. For example, much focus is on evaluating the current efforts and interventions made by stakeholders in addressing issues related to vulnerability and lack of access to education rather than provision of basic needs for scavenger children to enroll in school. According to the Malawi education system assessment on child vulnerability should start as early as at Early Childhood Development (ECD), Primary up into secondary education for scavenger children. This assessment will provide insights into the existing initiatives and their impact by stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenging children who mostly remain out of school.

iii. **Targeted Group at the Garbage Site:**

The group specifically targeted at the garbage site should be the scavenger children who have either dropped out of school or have never enrolled into the school. Mohanty, (2014), observed that scavenger children are a vulnerable category of children as they come from low-income households or typically very poor families and they obviously lack basic needs such as food, shelter and clean drinking portable water. Despite being in the school going age group, scavenger children lack proper guidance, access to quality and equitable education, and psycho-social support. Mohanty, (2010), explains that the uniqueness of scavenging children is that as much as they may want to be in school, rampant poverty forces them to go scavenging

every day for their survival. It is at this point those stakeholders in the provision of education ought to understand their situation to come up with befitting interventions for the already vulnerable scavenger communities. For example, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare has intensified pre-school play groups in the communities where they also provide porridge as a motivating factor for kids to remain in school. Therefore, there is need to understand that scavenger children are a unique and marginalized group which needs proper interventions to keep them in school and ought to be assisted.

iv. Addressing School Dropouts and Scavenging for Survival:

The key objective of the study is to explore and address the issue of school dropouts, especially among those engaged in scavenging for survival at the garbage site of Lilongwe City Council. It is the aim of the study to gain more knowledge and reasons that make scavenger children drop out of school despite having them enrolled into school. However, there are other reasons that need to be understood as to why scavenger children drop out of school in large numbers. Barre, (2019), observed that the issues revolve around, non-availability of stakeholders in education to assist scavenger children, lack of guidance and counselling and good parenting skills in the scavenger communities even though parental participation and availability in their children's education may not be a priority in scavenger communities. Unless these issues are properly understood by stakeholders and acted upon, then scavenger children might be encouraged to stay in school and reduce the dropout rates especially in the scavenger communities.

v. Stakeholders' Responsibility in Education:

The study emphasizes the responsibility of stakeholders in the field of education. This could involve exploring the roles and contributions of different stakeholders in mitigating the challenges faced by the scavenger children, with a specific focus on reducing school dropout

rates especially at primary school level. Some of the activities ought to include participation by stakeholders in the various Technical Working Groups (TWGs) hosted by the line Ministries in education, such as Ministries of Education, Gender, Health, Agriculture, Youth and Sports. There are some deliberate efforts by the Ministry of Education such as the development of policies and strategies which aim at addressing child vulnerability with much focus on the reduction of high rates of dropout for scavenging children. Ghazali, (2016), stressed that, it is the stakeholders' responsibilities include infrastructure development in form of child or disability friendly in the schools in form of rables, classrooms, water points, latrines and change rooms for girls, provision of financial support in form of scholarships or bursaries, support to menstrual hygiene management, Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) as embedded in Life Skills subject, Provision of teaching and learning materials, training of teachers and care givers if the school includes Early Childhood Development component and all other child protection issues pertaining to access to education such as safe spaces and provision of guidance and counselling.

vi. **Decreasing Vulnerability through Education and Support:**

Once Nelson Mandela stated, "*Education is the only tool that can decrease poverty.*" Empowerment of the scavenger communities through education and skills development can lead to a decrease in their vulnerability over the years. Barre, (2015), stated that experience has shown that provision of some survival skills such as local training in tinsmith, cooking, carpentry; bricklaying and ICT have uplifted the livelihoods of vulnerable populations in cities and towns as they no longer search for employment. These skills have proved to be useful by bringing income to the poor households for survival and it has helped a smaller function of scavenger families to migrate from the garbage site vulnerability into urban populations who engage in small scale businesses within or just outside their original.

vii. **Guidance and Counselling, Psycho-social Support:**

Considering the type of lives scavenging children through, a lot of bad things happen to these children both physical, emotional and psychological as they strive to survive while scavenging at the garbage site each other day. Mohanty, (2010), explains that effects of rampant urban poverty add to their vulnerability such as physical, emotional and psychological damage due to child labor, homelessness, orphanhood, lack of basic needs, sexual abuse and gender-based violence among themselves or inflicted by the older ones. It is the aim therefore, for this study to provide guidance and counselling by engaging parents on good parenting skills and probably offer psycho-social support to vulnerable scavenger children who might be traumatized or facing depression disorders.

In conclusion, it can be rightly stated that the components discussed are very important in addressing issues not only because of high dropout rates but also the emotional and psychological needs of scavenger children as they grow up in their communities. Therefore, this study aims to collectively bring together stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children / out of school youth so that the challenges these children face within the scavenger community at the City of Lilongwe garbage site should be addressed promptly and accordingly. The well-being of scavenger children could be drastically reduced by using the existing interventions in the country's policies and strategies in order to create a more supportive environment in education and keep scavenger children in school for them to have a meaningful future.

4.1. TRUSTWORTHINESS OF DATA

According to Mohajam, (2017), trustworthiness of data in research test results is very important as it assists the researcher to come up with evidence-based decisions. As such, validity, credibility, replicability, ethical responsibility, building trust, and impact and applications in research findings assist in building the trust of those that are to receive the

research results at any given time. For the evidence-based decisions to be maintained through transparent methodologies, proper documentation and handling of the information that has been collected ethically. Mohajam, (2017), stresses that credibility and dependability of research findings rely on the researcher's integrity using rigorous data collection techniques available. Therefore, the credibility, validity and reliability of this research data collected will be discussed with reference to the research instruments and methods used for collected data. Guba & Lincoln, (1994), explained that the key components of trustworthiness include criteria credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. As such, each of these criteria and the typically used procedures will be outlined. However, it should be noted that it is not all procedures that can be used in each study.

4.2. CREDIBILITY, VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

It is worth mentioning that credibility is fundamental to the trustworthiness of any research data. Stah, & King, (2020), observes that trustworthiness of data in research findings essentially involves assessing the quality of the data and determining whether it can be considered accurate, valid, and dependable for a given research purpose. Further to this, Connelly, (2016), agrees that credibility of data is crucial for making informed decisions and drawing accurate conclusions while reliability and validity are concepts that are applied to instruments such as rating scales and screening tools. Stah, (2020), stresses that validity describes how well an instrument does what it is supposed to do. For example, the use of research tools that have been used before on the same phenomenon could bring out the consistency with which results that are obtained will inform the reliability of the research study results.

The data collection processes for this study adhered to thorough scientific standards. This was ensured by making sure that the study involved key personnel experienced in handling

and managing both quantitative and qualitative data. Tough and strong quality assurance protocols were also observed, such as encompassing piloting of the data collection instrument, running correlation check to the pilot study data to ensure reliability and consistency of the data collection tools and cross-verification of the pilot to mitigate any potential systematic and human errors or inaccuracies during data collection and compiling.

On the reliability of the research instrument, a Cronbach alpha test to test the reliability of the tool was run, for the Stakeholder Questionnaire (Variables/Questions similar across all the 3 samples – community, stakeholders and school management), the alpha score was 0.9, for the Community Questionnaire, the alpha value was 0.8 and for the school management Questionnaire the alpha value was 0.7. With an alpha of 0.9, the most reliable tool was the stakeholder questionnaire compared to the other 2, indicating a high level of internal consistency and reliability in the stakeholder measurement instrument. This suggested that using one unified questionnaire across all the samples (community, stakeholders and school management sampling frames) so that individual groups can be compared effectively as this would eradicate high levels of missing data for some sample categories. Middleton, (2020), states that through different types of statistical methods reliability can be effectively estimated.

For the final unified dataset, the Cronbach alpha test was run; the results revealed that the unified 69 item Likert scale instrument with an alpha of 0.8 was more reliable and consistent.

Table 10

Summary of findings

Average interitem covariance	.0735715
Number of items in the scale	69
Scale reliability coefficient	0.8413

The study further ensured the credibility of data sources by ensuring that data collection was done on population that are key to the subject matter. The sampling frames: Mchitanjiru primary school, Mchitanjiru CDSS, Mchitanjiru community, communities around Mchitanjiru community, City Council and line ministries chosen as sampling frames for the survey were the most prominent and closest in proximity to the garbage site. Data collection was extended to community level participants beyond Mchitanjiru, these included community members in the community where the Lilongwe garbage site is located. Further to this, the general community close to Lilongwe city was surveyed as a good number of the scavenger children frequent the surrounding areas. Scavenger children found at the garbage site migrate to the city to graduate to street children, who in turn affect the population close to Lilongwe City garbage site such as, (area 24, Area 23, area 36 area 38, 6 miles, Kaphiri and Falls Estate). Mchitanjiru community members and these surrounding communities served as a sampling frame for the community population as they are equally part of the population that get in close contact with the inhabitants of the scavenger community. Selection of these population subcategories was done after consultation with line ministries responsible for child education and protection. These included key informants from the Ministry of Education (MoE) and key partners such as the City Council, Ministry of Gender, Health and Youth. Collection of data at the national level also included the line ministries and councils, and implementation partners snowballed by the city council. The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) for school management comprised teachers in management, teachers who have served for the longest term were also included and those that are also involved at community level meetings. For the Community FGD, members from the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) were also included, who were comprised of religious and community leaders. The key Informant Interview (KII) was conducted with the CEO for the City Council who is knowledgeable about the affairs of the scavenger children and responsible for any activity at the garbage site.

Sequential mixed methods have been applied to the study to understand the depth and breadth of answers to the research questions and objectives, rather than just quantification. Robson and McCartan, (2016), points out that for research results to be believable and truthful researchers must follow the principles of internal and external validity such that qualitative methods allow researchers to explore complex phenomena in-depth, while quantitative methods provide a broader perspective by collecting numerical data from a larger sample. Together, these offer a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The study used sequential mixed methods for methodological triangulation purposes as convergence enhances confidence in the robustness and credibility of the study. Connelly, (2016) explains that the richness of qualitative data also complements the statistical significance of quantitative data, leading to more convincing and trustworthy results. He further explained that qualitative methods help researchers understand the context, social dynamics, and underlying reasons behind quantitative patterns. Chugh, (2011), states that the contextual insight is valuable for interpreting and explaining quantitative findings. In addition, mixed methods of research is often well-suited for studies with practical applications. Stah & King, (2020), observes that the combination of qualitative and quantitative data can provide insights that are relevant and applicable to policy development and real-world interventions. For example, if proposals are made to government to intervene on the review of the already existing policies to suit the inclusion of scavenger children's access to education such as the Re-admission Policy or the National Education policy and the National Inclusion Strategy as a point of reference, scavenger children could have been included in most Government and stakeholder interventions.

4.3. RESULTS

4.3.0. Data collection Summary

In this section, the study presents results on the 3 key objectives in chronological order. For each objective, the study first presents quantitative finding followed by qualitative results. The researcher also presented demographic data results first before the objective specific results.

Table 11

Survey demographics (n = 250)

Organization	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Government Ministry	28	11.20	11.20
Donor Partner	24	9.60	20.80
Implementing Partner	15	6.00	26.80
Prefer not to answer	18	7.20	34.00
Community members	122	48.80	82.80
Primary School Management Teachers (Administrators)	23	9.20	92.00
Secondary School Management	20	8.00	100.00
Total	238	100.00	

The study surveyed a total of 250 participants both at the national and community levels whereby 18 opted not to respond making a total of 238 participants. Of these, a majority, 129 (52%) were males, 117 (47%) were females and the 4 (1%) did not reveal their gender (Missing data). The minimum age was 23 and the maximum age of 66 with a mean of 42.9 and a standard deviation of 9.7. Most of the population surveyed were of ages ranging from 31 to 40 (33%) and the least were 20 to 30 years old (10%). By Organization, a majority self-identified themselves to be community members (122; 48%), 28 (11%) as being affiliated to a Government Ministry and 15 (6%) as implementation partners (City council affiliates), the rest were either school management, Donor Partner or they preferred not to reveal. In terms of

education status, the majority (33%) indicated having an MSCE, seconded by bachelor's degree (22%), Diploma 15%, teaching certificate 13%, master's degree 10% and 5% indicated not having any education qualification.

A large majority (45%) of the sample was employed full time, 1% seeking opportunities, 2% employed part time, 8% were retired, and 43% not employed at all.

Table 12

Participants involved in qualitative data collection

QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION METHOD	TOTAL INTERVIEWED
School Management Focus Group Discussion	12
Parent Teacher Association Focus Group Discussion	3
Key Informant Interview (National Level)	1
TOTAL	16

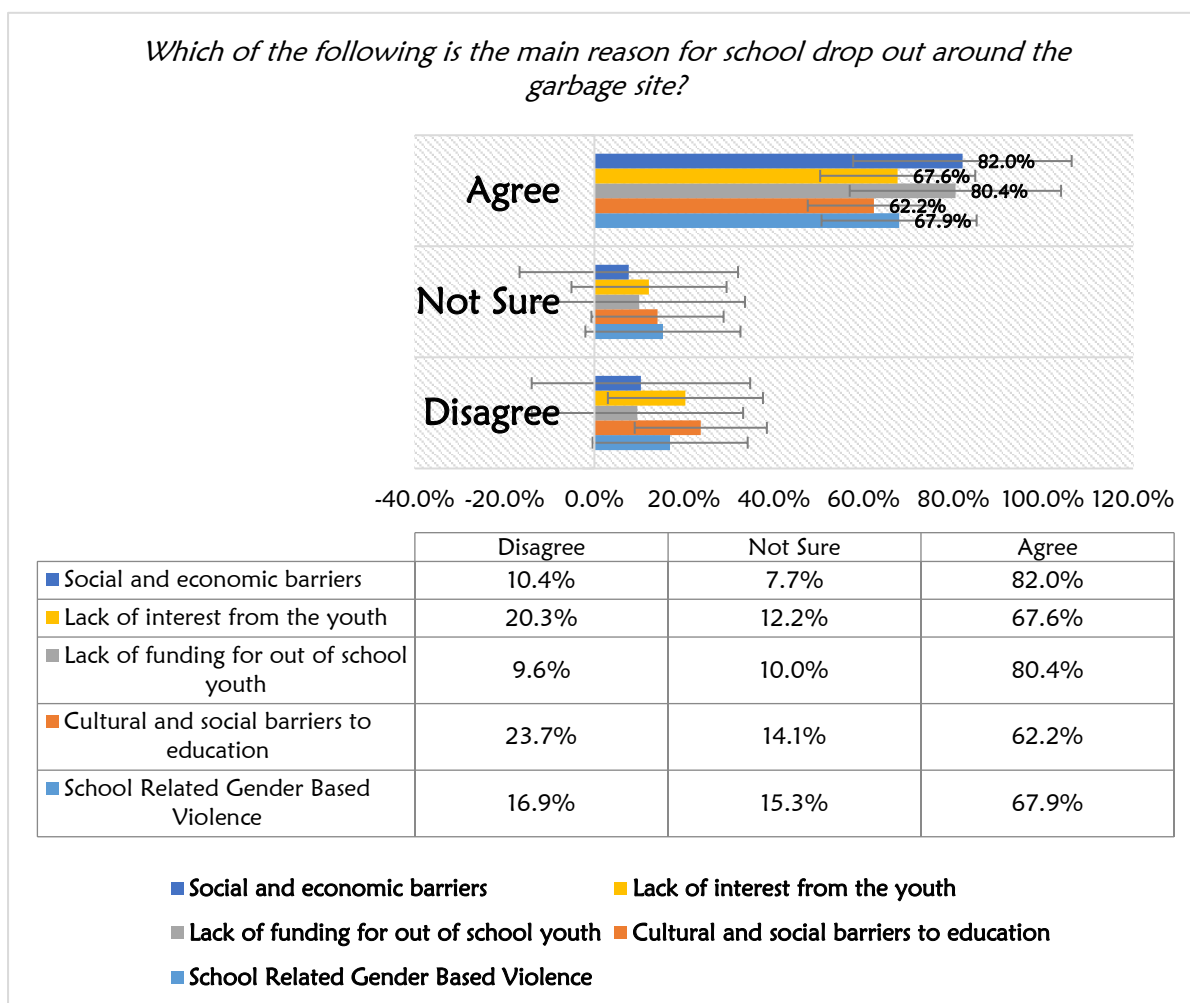
For the qualitative aspect, the study conducted qualitative interviews with a total of 16 participants (Table 12). Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with 12 key informants from both the secondary and primary school (FGD named SMFGD 23062023_012941), 3 from the parent teach association (FGD named PTAFGD 23062023_012938) and 1 KII with a key informant from the city council during qualitative data collection. (KII named KII CC 222082023_054200). The rest of key informants responded online due to time constraints and pressure of work in their offices.

4.3.1. CAUSES OF SCHOOL DROP OUT IN COMMUNITIES AROUND THE GARBAGE SITE

Apart from non-enrolment into school for scavenger children, it has been found out that scavenger children drop out of school due to numerous reasons ranging from lack of basic needs (such as food, shelter, safe and clean drinking water, health care and protection), to school factors (TLMs, child friendly infrastructure and adequate teachers) and home factors such as (poverty, parental availability and GBV due to age and sex. Cultural and traditional beliefs also take a huge percentage of scavenger children absence from accepting equitable and quality education. According to UNICEF S Report of (2018), on Traditional Practices Study on centering child rights with regards to the 2030 agenda, in Malawi, it has been reported that some cultural and traditional practices increase the rate of dropouts for learners especially in the Sub-Saharan countries with no exception of Malawi. It has further been reported that most of the harmful cultural and traditional practices do not favor girls to continue with their education. For example, some of the bad practices are, culturally influenced forced/child marriages, child trafficking, child labor and girl cleansing (kuchotsa fumbi), after the on-set of their monthly periods they are forced to sleep with an elderly man, and such acts can end up into early and unwanted pregnancies. The girl child within scavenger communities has minimal chances of going to school whilst at school these children are discriminated against by fellow learners or even their teachers due to their low social economic status. Figure 12 highlights some of the causes of drop out from school for scavenger children if they attempt to enroll into school and barriers at home.

Figure 11

Causes of school drop-out in communities around the garbage site



From the survey data, over 62% of the sample agreed that the main reasons for school dropout around the communities surrounding the garbage site included School Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV), cultural and social barriers to education, lack of education funding for out of school youth, lack of interest from the youth and socio-economic barriers. Of these

causes, over 80% of the participants indicated cultural and social barriers to education and lack of funding for out of school youth as key reasons to why there are high rates of dropouts around the garbage site. However, within category, graphically there were no statistically significant differences between the numbers of those that had indicated to “agree” across the four causes (error bars for all the causes overlapped).

A few participants seemed to disagree with the causes (16.9%, 23.7%, 9.6%, 20.3%, and 10.4% respectively for SRGBV, cultural and social barriers to education, Lack of funding for out of school youth, lack of interest from the youth and social and economic barriers). Across categories (Agree, not sure, Disagree), there were significant statistical differences between those that had indicated “Agree” and those indicating to either be “not sure” or “disagreeing”. A few indicating to agree with the causes (16.9%, 23.7%, 9.6%, 20.3%, 10.4% respectively for SRGBV, cultural and social barriers to education, Lack of funding for out of school youth, Lack of interest from the youth and Social and economic barriers).

The qualitative data from the community FGD also provided evidence that Gender Based Violence (GBV) being one of the key drivers that keep children out of school, especially the girl child in primary school. The data highlights that children in the upper classes of primary school due to puberty developments (also caused when the girl child repeats several years in one class) face verbal sexual abuse from teacher and fellow students. They raise comments that they are grown, and they should go ahead and marry instead of being in school. There are also some girl children that get abused by men and boys along the way to school, especially for those that stay far away from school.

“..... So, there are some children who come to school, especially girls. They may start school up to standard five or six they start saying that teachers speak bad words to them as they repeat in certain classes: “hey you, why should you be repeating a class with that big chest... you are going to rot just here...” So, the child looks at it as a burden that

teachers speak bad words to me so it's better, I just drop out... ”
PTAFGD 23062023_012938

From the qualitative findings, school drop out for primary school is relatively higher going up the ladder of classes. Enrollment is higher in the lower classes compared to those in the upper classes; this is mainly not due to transfers, but rather school dropouts. Likewise for the Community Day Secondary School (CDSS), they face similar problems. For example, starting in term one, they usually start with a lot of learners, but when in term two the enrolment rate drops. Several reasons are outlined leading to this massive school drop for both primary and secondary school, these include early or forced marriages, poverty, piece work, hawking and scavenging at the garbage site just to mention a few causes of dropping out of school for scavenger children.

“I am from the primary school. We can see that most learners are dropping out of school. Most of this start dropping out of school from when they start reaching standard four, five, six, seven... There are usually many learners in standard one, two, and three... but these figures drop when coming to higher classes. The cause of this is sometimes early marriages, poverty, some piece works...” SMFGD 23062023_012941

“In addition to that, the problems of school dropout at secondary school are just like the ones our friend has mentioned here. Usually at secondary school level it's where a learner can recognize things. So, we think that with the way they cannot think, they would be able to have right decisions that they are now at secondary school level and that four years is just a short period... But we still face problems that when we are just starting term one, we are usually with a lot of students, but when it comes to term two the enrolment rate drops. The reasons they give are according to a few surveys of students and their parents; some allude that it's because of the poverty of their parents who fail to provide them with school fees. So, we engage in panel discussion with the students where we ask them to tell us how they live in their families, what happens in terms of food... So, it's a small survey which we conduct to find out about the students so that we might be able to find some organizations which may assist them. So, when we ask, most of them talk about the poverty in their homes, that their parents fail to provide for them and that they are also in large numbers in their families... so it's difficult even at primary school especially in upper

classes like four or five and upwards there are some payments that are need at school... Another issue is sometimes support by the teachers. This is because when they are here, we teachers are also their parents. We encourage them; we don't tell them that education is bad... So, we may tell them information, but the decision remains with the students themselves that even though I have support for my education, but I just feel like dropping out of school. This is what we experience. When we ask you will find that other just say their friends just dropout like... sometimes they say they got married... For example, these cases are high in secondary school. We experience this each term. So usually, students drop out because of early marriages... those who dropout because of poverty are few, but most students it's because of early pregnancies and early marriages. So, this I can say about the situation of dropout of learners" SMFGD 23062023_012941

Lack of interest from parents is also one key challenge preventing children from constantly being in school. Respondents indicated that some parents do not have proper monitoring of their children on education issues. Most of the parents do not check if the child really went to school when the child arrives late. Even in cases where the parent knows that the child did not go to school, they will not say anything to the child, or they will only speak lightly about it since it has been the norm in their community of not minding about education for their children. So, respondents also reported that sometimes parents say that there is no benefit with education by citing examples such as that there are a lot of people who are educated but are not employed and are just as poor as they are.

"..... Some parents do not have proper monitoring of their children on education issues. When the child gets back from school, the parent does not check on them properly. This lets the child lose. When the child doesn't come to school, the parent will not have a say... at times the parent will only speak lightly about it and not seriously. So, this is one of the things that are leading to school dropouts. Sometimes certain parents say that there is no benefit to education. They say that 'there are a lot of people who are educated but are not employed... so what will education help you with?' They tell their children that I don't have things to assist you with. If they do like that, it takes away the interest of the child from school which makes the child just to get involved with some village activities..." SMFGD 23062023_012941

Scavenger children also face lack of motivation at school. Efendi, (2020), observed that the pangs of poverty from scavenger children's families influence their education as their families cannot provide for their needs due to the economic vulnerability they live in. For example, due to their background and the social economic status of the scavenger community, they are always discriminated against and stigmatized by fellow learners including teachers in certain instances. Nurdin, (2020), explains that often scavenger children feel bored and sidelined with such a school environment and as a result they drop out of school since they lack proper clothes and learning materials hence, they do not feel or take themselves to be part of the school environment. It has been discovered that scavenger children would feel motivated toasty in school if there were efforts from their parents, school authorities and the community they live in. Most of the times scavenger children fail to enroll at school due to lack of necessities at home where the ugly face of urban poverty hovers over them. Barre, (2019), observes that it is very difficult for scavenger communities to migrate from poverty without the provision of quality education. Once, Nelson Mandela said that "education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world." If scavenger communities adhered to such type of thinking, at least there would be hope that stakeholders would encourage parents for scavenging children to make all efforts for their children to stay in school and become responsible citizens soon. Lack of motivation strategies for scavenger children has increased the number of schools dropouts within the scavenger communities as they found excuses for not being in school. For example, when scavenger children are discriminated against because of their poor dressing or having no school uniform, they often resort to being absent from school and eventually divert their attention to scavenging activities at the garbage site on the expense of getting their basic education at the appropriate age. As already stated in SMFGD 23062023_012941, information indicates that all the negativities shown and experienced by scavenger children either from their community or at the school brings about lack of interest

for them to stay in school hence the poor performance and anti-social behaviors illustrated by most of them when they are among their fellow peers. Some of the scavenger children may want to go back to school after being approached by the school management through the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or the mother Groups; but there is a lot of peer pressure within the scavenger community and the result is the influx of school aged children at the garbage site of migration to the city's streets which are not a safe place for scavenger children as there is a lot of negativities toward child garbage scavengers.

4.3.2. RESULTS: RESPONSIBLE STAKEHOLDERS OF PROVIDING EDUCATION TO CHILD SCAVENGERS AT THE GARBAGE SITE

The expected role of different stakeholders is to strengthen and promote access to education for scavenger children who are in or out of school alongside government.

Table 13

Objective and Research Question 1

Research Question 1	Objective 1
What is the role of different stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children at Lilongwe garbage site?	Identify the roles of different stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children at Lilongwe garbage site

Table 14

Agreement to "Government should take lead in providing education to (Scavenger Child)"

Government should take lead in providing education to out of school youth (scavenger children)	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Strongly Disagree	3	1.26	1.26
Disagree	11	4.62	5.88
Not Sure	13	5.46	11.34
Agree	83	34.87	46.22
Strongly Agree	128	53.78	100.00

According to table 14, 238 (92%) of the 250 total sampled participants responded to questions relating to government's proposed role in the provision of education to scavenger children, 12 (8%) Participants opted not to respond while others missed the deadline, especially online. Of the 238 when asked "Government should take lead in providing education to out of school youth", most of them (54%) "strongly agreed" that indeed government should take lead in providing education to out of school youth, 34% "agreed" while 11 (5%) disagreed and 3 (1%) strongly agreed.

Table 15

Agreement proportions to "Government should take lead in providing education to out of school youth (Scavenger Child)"

Government should take the lead in providing education to out of school youth (Scavenger Child)	Prop.	Std.Err.	[95%Conf Interval]	
Disagree	0.059	0.015	0.035	0.097
Agree	0.887	0.021	0.839	0.921
Not Sure	0.055	0.015	0.032	0.092

When scored positively (Agree), neutral (Not Sure) and negatively (Disagree), 89% (95%CI; 0.839 0.921) of the respondents agreed that government should take lead in providing education to out of school youth, while 6% (95% Confidence Interval; 0.015 - 0.035) disagree and 5% (95% Confidence Interval; 0.032-0.092) were not sure (table 15). The difference in proportions between "agreeing" and the other 2 categories (not sure and disagree) was significant (as the Confidence Intervals do not overlap) while that for the category "not sure" and "disagree" was not significant.

Table 16

Frequencies on “Government not being the only stakeholder responsible for safeguarding the education rights of out of school scavenger children”

Government is not the only stakeholder responsible for safeguarding the education rights of out of school scavenger children	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Strongly Disagree	5	2.02	2.02
Disagree	12	4.84	6.85
Not Sure	9	3.63	10.48
Agree	91	36.69	47.18
Strongly Agree	131	52.82	100.00
Total	248	100.00	

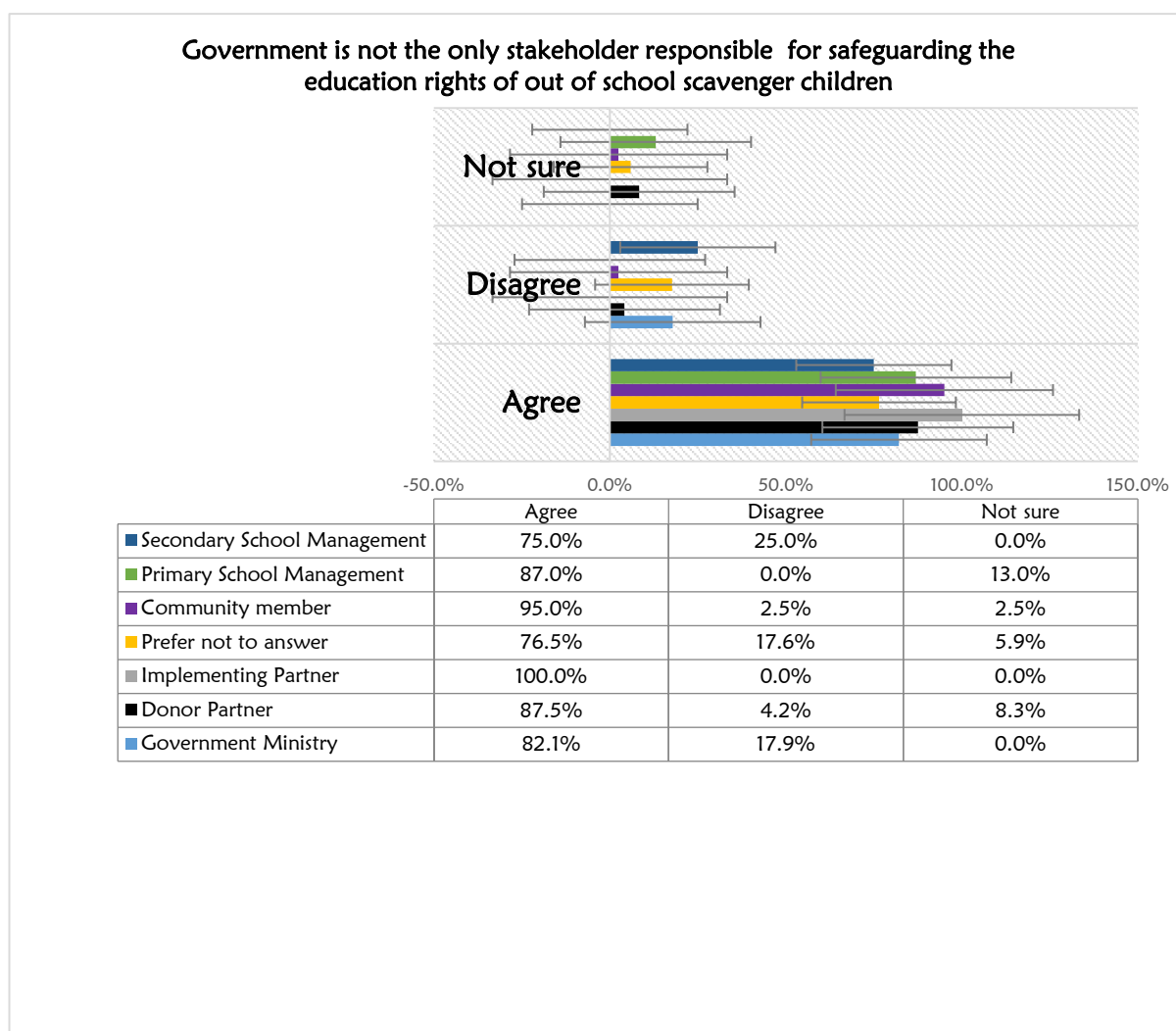
Further, the researcher distributed 250 questionnaires, 238 of these successfully answered questions on “Government is not the only stakeholder responsible for safeguarding the education rights of out of school scavenger children”, representing a response rate return rate of 95%. Of these, the majority (53%) strongly agreed that the government cannot do alone to safeguard the education rights of out-of-school (scavenger children), 37% agreed, 4% were not sure, 4% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed with the statement. When scored positively (Agree), neutral (Not Sure) and negatively (Disagree), the large majority 90% (95% Confidence Interval; 0.8501131 - 0.9278199) agreed, 7% disagreed and 3% (95% Confidence Interval; 0.0189025 - 0.068555). The difference in proportions between “agreeing” and the other 2 categories (not sure and disagree) was significant (as the CIs do not overlap) while that for the category “not sure” and “disagree” was not significant.

By participants’ organization in the survey (figure 13), Most participants who self-identified themselves to be a community member agreed that it is the responsibility of government to take lead in providing education to out of school youth. A few participants for each category of the participants disagreed with the statement, however, there were no statistically significant differences in responses about the government being responsible across

the organizations affiliated with the participants with each scale point (Chi-Square P-value = 0.2).

Figure 12

Frequencies on “Government not being the only stakeholder responsible for safeguarding the education rights of out of school scavenger children”

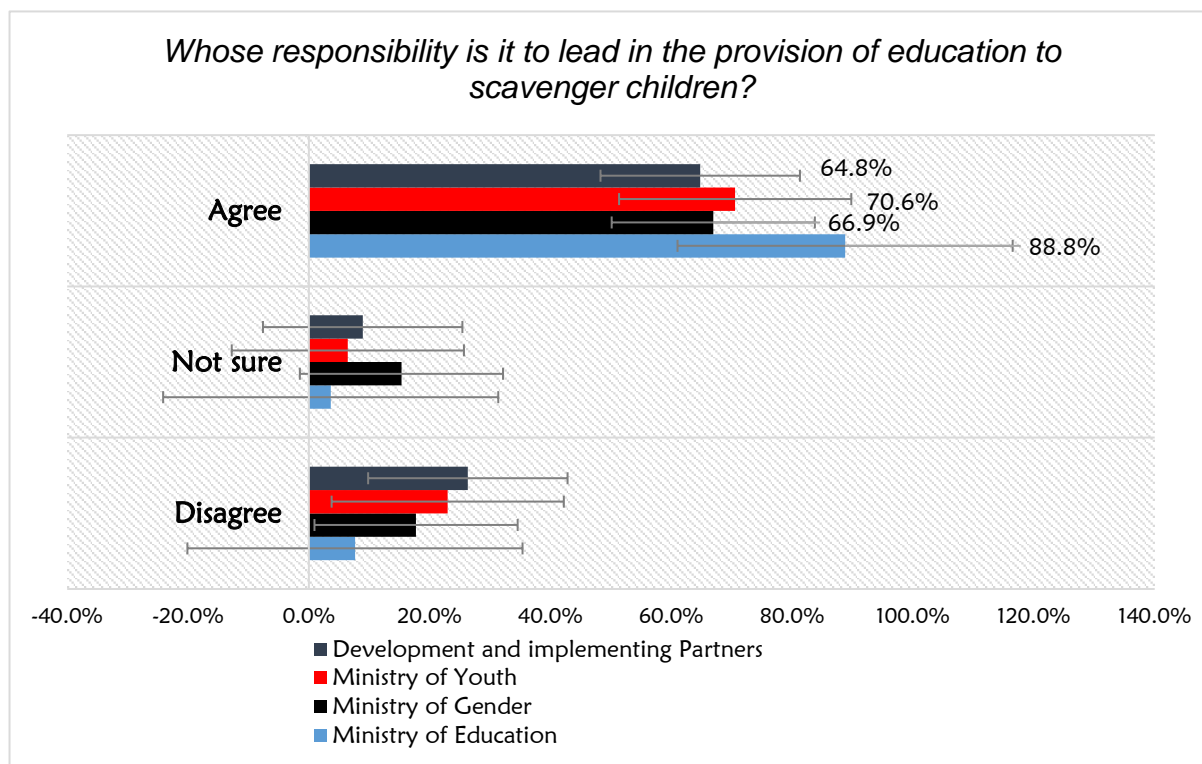


When participants were asked about a specific ministry in the government or whether is an implementation partner who is responsible to lead in the provision of education to scavenger children, a majority agreed (43% of the participants “Strongly agreeing” and 46% “Agreeing”) that it is the primary responsibility of the Ministry of Education to facilitate linking and harmonization of efforts to provide education to scavenger children not sure and

2% disagreed. When scored positively (Agree), neutral (Not Sure) and negatively (Disagree) (Figure 14), visually by the error bars, there were significant differences between agreeing and the other two categories (Not sure and disagree), however, no statistical differences were seen for a comparison between responses for Not sure and disagree. Within category, there were no significant responses between responses given by participants. For the category “Agreed”, a majority (89%) of the respondents agreed that Ministry of Education to facilitate linking and

Figure 13

Responses on responsible departments to lead in the provision of education to scavenger children?



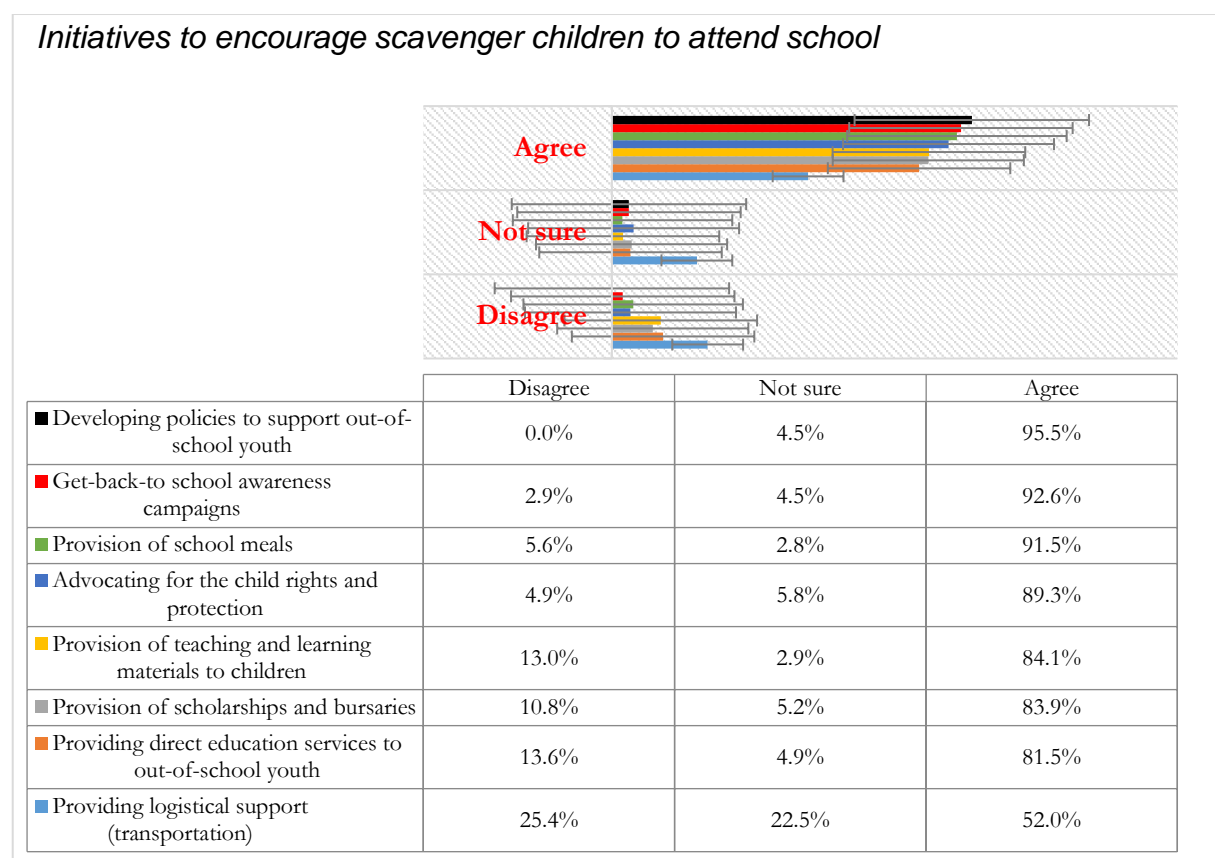
harmonization of efforts to provide education to scavenger children, while 9% disagree and 11% were not sure.

According to figure 14, the quantitative data reveals several initiatives that stakeholders and government can do to encourage and make sure that the youths around Mchitanjiru attend school rather than go to the garbage site. Over 50% of the surveyed population agrees that Providing logistical support (transportation), Providing direct education services to out-of-

school youth, Provision of scholarships and bursaries, Provision of teaching and learning materials to children, Advocating for the child rights and protection, Provision of school meals, Get-back-to school, awareness campaigns and Developing policies to support out-of-school youth are some of the ways to mitigate the problem of school dropout around Mchitanjiru community. However, the majority (Over 90%) think that Provision of school meals, Get-back-to school awareness campaigns and Developing policies to support out-of-school youth are the most effective. The least thought to be effective (52%) was providing logistical support (transportation).

Figure 14

Frequencies on “Initiatives to encourage scavenger children to attend school”



Results from the qualitative data suggests that train teachers on students’ management, so that they can manage issues around gender-based violence within the school premises and

relocating the garbage site are some of the ways that can help to ensure high enrollment around Mchitanjiru community.

“The government has a role to play. If they may come and train teachers on proper class management and not scorn learners or ask them out, their role is to mold them to be able to progress into secondary school. So, teachers who have bad intentions may now start concentrating on their primary role of teaching and assisting our learners” **PTAFGD 23062023_012938**

“So, if the dumpsite could be moved away then our children can easily get back to school. In fact, very few children from here get educated. Those that get educated through here are those that come from town. The people who are doing better here are those who have just come to settle here, but we the owners of the land are not doing well in terms of education” **PTAFGD 23062023_012938**

“Things cannot move well here because this whole area is hugely affected by the dumpsite. If this school can be in a fence that children would not be focusing on moving cars, it really would do us good. They would not even be busy looking at Gule Wankulu (the mask dance). We would just be closing the gate when the children come in and open when they are knocking off. But because school is in an open space, most children usually go around picking sugarcane leftovers to eat because of the hunger they come with from home. Some do not even come back to continue with the lessons. They just go back home. So, if our school was fenced it would really have helped us because that is a great security for the children” **PTAFGD 23062023_01293**

4.3.3. RESULTS ON RESEARCH QUESTION / OBJECTIVE 2

Results on RQ 2 and Objective 2 bring out the extent on how different stakeholders are engaged in their intervention and implementation of Government policies and strategies to provide access to education for scavenger children frequenting the garbage site rather than attend school.

4.3.3.3.1. ENGAGEMENT AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

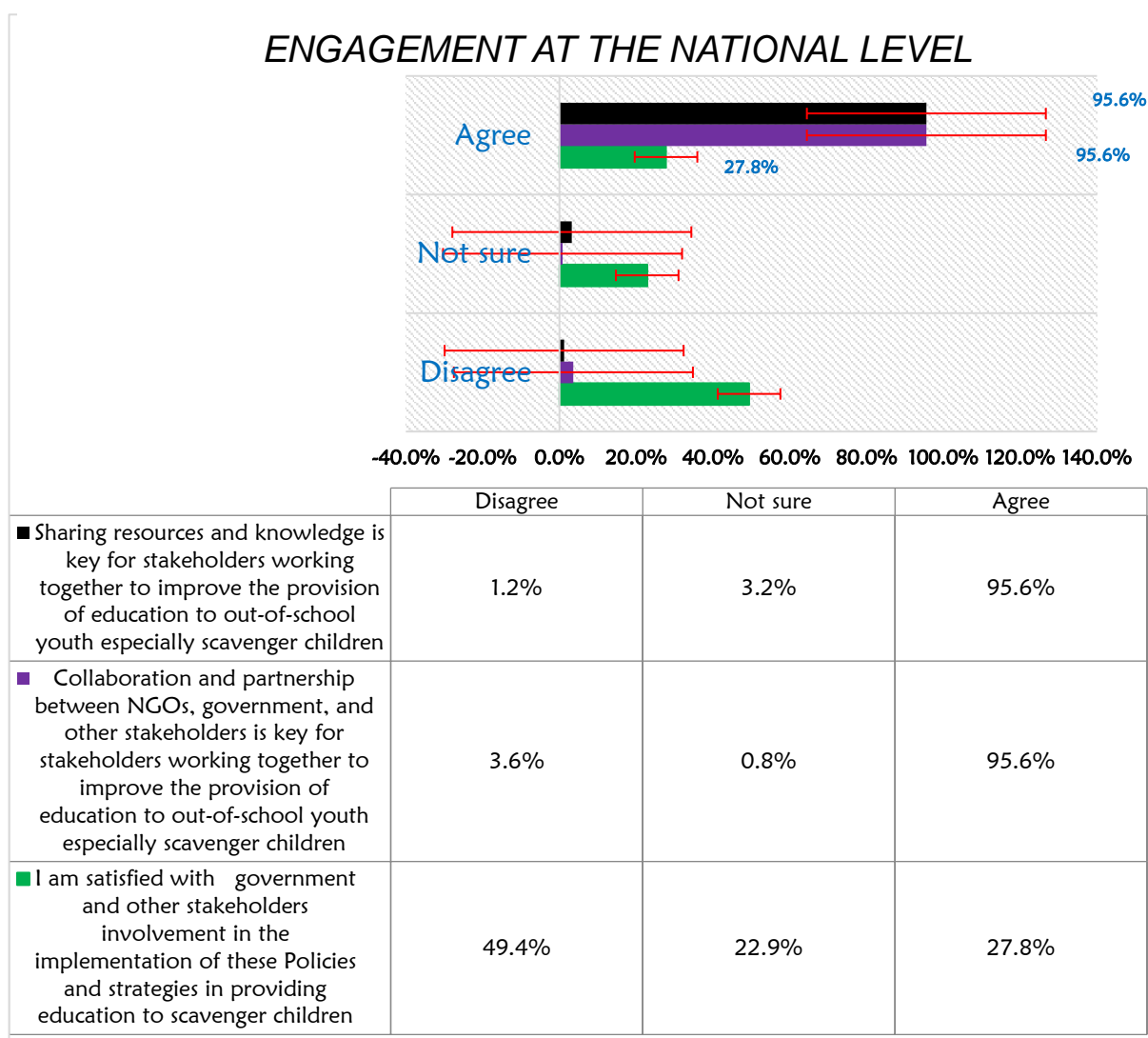
Table 17

Objective and Research Question 2

Research Question 2	Objective 2
To what extent are the different stakeholders engaged in implementing policies and strategies in providing education to child scavengers.	Determine the level of engagement of different stakeholders by the Ministry of Education in the implementation of policies and strategies to provide education to children as a human right to scavengers.

Figure 15

Engagement at national level



the researcher analyzed research question 2 and objective 2 in three components, the researcher looked at engagement at the national level, where Researcher looked at engagement between partners and responsible line government ministries (including city council members). The researcher asked all respondents, those within these ministries and beyond, to express how they rated their engagement at the national or policy level. This was evaluated on three themes, namely, sharing of resources, collaboration and partnership and their involvement in the implementation of policies and strategies. Over 95% of the sample population agreed that collaboration and partnership between NGOs, government, and other stakeholders is key for stakeholders working together to improve the provision of education to out-of-school youth especially scavenger children and sharing resources and knowledge being key for stakeholders working together to improve the provision of education to out-of-school youth especially scavenger children. Graphically, there were no significant differences in the responses for these two variables. However, only about 28% were satisfied with government and other stakeholders' involvement in the implementation of these Policies and strategies in providing education to scavenger children. Graphically, there were significant differences compared to the other 2 (collaboration and sharing) in this same category.

4.4.3.2. ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN COMMUNITY AND NATIONAL LEVEL

On engagement between community and the national level, the researcher tabulated the survey data response for the organization category “Community member” “Primary School Management” and “Secondary School Management”. The researcher asked respondents if they have or knew someone who has ever worked with a government ministry to provide education to out-of-school youth and if they have or know someone who has ever worked with a national level stakeholder to provide education to out-of-school youth.

Table 18*Engagement between national level and community level*

Yes, I have, or I know someone who has worked with a government ministry to provide education to out-of-school youth				
	Proportion	Std. Error	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Disagree	20%	0.033	0.139	0.269
Agree	61%	0.04	0.526	0.684
Not Sure	20%	0.033	0.139	0.269
Yes, I have, or I know someone who has worked with a national level stakeholder to provide education to out-of-school youth				
Disagree	15%	0.029	0.099	0.216
Agree	64%	0.04	0.561	0.716
Not Sure	21%	0.034	0.151	0.283

61% of these participants indicated that they have, or they know someone who has worked with a government ministry to provide education to scavenger children, 20% did not know anyone and the other 20% was not sure. The majority (64%) also had or knew someone who had worked with a national level stakeholder to provide education to out-of-school youth, 15% did not and 21% were not sure. For both questions, there were significant difference across categories between responses for category “Agree” and the other 2 categories (Confidence Interval for Agree did not overlap with the Confidence Interval for “Not sure” and “Disagree”).

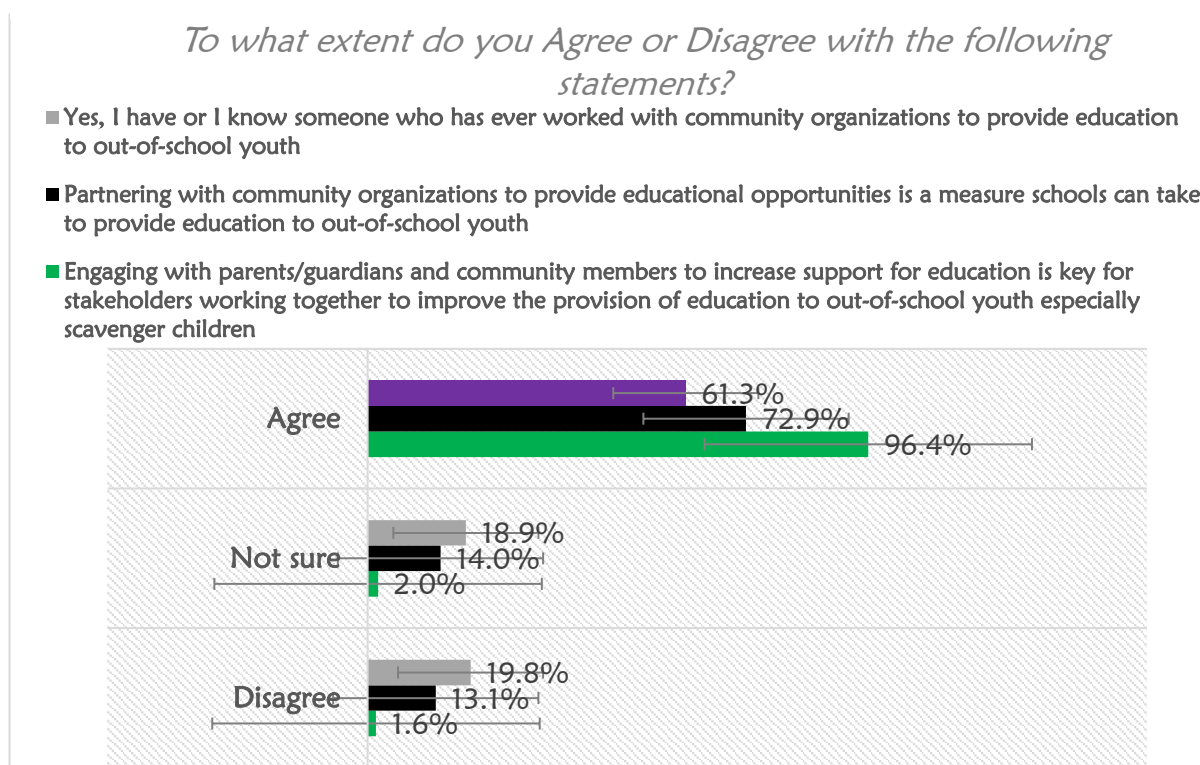
By Organization, a majority (47%) of community members agreed they have or knew someone who has ever worked with a government ministry to provide education to out-of-school youth and that they have or know someone who has ever worked with a national level stakeholder to provide education to out of school youth. For instance, of the participants who indicated that they have, or they know someone who has worked with a government ministry to provide education to scavenger children, a majority (82%) self-identified themselves as community members, seconded by 16% Primary School Management members and 2%

Secondary School Management members. Within category, a majority of both Community Members and Primary School Management “Agreed” that they know someone who has ever worked with a government ministry to provide education to scavenger children. However, the majority (38%) of Secondary school Management Members disagreed. The trend was like those that had indicated to have or know someone who has worked with a national level stakeholder to provide education to out-of-school youth with a majority of those agreeing being community members, followed by primary and secondary school management members (Appendix 1).

4.4.3.3. Engagement at the community level

Figure 16

Engagement at community level



At community level, 96%, 73% and 61% of the entire sample exclusively agree that "Engaging with parents/guardians and community members to increase support for education is key for stakeholders working together to improve the provision of education to out-of-school

youth especially scavenger children" 73% agreed that "Partnering with community organizations to provide educational opportunities is a measure schools can take to provide education to out-of-school youth" and 61% agreed that they have or know someone who has ever worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth". Graphically, there were no significant differences for responses within the agree category (as all the error bars overlapped across the variables). Very few (up to 20%) disagreed that "Engaging with parents/guardians and community members to increase support for education is key for stakeholders working together to improve the provision of education to out-of-school youth especially scavenger children", "Partnering with community organizations to provide educational opportunities is a measure schools can take to provide education to out-of-school youth" and "They have or know someone who has ever worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth". Again, there were no significant differences in responses across variables for this outcome.

4.4.3.4. CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR ASSOCIATIONS AND REGRESSION ANALYSIS – STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Table 19

Chi-square test for association results – stakeholder engagement

Yes, I have or I know someone who has worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth	Role			
	Community	primary	Secondary	Total
Disagree	36	3	5	44
Agree	114	17	5	136

sure	Not	30	3	9	42		
	Total	180	23	19	222		
Pearson chi- square test for association p-value = 0.006*							
e sure	Yes, I have or I know someone who has worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth	Age					
		20 -30 yrs	31 - 40 yrs	41 - 50 yrs	51 yrs +	Total	
		4	18	10	9	41	
		Disagre	12	40	39	38	129
		Agree	5	17	16	3	41
		Not	21	75	65	50	211
Total							
Pearson chi- square test for association p-value = 0.117							
e sure	Yes, I have or I know someone who has worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth	Gender					
		Male	Female	Total			
		17	27	44			
		Disagre	69	65	134		
		Agree	30	12	42		
		Not	116	104	220		
Total							
Pearson chi- square test for association p-value = 0.009*							

The researcher runs 3 chi-square tests for association to understand factors association with engagement of stakeholder, crudely at both national and local level. First, the researcher tested the association between knowing someone who has ever worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth (variable C14D8A) and the role of the study participants. The null hypothesis in this case was “There is no significant relationship between the role of the participant and knowing someone who has ever worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth. With a significant p-value of 0.006 (alpha value = 0.05), the researcher rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that there is a relation between opinions on knowing someone who has ever worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth with role. For the other two explanatory variables (age and gender), the chi-square tests for association indicated there is an association between the role of the participant and knowing someone who has ever worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth and gender (p value = 0.009) while for age, the relation between the role of the participant and knowing someone who has ever worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth and the age of the participant (p-value = 0.117).

By Organization (Government Ministry, Donor Partner, Implementing Partner, Prefer not to answer, Community member, Primary School Management, Secondary School Management), The researcher run Chi-Square test of association to see if there was an association between the organization and their response outcomes on the three variables ("Engaging with parents/guardians and community members to increase support for education is key for stakeholders working together to improve the provision of education to out-of-school youth especially scavenger children", "Partnering with community organizations to provide educational opportunities is a measure schools can take to provide education to out-of-school youth", "Yes, I have or I know someone who has ever worked with community organizations

to provide education to out-of-school youth"). From the results (Appendix 1), There was no association between organization and "Engaging with parents/guardians and community members to increase support for education is key for stakeholders working together to improve the provision of education to out-of-school youth especially scavenger children" (Chi-Square P Value = 0.063 greater than alpha = 0.05) and "Partnering with community organizations to provide educational opportunities is a measure schools can take to provide education to out-of-school youth" (Chi-Square P Value = 0.247 greater than alpha = 0.05). However, there was an association between the organization affiliated to the respondents with their views on variables "Yes, I have or I know someone who has ever worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth" (Chi-Square P Value = 0.013 less than alpha = 0.05). For this tabulation, a majority of those that agreed with the statement were "community members" (69%).

Table 20

Regression Variables

DEPENDENT VARIABLE	INDEPENDENT VARIABLES
<i>"I have or know someone who has ever worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth"</i> (variable C14D8Aco) 1. Agree 0. Disagree	Age (Continuous)
	Gender 1. Male 2. Female
	Role 1. Community Member 2. Primary School Teacher 3. Secondary School Teacher

The researcher also run logistic regression to understand the relationship between knowing someone who has ever worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth (variable C14D8A) with the organization affiliated with the survey sample the researcher collapsed variable C14D8A into a binary variable with categories "Agree" or "Disagree" by dropping category "Not sure". Categories "Agree" and "Strongly

Agree” were combined into “Agree” and “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree” into “Disagree”. Variable C14D8Aco was the dependent variable in this case while controlling for covariates such as age, gender and role. Below is the regression output.

Table 21

Regression Output

```

Logistic regression                Number of obs    =      168
                                   LR chi2(6)        =      9.99
                                   Prob > chi2       =      0.1251
Log likelihood = -88.362518        Pseudo R2       =      0.0535

```

C14D8Aco	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
role						
primary school teacher	2.138726	1.45735	1.12	0.265	.5625194	8.131539
Secondary school teacher	.3166315	.2191427	-1.66	0.097	.0815515	1.229352
age2						
31 - 40 yrs	.5740041	.3886062	-0.82	0.412	.1522802	2.163648
41 - 50 yrs	.9926935	.6940522	-0.01	0.992	.2521672	3.907885
51 yrs +	1.062179	.7472756	0.09	0.932	.2675169	4.217394
gender						
Female	.4705871	.1860709	-1.91	0.057	.2168071	1.021425
_cons	5.894104	4.030092	2.59	0.009	1.543153	22.51265

The regression results indicated that those who were affiliated to primary school were as twice more likely to agree that they have or know someone who has ever worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school youth" and those from the secondary school were least likely (0.3 times) compared to those who self-identified as community members, for age, those 41 years or older were not significantly different to 20-30 years old, however compare to the same group, those aged between 31 to 40 years were least likely to agree (0.6 times).

4.3.4. RESULTS ON RESEARCH QUESTION / OBJECTIVE 3

Results on research question and objective 3 indicate the effectiveness of provision of Guidance and Counselling and good parenting skills to reduce high dropout rates at the garbage site.

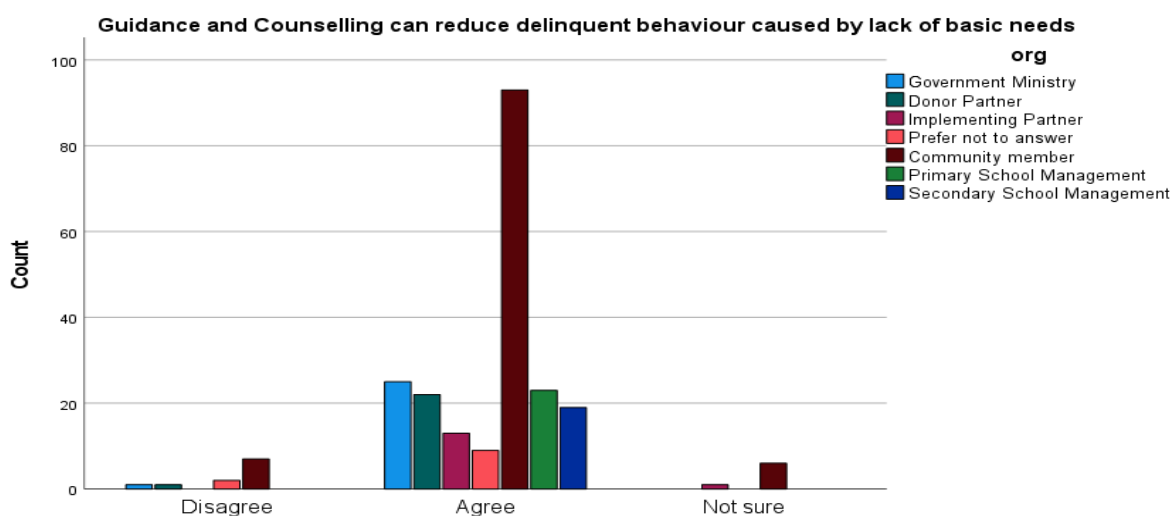
Table 22

Objective and Research Question 3

Research Question 3	Objective 3
How effective is provision of Guidance and Counseling and good parenting skills at reducing dropout rates for child scavengers?	Determine the effect of guidance and counseling and good parenting skills to child scavengers.

Figure 17

Effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling



Almost every category for the role of the participants agreed that providing guidance and counseling can reduce delinquent behaviors caused by lack of basic needs by scavenger children. Over 20% of respondents who self-identified as Government Ministry affiliates, Implementation partners, Primary school Management and donor partners agreed that

providing guidance and counseling can reduce delinquent behaviors caused by lack of basic needs by scavenger children. None of Implementation partners, school management (primary and secondary) disagreed that providing guidance and counseling can reduce delinquent behaviors caused by lack of basic needs by scavenger children.

Although guidance and counseling have been agreed to by most of the respondents in the survey, and despite participants also in the FGDs conducted also agreeing to the same, guidance and counselling alone hasn't been effective in ensuring that these scavenger children come back to school, citing that they do not have interest in education due to poverty cause.

“In addition, when they are doing some career guidance there should also be a role model to come there so that the children should be able to interact with them so that the role model should explain well. “This because most young people think that when one is in the secondary school; things will just go so easy that when I come out of this place then I will be such a person. However, things on the ground are not like that... So, when they meet problems, they feel it's their end of life, but this person may explain to the kind of things they passed through that, “I did not meet what I expected to go through, but I persevered.” So, the children must be able to listen to what this person went through until he achieved something. So that will encourage the children. This is because we lie to one another when we are at secondary school about life. Some may come from well to do families and think things will be easy... So, the children must be able to interact with role models to learn more. “SMFGD 23062023_012941

“I just want to make an addition from what my colleagues have spoken from the secondary school level. The dropout rate is still high at secondary school despite giving the learners guidance and counselling. But due to the factors mentioned by my colleagues, it's what usually facilitates the dropout of learners. In our findings, it reveals that the learners who drop out of school do not usually have an interest in education. One of the causes is poverty which gives a high number of school dropouts” SMFGD 23062023_012941

Participants also cited that guidance and counseling is usually not effective due to lack of role models, in most cases since this guidance is offered by teachers and their parents, they overlook it saying that they are not well to do or they are also school dropout themselves. Participants suggested that if this guidance and counseling can be done by university graduates, for example from schools within this community, several children would be motivated to attend school by imitating the efforts their role models have gone through to achieve their status. However, teachers also suggested that it would be nice if the government could take the initiative to have guidance talks with students to reduce school drops as part of routine teaching and bring awareness to scavenger children's families, especially parents and guardians of the importance of being available for the children and participating in their school activities.

“So, we can give the students some guidance as part of the lesson apart from just teaching them what we are expected to teach. It's possible that if we encourage these children, they can change their stories... its possible. Some of the parents we are dealing with now are those that were students and they dropped out in maybe form three and got married. So, they got married and raised a child. It will therefore be difficult for them to give proper guidance to their child. As a result, it will affect the child because the child believes that his parents did not go up to form four and believes he can't manage it too. So once encouraged they might be able to change the history of their families... So, it's important that teachers should spare some time and counsel the students that everything is possible and they can do better in their lives.” SMFGD 23062023_012941

CHAPTER 5:

5.0. Introduction

As already indicated in Chapter 1; the problem statement is that scavenger children are mostly neglected and marginalized by both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders who have the responsibility of providing quality, equitable and inclusive education to the out of school youth and in this case, 'scavenger children' who are not able to stay in school due to a lot of barriers they face in their ever day lives due to the rampant poverty of the urban squatter areas. Lilongwe city has a fast yearly growth rate of 4.42% as indicated by Macrotrends, (2022), a scene which has an impact on resources especially for the vulnerable communities. Barre, (2015), indicates that City of Lilongwe this fast growth rate of 4.42% has resulted into huge accumulation of solid waste hence the emerging of garbage scavenger children in scavenger communities who risk dropping out of school due to negligence and marginalization by stakeholders in education in Malawi and in this case at the LCC garbage site. The purpose of this study is to come out with positive changes and achievements in the categories of environmental and economic benefits to the scavenger families and communities inclusive. Newman, N. et.al., (2019), stresses that quality and equitable education can be accessed and achieved if stakeholders involve the communities, especially parents.

It is assumed that the contributions of this research study will be high retention and survival rates in nearest schools around the garbage site, increased infrastructure development, provision of motivation factors to both teachers and learners, improved behavioral changes in learners and good parenting skills, implementation and development of government policies and strategies for out of school youth by stakeholders in education. Additionally, the study findings will create an in-depth knowledge of the research problem for the researcher and topics for future studies. Scavenger children, (learners), school management, community and policy makers will also benefit from the study by the implementation of the suggested

recommendations such as high enrolment and retention rates for scavenger children apart from the proposed behavioral change center and skills development within the scavenger community.

5.1. Methodology Approach

The study used mixed research methods, which followed positivism for quantitative components and interpretivism for qualitative components. The researcher used a quantitative approach which was carried out using questionnaires with checklists. While the qualitative research approach used observations and in-depth interviewer administered Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Observations were based on participant's behavior, level of participation, peer influence and group dynamics during the focus group discussions. This research design was appropriate for the study for the sake of the measurement of the variables to provide a better and deeper understanding of the research problem at the garbage site as well as at the school and within the scavenger community.

5.1.1. Study Limitations

The study had its limitations in the areas of resource constraints, risk of generalization of the results, bias and objectivity, and time constraints.

On resource constraints, the resources were not enough since the research study was not funded. The researcher had to use own finances which were meagre. These resources were in the categories of both financial and logistical, which at some time caused a call for worry and anxiety. For example, the stipend given to the community members during the Focus Group Discussions (FGD), was so minimal to the extent that the researcher had to plead with the participants to continue with discussions when they threatened to abandon the proceedings. It seems that there have been some funded research studies on different themes and topics which have been taking place in the scavenger community, and the participants were used to

being paid an attractive amount of stipend or honorarium even before the survey had not yet been completed in terms of data collection. However, after negotiations with the school management and the Parent Teachers Association (PTA), and the School Management Committee (SMC), they all understood, and they agreed to continue with the discussions with the help of the chairperson of the SMC. The leaders made the participants realize that the research was not funded and that it was for academic purposes, but the study results could be beneficial to their society and community. In the end they understood that participating in the study was supposed to be an almost voluntary agreement between the researcher and the participants and that is why they had to sign consent forms. The sample size in terms of participants was fluid due to the nomadic type of life of scavenger children which also affected data collection in rare instances. Access and participation in the survey was affected since the under-aged were accompanied by their parents and were not very free in responding to some of the questions, especially on the reasons for dropping out of school. There were also other logistical limitations when collecting data such as re-scheduling appointments caused by workloads and mobility issues for the researcher or the research participants due to unforeseen circumstances. For example, an appointment with the school management could be re-scheduled due to unforeseen circumstances such as funerals, disruption of the school calendar as learners or teachers were supposed to attend a meeting or an event outside the school premises.

5.1.2. Sampling

The researcher made sure that sampling was done properly following the purposive methods to avoid biasness and objectivity, especially to the researcher's side throughout the research study. This also applied to the respondents from government and other non-governmental stakeholders in education who could have preconceived perceptions about scavenger children and their communities due to their low socio-economic status and

background in society. Efendi, (2020), describes scavenger children's behavior as unique and that use of guidance and counselling techniques in Life Skills subjects or in clubs at the school could assist in molding these children into responsible citizens soon. Therefore, critically weighing the participants' assumptions outplayed by their preconceived perceptions such as having negativity and thinking that scavenger children are always violent and unruly, is just an assumption and a negative generalization and not a fact. It is in this regard that the researcher needed to avoid generalization of the research findings from a specific context to the broader populations with interest in scavenger children and their community's vulnerability. For example, stakeholders need to consider how governments in the underdeveloped and developing countries provide education to scavenger children in their municipal cities and towns and how sharing of best practices among researchers could be of assistance. However, different stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children vary due to their areas of concentration and abilities. Efendi, (2020), agrees that it is possible that the role of stakeholders in providing education to scavenger children could vary depending on the demographic, socio-economic status of the scavenger communities and their traditional and cultural beliefs an individual can have in a society.

5.1.3. Ethical Dimensions

The study on the role of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children is not an easy attempt as it requires several ethical dimensions to be considered and consideration. First, the topic itself looks and feels like it is discriminatory, but experience has shown that interventions meant for scavenger children after most of the research findings in child vulnerability have been misguided either to street children or other school dropouts due to other reasons and not scavenging at the garbage site. Dubois, (2018), explains that privacy and confidentiality is paramount in any research study due to the sensitivity of data about individuals or researchers come across with during data collection.

This study followed the research ethical dimensions as a way of showing respect to protect the participant's rights to privacy about their information. These were, obtaining informed consent from the participants, assurance on privacy and confidentiality, cultural, traditional and belief sensitivity, and advocating for the 'doing no harm and power dynamics.'

- i. The researcher made sure that **informed consents** were obtained from all participants involved in the study. These included the school management, the Parents Teacher Association (PTA), community members and policy makers in this case government line Ministries and other non-governmental stakeholders in the provision of quality, equitable and inclusive education to scavenger children at the garbage site. However, obtaining informed consents from the scavenger population and their families was not an easy task due to time limitations, high expectations such as getting allowances instead of a small stipend, high literacy poverty in the scavenger community and lack of trust by authorities especially at the garbage site who, most of the times have been at the wrong side of the law. The garbage scavenger community at the garbage site is always suspicious of strangers in their community as mostly there are crimes being committed within their community; hence, they take any intruder as a suspect to disrupt their peace. Nonetheless, the Parents Teacher Association (PTA) intervened, and the informed consents were finally obtained even though some parents seemed to be skeptical about the research idea in their community. This was observed during data collection through Focus Group Discussions when at some points parents made sure that they were present all the time while making it difficult for their children and wards to participate freely especially when child protection issues were tackled.
- ii. The researcher made sure that **privacy and confidentiality** was given priority as this is a requirement for any study. Adamourch, (2020), explains that participants

need assurance of protection of their privacy and that it can be in different categories depending on the type of research being undertaken. In this research study participants were assured of the researcher's ability to be trusted with the information they were asked to provide with their consent by participants themselves or through their gatekeepers. The researcher made sure that children between 10 and 17 years of age and their families were given the anonymity they deserved through coding to avoid stigmatization and discrimination. Wahyun, (2019), stigma and discrimination could occur among scavenger children themselves and possibly cause emotional damage that could be triggered if the information provided has not been properly secured or destroyed after the dissemination of the results of research study. This was achieved through coding and not using real names. In the case of inclusion and exclusion criteria, all participants were eligible to participate in the study except those who did not condone to have informed consent, the traumatized and those with mental issues and other ailments which were posing a threat or had the potential to derail data collection. Children under age was either accompanied by the parents/Guardians or their gatekeepers. For example, the teachers, Head teachers and some of the gatekeepers.

- iii. Respect was also given to the **structural setup** at the garbage site and to the scavenger community. The researcher made sure that the mitigating powers were recognized through careful setting of meetings through the leaders of the community and those with powers within the marginalized community and their families. For example, the researcher first engaged the leaders before the others and in this case, the Headteacher at the school, the president at the garbage site, the chair for Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and School Management Committee (SMC)

at the school, the block leaders and village headmen and faith-based leaders in the scavenger community. This approach assisted the researcher to have a deep understanding of the of the cultural norms, values and beliefs of the scavenger community and started to understand why scavenger children seemed not easy to control like other children coming from outside the scavenger community or the scavenger families at the school environment especially on issues of getting access to education and at the same time attend to issues of survival at the garbage site.

- iv. The researcher made sure any sensitive **cultural differences** in the form of gender issues, guidance and counselling and upbringing of scavenger children were not imposed on the participants such as forcing the researcher's own perspectives in the areas of initiation ceremonies, child rights violation and non-enrolment into the school. All in all, it was the researcher's responsibility to make sure that there was no harm caused to the participants, such as causing emotional harm but made sure that the results should provide access to quality, equity and inclusive educational services and financial support services to the scavenger children and their communities. The researcher made sure that while minimizing any kind of risk that could be associated with the study during data collection or dissemination, participant cultural and traditional beliefs should not have any effect on the research process. The ethical dimensions mentioned enabled the researcher to conduct the study in a respectful, responsible and impactful manner at all times of the data collection processes.

It can be summarized that this chapter covers the study's implications, recommendations and conclusions. Firstly, this chapter summarizes some of the key discussions that are linked to the theoretical insights emerging from the study. Further to this, the study discusses how any potential limitations may have affected

the interpretation of the results by linking it with the response according to conceptual framework and its significance to the literature review in chapter 2. Finally, this chapter describes the implications with reference to the research questions and actions taken and applied to build on the existing body of the research topic which deals with examining the role of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in the providing of quality, equitable and inclusive education to scavenger children at the city of Lilongwe garbage site.

5.2. Implications for the findings

As already indicated in chapter 4, the study's findings revolved around the role that governmental and non-governmental stakeholders need to undertake or implement to provide quality, equitable and inclusive education to scavenger children who often are discriminated against and stigmatized. Below are the research questions: -

Research Question 1:

What is the role of different stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children at city of Lilongwe garbage site?

The participants agreed that it is not the role of government only to provide education to scavenger children, but also other non-governmental stakeholders have the responsibility to get involved at different levels of the society and communities. The implication is that most stakeholders lack awareness and advocacy strategies in the areas of child protection strategies, campaign for the ratified Convention of Child Rights (CRC), good parenting skills and School Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV) plus enhancing inclusive education. For example, most non-governmental stakeholders such as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) come to the garbage site with fragmented efforts for unspecified time without elements of sustainability. The implication is that scavenger communities are not aware of their concept let alone the objectives and benefits of their projects to their immediate communities. Some stakeholders

just do it for cameras without any proper impact evaluation strategies so much so that there are no tangible benefits to the scavenger communities despite such interventions. The impact of the study will be strengthening of awareness and advocacy strategies so that scavenger children and their parents should be more knowledgeable of child rights, such as some of their basic and fundamental rights and child needs; like the right to education, food and shelter among others and that parents should acquire good parenting skills through guidance and counselling plus psycho-social support if they found themselves traumatized and depressed due to their living conditions whereby poverty and School Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV) are rampant.

It has been observed that if parents were to be exposed to good parenting skills, child protection issues emerging from violating child rights through lack of access to quality, equitable and inclusive education by non-enrolment, lack of shelter, food and good clothes could have been minimized in the scavenger community. It is believed by the researcher that provision of a behavioural change and skills development centre is the right step in the right direction as most of the individuals do not go further with education but given the right skills, they can find survival means and earn a meaningful living. The Convention on the Rights of a Child, explains that human rights are child rights too; therefore, advocacy on child rights and behavioural change will have an impact on scavenger children as the attempt to access equity and quality education.

The study found out that the role of stakeholders was not significant in advocating for the renewal and review or developing policies and strategies which could be recommended to assist in the re-admission of scavenger children who dropped out of school due to unfavourable education policies involving the vulnerable and marginalized. Action to be taken should be the renewal and review of such policies and strategies which are a stepping stone for scavenger children to access education for their future livelihoods. For example, The National

Educational Policy (NEP), the question should be what should be included or subtracted in the policy for it to cater for the education of scavenger children if reviewed? The National Girls' Education Strategy (NGES); what should be implemented for girls to stay in school apart from letting them face the barriers to girl's education in the scavenger communities? The re-admission Policy and the NGES expired in 2023 hence the urgent need to revise or formulate newer policies and strategies which are going to respond to sustainable stakeholder involved in the provision of education to scavenger children apart from government alone.

RQ 2: To what extent are the different stakeholders engaged in implementing policies and strategies in providing education to child scavengers.

Participants agreed that they knew someone who came to implement an activity in the scavenger communities, but the efforts were not sustainable.

“Yes, I know someone who has ever worked with the government to provide education to out of school scavenger children.” SMFGD 23062023_012941

The implication is that most of the stakeholders only take advantage of important dates such as the international Day of the Girl Child, the African Child and they usually donate food items to the scavenger communities but without really linking their intervention with the already existing policies on education, child rights or the policies governing youth activities such as the (Malawi National Youth Policy, National Gender Policy and other child protection policies). In chapter 2, the literature indicates that stakeholders in education are engaged both at national and local levels depending on their agenda towards the provision of education to scavenger children. Nurdin, (2020), emphasizes the need to examine stakeholders' involvement in providing services to such communities including other mentioned areas as their social responsibility. For example, Lilongwe city Council ought to take full responsibility in providing education starting with Early Childhood Development, primary up to secondary

as these categories of education fall under the council with regards to the decentralization agenda.

It should be noted that stakeholders' there are some interventions by engaging out of school youth (scavenger) communities inclusive, such as, UNICEF Child and Youth Friendly Community Initiative (CYFCI). The aim is to safeguard child rights protection and provide a platform for scavenger children and out of school youth to realize why they must stay in school and get education plus skills development. While blending these activities with other interventions there could be tangible results in the provision of education and skills development to scavenger children who are being denied access to quality and equitable education due to their status in society.

However, the implication is that this initiative covers children in different communities but not specific to the scavenger children who frequent the garbage site. Therefore, the provision of education to scavenger children is not a government responsibility only but also for other stakeholders in the same category which should be policy driven and sustainable for a positive change. These results were expected since there has not been real monitoring and evaluation for the projects undertaken in the scavenger communities. The achievable goals of interventions implemented by stakeholders in education have not been realistic due to the levels of child vulnerability within the scavenger communities. Hence, the provision of education has always been fragmented and sometimes not policy driven. Barre, (2015), observed that, mostly, scavenger children have been marginalized in policy interpretation and implementation by stakeholders in the provision of education while much of their concentration is focused on the in school. For example, open schools and CBEs are not frequented by scavenger children but school dropouts from a different level which is better than that of the scavenger communities.

RQ 3: What is the effect of providing educational resources, Guidance and Counselling and good parenting skills on reducing drop-out rates for child scavengers?

In chapter 1, the research Hypothesis (H0) states that if out of school youth (scavenger children) are provided with appropriate intervention by relevant stakeholders in education then drop-out rates will be minimized. While H1, (Alternative hypothesis) states that providing out of school youth with proper intervention by relevant stakeholders in education will not minimize high school drop-out rates. Guidance and Counselling and good parenting skills play a very big role in the education of a child and with reference to literature in chapter 2, behavioral change and parental involvement in scavenger children's education could minimize drop-out rates from school and would probably increase the retention rates.

The research findings in chapter 4 indicate that participants wish the counsellors in career guidance could be positive role models to have an impact in their implementation activities. Participants also felt that an interest in education by stakeholders and parents in the scavenger communities should be paramount as it gives the learners the motivation to stay in school and start working hard to improve their performance.

“..... career guidance there should also be a role model to come there so that the children should be able to interact with them so that the role model should explain well....” SMFGD 23062023_012941

“... The school dropout rate is still high at secondary school despite giving the learners guidance and counselling.do not usually have an interest in education.” SMFGD 23062023_012941

These results were not expected since most scavenger communities do not have an interest in their children's education right away from a tender age whereby, they are supposed to attend ECD. Mostly families go scavenging for survival, they interact and meet the same people within their community whose behavior has a lot of influence on their way of living and plays a big role in their everyday choices. Parents are not involved in their children's education let alone in providing guidance and counseling due to their levels of education and understanding and knowledge of child rights. It is therefore appealing to find out that scavenger communities need to have positive role models for their children so that they can be exemplary. It is believed that scavenger families have seen potential in children who attend school and

probably have significant change in their behavioral patterns than those who do not enroll into school or drop out of school.

The implication is that there is a lack of collaboration of efforts done by stakeholder intervention in the scavenger communities. This has resulted in duplication of efforts and lack of harmonization of efforts. For example, 2 or more NGOs of Donor Partners are found to be providing Social Guidance while none of them considers the provision of psycho-social support or Psycho-social First Aid (PFA) during or after natural disasters for the vulnerable and traumatized children. It is therefore assumed that these findings will assist stakeholders to harmonize efforts such as provision of guidance and counseling, provision of bursaries/scholarships and training of psycho-social counselors and skills development for the youth and vulnerable children such as scavenger children. Mohanty, (2019), states that interventions on non-enrollment for scavenger children need to be scrutinized in the areas of impact and sustainability.

Therefore, in this context the study can bring benefits to the scavenger community and children by influencing stakeholders to establish a behavioral change center for scavenger children and good parenting skills for the scavenger community to bring positive change to the community and particularly scavenger children vulnerability in accessing education.

In chapter 2, literature review highlighted that scavenger children have the right to education despite their social economic status in society.

“Despite the hardships and vulnerability of the of the scavenger communities, scavenger children need to get access to quality and equitable education as stipulated in article 1 section 25; Constitution of Malawi, (2013), which stresses on equal access to education by all persons regardless of color, ethnicity and religion.”

The assumption has been that stakeholders in education have turned a blind eye to the scavenger communities around providing education to scavenger children. However, Mohanty, (2010), stresses that parental involvement and participation in children’s schooling is of a

highly important concern to both government and stakeholders in the provision of education to the out of school youth and scavenger children.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides some recommendations and some insights on the research implications with regards to the problem of having high drop-out rates and non-enrolment for scavenger children being side-lined and stigmatized in the provision of quality and equitable education by various stakeholders in the scavenger community.

5.3.1. Introduction

These recommendations have been linked with the highlights of the significance of this research study. This chapter starts by considering the issue of examining the role of stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children and access to education for scavenger children who frequent the garbage site for their survival. Further to this, the study links the research findings to Research Questions for the study and their effects on the provision of education to scavenger children. For example, RQs and objectives of the study have led to the implications and recommendations which can assist the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the scavenger community issue of go-back to school campaign (Re-admission Policy) and barriers to scavenger children's access to quality education in their day to day lives. These sentiments are based on the interaction that took place between the researcher and the participants in this study.

In the 21st century, education has been acknowledged as universal and it is among the fundamental rights of a child, whereby the 2063 and 2030 agendas are focusing on 'leaving no child behind.' However, the living conditions of scavenger children have been faced with a lot of barriers for them to access quality and inclusive education in the areas of infrastructure development at the school, like, girl's change rooms and toilet units for both boys and girls, teaching and learning materials, basic needs at home, parental support and Guidance and Counselling. In the areas of inclusive education, it has been noted that children with diverse needs are the most affected as they are double discriminated and sidelined by just being born

in the scavenger families but also having diverse needs. It has been discovered that some families hide children with physical disabilities from the public to the point that these children fail to attend Special Needs Education (SNE) which is mostly offered at the school by trained SNE teachers. Barre, (2019), explains that scavenger community vulnerability has caused stigma and discrimination especially when scavenger children attempt to get enrolled into school. They often drop out of school because of such actions against them by either school management or their fellow learners at the school. It is therefore in this regard that this phenomenon requires the intervention of various stakeholders to take their roles in the provision of quality and equitable education to scavenger children as early as at ECD level. These stakeholders are the line Ministries which deal with child affairs such as, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Gender, Community development and Social Welfare, Ministry of Youth and Sports and Ministry of Health plus other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Community Based Organizations (CSOs) working with local communities and educational institutions. And adding to the list other stakeholders which are in the forefront formulating and implementing strategies and policies which could offer quality and equitable access to education for scavenger children are also very important in finding solutions to this phenomenon.

This study was conducted with an aim to explore and analyze the different roles that stakeholders ought to undertake to strengthen provision of quality and equitable education to scavenger children through examining previous and on-going interventions. These are implemented through the line Ministries, NGOs community initiatives alongside parental involvement in their children's education. This was done with an aim to come up with recommendations that could bring out action points and fostering education which could be inclusive and empowering to the scavenger communities and beyond the research study area.

The research study followed the mixed methods approach which used questionnaires during interviews.

This study sought to identify strategies that can be used to engage stakeholders to effectively play their role in the provision of education to scavenger children. There are policies and strategies which, if implemented properly and timely, could assist in the change in the socioeconomic status of the scavenger communities and their families for better access to education as the poverty and vulnerability cycle would be broken with time. Therefore, this research study has proposed the recommendations in the areas of community centered approaches, advocacy on collaboration and networking, technology integration, skills development, advocacy on policy and recommendation, psycho-social support and alternative learning models. Culkins, (2020), states that in every research study, recommendations are supposed to be based on evidence-based information. Such interventions through advocacy would act as a basis for attaining opportunities to provide quality and equitable education to scavenger children which should be accessible at all levels and times. These recommendations can yield positive results if there were collective efforts among stakeholders in the provision of quality, equitable and inclusive education to scavenger children as they grow up within the scavenger community where there is rampant urban poverty.

5.3.2. Advocacy on recommendations

Advocacy on recommendations in any research study findings is key to addressing the research problem. Ritter, (2022), explains that evidence-based findings could influence policy direction to assist those faced by research problems though it may sound a little bit of a political gimmick. For example, a good research study does not generalize research results but there is need to produce results that have tangible evidence on the information given out to the public. But the issue which matters most is responding to the research problem with solutions that can assist in a positive manner and beneficial to the area of study.

5.3.2.1. Community Centered Approaches

There have been numerous community centered approaches by stakeholders in the provision of education to vulnerable communities such as those living under the poverty line, orphans, street children and victims of natural disasters at school; but not directly to scavenger children. Barre, (2015) observed that haphazard interventions by some Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) and Civil Society Organization (CSOs) have reached the scavenger communities but they have no impact on scavenger children's education since they do not frequent the school and prioritize scavenging activities at the garbage site. For example, notable people within the scavenger community have at certain times conducted parties, donated clothes and food items at the garbage site on important days such as Christmas, The Day of the African Child or any other memorable dates for charity work but still this is not sustainable. Mostly, these have been once-off activities that have no impact on the scavenger communities and are not sustainable.

This study therefore recommends that establishment of Community Based Education (CBE) should continue and add more centers in all the 34 education districts to minimize literacy poverty around the garbage site and other equally vulnerable areas within Lilongwe city council, while also using the Re-admission Policy to re-admit scavenger children who dropped out of school due to barriers to education. The barriers registered were, early and teenage pregnancies, child marriages, natural disasters, relocation, illness, divorce of parents and ranking high on the list being rampant urban poverty in the scavenger communities. Craig-Dorough, (2003), explains that high dropout rates could easily have been avoided if there were strategies and policies which could be addressing prevention and reduction of such barriers to education in their early stages. For example, providing information on early and teen pregnancies using Life skills subject or clubs and societies for in and out of school youth, bringing awareness on the importance of education to individuals with regards to their future

livelihoods and sensitization of local leaders, parents and faith-based leaders on good parenting and developmental skills to out of youth and scavenger children in their communities.

It has been observed that networking and collaboration with Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), seems to play a big role in the provision Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs), infrastructure development, bursaries and scholarships, water and sanitation in the struggle to address educational barriers to scavenger children within their community even though some of the interventions are fragmented and lack sustainability due to lack of funding and expertise.

5.3.2.2. Technology Integration

According to the Malawi 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), goal #4, digitization of education in Malawi is imminent. The Directorate of Basic Education secured funding with Royal Norwegian Embassy for Unlocking Talent which has been implemented by Volunteer Services Overseas (VSO). The project's objective was to equip rural primary school with internet technology (ICT) skills whereby learners starting from standard 2 to 4 have been given skills on how to read using tablets. The project runs for a period of 7 years (from 2013 to 2021). From 2021 to 2023 the German Government, Kreditanstalt for Wiederaufbau (KfW) continued to fund the project until 2023 where there was an overlap with Building Educational Foundations through Innovations & Technology (BEFIT) with funding to be implemented by Imagine Worldwide (IW) and it is a consortium. The program has been scheduled from (2023 to 2029). The commitment is still for selected primary schools in remote areas even, but Ministry of Education (MoE) has planned to roll the initiative to the urban schools as well. However, these plans are only geared towards learners who are in public schools. Ortega-Ruiz, (2012), noted with concern that learners in this case (scavenger children), who have dropped out of school are not given a chance to benefit from access to internet interventions as their socio-economic vulnerability may not allow them to be in school.

Scavenger children are a very fitting example of marginalized children living in scavenger communities and have either dropped out due to repetition, stigma and discrimination or have not managed to enroll into school due to Gender based violence especially against girls when it comes to education.

“..... So, there are some children who come to school, especially girls. They may start school up to standard five or six they start saying that teachers speak bad words to them as they repeat in certain classes: “hey you, why should you be repeating a class with that big chest... you are going to rot just here...” So, the child looks at it as a burden that teachers speak bad words to me so it’s better, I just drop out...”
PTAFGD 23062023_012938

According to Ojiambo, (2012), a lot of learning interventions may be suggested for scavenger children, but despite being beneficial interventions, learners who are out of school have no chance to access to any kind of such interventions as they do not enroll into school. For example, when scavenger children drop out of school no one bothers, and they are accountable to no one as the school management may not make follow-up and most of their parents are not concerned with the act of shunning school. Mohanty, (2020), stresses on the need for efforts to train parents and guardians of the scavenger children on social behavioral change especially on their negative attitude towards education.

5.3.2.3. Alternative Learning Models:

If scavenger children attempt to enroll into school, the chances of staying in school have proved to be minimal. In chapter 2, the literature review points out that there are a lot of barriers to scavenger children’s education due to their vulnerable socioeconomic status in their society.

....’In the cities the phenomenon is rampant in the squatter areas such as the scavenger communities which are highly patronized by the rural immigrants to urban areas. Barre, (2015), explains that scavenger children face a lot of discrimination, anti-social language use, bullying, unfriendly seating plans in the classroom and sexual exploitation.’ **PTAFGD 23062023**

There is need to identify alternative learning opportunities that are flexible learning models with schedules fitting scavenger children as they depend on scavenging for their day-to-day survival. Aryampa, (2019), commented that strengthening non-formal Community Based Education (CBE) and adult learning centers could suit the scavenger children's needs and lifestyle as they do not have time to sit down and concentrate on schooling. Another option could be to find a solution to their mobile operations as they always must jump on refuse vehicles to another as they scavenge for food before it reaches the dumping site for garbage for fear of other older scavengers who snatch whatever they scavenged or beat them if they refuse to surrender the scavenged items.

This study therefore recommends that the Complementary Basic Education (CBE) centers which have already been established or are intended to be established should also have such interventions so that scavenger children could be exposed to the digitalization of education in Malawi. For those that have grown past the recommended primary school age should be enrolled at the adult learning centers so that they should at least acquire basic numeracy and literacy skills for their survival. Further to this intervention, Lilongwe City Council through the responsible Councilor should plan and arrange for mobile classrooms by providing a mobile van which could be used as a classroom. Nurdin, (2020), stressed that, if stakeholders fail to reach the out-of-school youth and bring them back to school, then it better to find strategies that can make it possible to reach them wherever they are. The teaching and learning materials could be in form of tablets, smartphones, radio, TV educational programs and motivation through the mobile van. It should also be a priority to have the school dropouts be re-admitted into the main school for progress's sake on the phenomenon that is hitting scavenger communities with poverty.

5.3.2.4. Skills Development Programs:

In chapter 1 of this thesis, it has been explained in the significance of the study that it is assumed that there are sections of the scavenger community to benefit from the study findings. A good example is the proposal to establish a Skills Development and Behavioral Change Centre (BCC) within the scavenger community. Provision and establishment of a skills development center in survival skills such as carpentry, ICT, Tailoring and cookery to empower scavenger children to improve their present and future livelihoods.

“One child ever spoke to me that, “why should you speak to me like that? Are you the one who gave birth to me? She even said, “Don’t talk to me again...” So, I decided to talk to her mother. The mother just said she and her friends are taken up by men... So, we should be honest here that these girls are into boys so much. And in fact, these boys who are now getting into some bad habits like drinking at an early stage and even smoking, they cannot have any interest in going to school”
PTAFGD 23062023

The proposal to lobby for finances to establish a Behavioral Change Centre, is believed to benefit the scavenger community in future in the way that provision of Guidance and Counselling will assist scavenger children in their day-to-day lives through emotional support and empowerment of their self-esteem to make the right choices in life. Kanjere, (2019), discussed issues of child or forced marriages and explained that these will be a thing of the past if children are guided properly. It is further proposed that trained counsellors should be deployed to the center so that traumatized children should be assisted accordingly with professional approach. Literature review portrayed on the issue of Guidance and Counselling and how good parenting skills can promote scavenger children’s education. It is important to note that parental participation, provision and availability are crucial in a child’s education journey.

“Provision of G & C and good parenting skills can assist in the provision of education to scavenger children despite their low-income status. Once children have been enrolled in school, they need to be guided in the areas of education, social, personal

and career from a very young age However, scavenger children's parents may assist in explaining to their children if they are exposed to good parenting skills. It should be noted that G & C brings about positive behavioral change in students and can lead to good performance at school." PTAFGD 23062023

Chapter 4, from the findings in the qualitative FGDs interviews, participants explained that scavenger children parents lack interest in their children's education. Parents as well as their children are mostly occupied with finding means of survival to overcome challenges to meet their basic needs, especially food.

....'Some parents do not have proper monitoring of their children on education issues. When the child gets back from school, the parent does not check on them properly. ... at times the parent will only speak lightly about it and not seriously. So, this is one of the things that are leading to school dropouts. Sometimes certain parents say that there is no benefit to education. They say that 'there are a lot of people who are educated but are not employed... so what will education help you with?' PTAFGD 23062023

Candaleza, (2020), commented that parenting styles can have great effects on child up bringing depending on where the child is being raised. In the case of scavenger children, good parenting styles are not appreciated and practiced and most of the times families struggle to survive amidst poverty barriers such as shelter, food and medical care, just to mention a few.

5.3.2.5. Psychosocial Support:

Scavenger children are just like any other child when we consider their psychological, mental health well-being and emotions as they are growing up in their community. They are prone to trauma and depression if their emotions have been tampered with like any other human being. According to Downey, (2022), trauma in children can be caused by death in the family, abuse, teasing and bullying, homelessness and very poor living conditions. Due to the rough conditions scavenger children live in, if traumatized or depressed, they experience anxiety and end up creating a false image of themselves such as getting involved in drug and substance

abuse or engage in anti-social behavior by being violent or withdrawal. As such, provision of psycho-social support is very important for every child. However, there are very minimal attempts on the provision of psycho-social support by NGOs and CSOs for scavenger children and sustainability strategies for their interventions is not guaranteed. Firdours, (2022), explained that mostly, interventions by Implementing Partners target children who are in school, but the school dropouts and non-schooling children are mostly sidelined even though they are equally affected by the rough living conditions they experience.

This study therefore recommends that the Ministry of Education and other line ministries, especially Ministries of Health and Ministry of Gender and Child Welfare, should work together with NGOs and CSOs to accommodate scavenger children. These stakeholders should network and link with each other and provide mental health and psycho-social support services to strengthen child protection strategies and help scavenger children stay in school to complete their education cycle at their level. Further to this, child protection officers are supposed to link with scavenger communities and school management to strengthen child protection interventions between the school and scavenger communities by using safe spaces and community-based organizations (CBOs).

5.3.2.6. Advocacy and Policy Recommendations:

Advocacy on policy reviews and changes both at local and national levels is recommended by this study so that scavenger children's education should be prioritized amid the challenges they face in their communities. These policies should be in the line of access to education, gender equality, child protection and inclusive education with scavenger children and their communities. The policies being used by the Ministry of education, Gender, Health, Youth and other stakeholders working towards ending child vulnerability in accessing quality

and equitable education should either be reviewed or developed further so that scavenger children and their communities should not be sidelined or marginalized.

In the literature review, the researcher discussed the following policies as key to scavenger children's ability to access quality education which shall be inclusive without being sidelined.

.....'Some of the policies and strategies that are used to provide education to in school and out of school youth are; the National Education Policy (NEP), National Gender Policy (NGP), National Youth Policy, Re-Admission Policy, the National Girls' Education Strategy (NGES), Inclusive Education Strategy, National Education Sector Investment Plan (NESIP) and National Educational Standards. Therefore, according to the UN 2030 agenda, provision of education to all citizens especially children are a multi-stakeholder responsibility, and it is a fundamental human right as stipulated by various countries' constitutions...' KII CC 222082023

The National Education Policy (NEP) is proposed to be reviewed (funds permitting), with an aim to advocate for compulsory education so that the issue of non-enrolment should be dealt with permanently. In addition, there should be sensitization in scavenger communities with much focus to parents on the interpretation of the policy or to have it reviewed so that no one is left behind as stipulated in the SDG #4 and Agenda 2030, (MIP 10). The school management should also take the initiative to interpret and implement the policy within the scavenger community so that re-admission procedures and processes should be followed accordingly. For example, with low literacy levels for scavenger children's parents, it is very difficult to interpret the policies which have been written in English. There is need therefore to have these policies interpreted in the local language and in a popular summarized version for easy access and understanding.

5.4. Conclusion

As suggested earlier study of the role of stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children in the city of Lilongwe needs to dwell much on the following areas as

recommendations. Community Centered Approaches, advocacy on collaboration and networking with NGOs and CSOs plus other stakeholders in education, technology integration, skills development, policy recommendation, interpretation and implementation, provision of psycho-socio support, Guidance and Counselling and alternative learning models so that they should act as a foundation for scavenger children access to equity and quality education. In addition, monitoring and evaluation of projects meant for scavenger children's education could assist with cross-checking if this category of children is reached out and assisted. With reference to the Anomie Theory by Robert Melton, most of the scavenger children are abused and in conflict with the law hence negativity from some of the stakeholders who fail to assist them accordingly. The establishment of a Skills Development and Behavioral Change Centre shall assist even the youngest children in the scavenger communities. Action Aid, (2015), reported that scavenger children as young as 6 years of age, often face discrimination as they strive to scavenge in garbage sites. The negativity is so huge that scavenger children are always identified before they can even talk to anyone who lives outside their community.

It is therefore in this respect that the recommendations mentioned are very important in the uplifting and strengthening the lives of scavenger children's education and future livelihoods. Efendi, (2020), mentioned that scavenger communities will end up being hit with extreme poverty because of their negativity towards education as stakeholders have preconceived negative attitude towards scavenger children. For example, as scavenger children are associated with crime and anti-social behavior, all the bad things are heaped upon them, such as stealing, smelling garbage, foul language, fighting and the list is endless.

5.5.0. Recommendations For Future

Future recommendations from the results of this research study are very important for the benefit of the individuals living in and around the area of study. These recommendations could assist in getting an in-depth knowledge of the research problem with reference to the emerging issues from the research study findings to act as a basis for any future study on the same topic or a completely different study in the same area.

5.5.1. Introduction

The study on examining the role of stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children, has been very important to the researcher in a way that this ought to be the only way to establish and learn more on what level and extent does Ministry of Education and the other line ministries, NGOs, CSOs and other stakeholders provide accessibility to quality, equitable and inclusive education for scavenger children who live in the scavenger communities around City of Lilongwe garbage site.

The problem of the statement as stipulated in Chapter 1 states that: -

..... The problem is that most Scavenger children are neglected by both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders who are responsible to ensure that they stay in school and access education as stipulated in the SDG# 4, Agenda 2063 Goal # 2, National Education Policy (NEP) Re-admission Policy and Free Primary Education by responding to the Education for ALL (EFA) goals. According to the NSO Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (MDHS), 11% of primary-age children are out of school, with poorer ones being more likely to be out -of school. Thus, scavenger children are inclusive. Kacheyo, (2024) states that approximately 15,000 children live and work in the streets of Malawi's major cities, but this excludes scavenger children. Non-governmental stakeholder projects target small numbers of vulnerable children, for example Fiddes.org, (2023), targeted 40 street children at the Home of Hope in Chitedze, Lilongwe against a population of over 3,000 child scavengers. Although there are low drop-out rates in the City of Lilongwe, of (0.7% for both girls and boys), (2024). Annual School Census, scavenger children do not enroll into school as education is not yet compulsory. In the 2022 academic year, 38 children aged 10 – 17 dropped out of school at the primary school near the garbage site. (School records). More statistics indicate that Lilongwe city has a fast yearly growth rate of 4.42% as indicated by Macrotrends, (2022). Wilson, (2008), indicates the magnitude of scavenging that twenty million people depend on waste picking worldwide. Scavenger children have been neglected by both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders who are responsible to ensure that they stay in school and access education as stipulated in the SDG# 4, Agenda 2063 Goal # 2, National Education Policy (NEP) Re-admission Policy and Free Primary Education by responding to the Education for ALL (EFA) goals.

11% of primary-age children are out of school, with poorer ones being more likely to be out of school. (2015-16), NSO Malawi Demographic & Health Survey, (MDHS).

These are street children, orphans and scavenger children among others.

Statistics indicate that Lilongwe city has a fast yearly growth rate of 4.42% as indicated by Macrotrends indicates the magnitude of scavenging that twenty million people depend on waste picking worldwide.

Children close to the garbage site neglect school and opt to pick these wastes, hence the emergence of garbage scavenger children, however, there is little to no evidence of what is being done by all stakeholders in education to influence these children to attend school due to lack of research around this topic.

“The study could bring a lot of positive changes in the community and in the lives of the scavenger children. Further assumption is that there will be economical and environmental benefits after the study..... equitable access to education could reduce the rate of school dropouts and health risks for communities living around the area.”

It is assumed that beneficiaries from the findings of the study shall be the scavenger children who are mainly out of school youth, parents and the whole community, the scavenger community, the nearest primary and Community Day Secondary School (CDSS), the researcher and the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders in education.

- i. Out of school youth** are children who drop out of school due to a few reasons such as poverty, lack of interest and child labor. These will benefit through identification of stakeholders in education who have the capability to assist them with motivational factors such as school meals, social cash transfers to their families and alternative learning modalities. In addition, out of school youth could benefit from the provision of Guidance and Counselling which NGOs could offer through mentorship and role modelling sessions.
- ii. Nearest primary and secondary schools** will benefit through stakeholders that have the capability to aid such as learner friendly infrastructure in the categories of school or classroom blocks, libraries, girl’s change rooms, toilet units and water points, Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) and provisional of financial support in the areas of bursaries and scholarships. The learners will

also benefit through NGOs and Donors who provide school feeding programs and psycho-social support for traumatized learners such as the World Food Program (WFP) and UNICEF Malawi in their district of operation just to mention a few in this category.

...” World Food Program, (2021), indicates that school feeding programs have the capacity of keeping children in school. Statistics indicate that Malawi has reduced absenteeism by 5% and drop-out rates by 2.9%. And attendance increased from 77% to 92%, reducing absenteeism and truancy by scavenger children in schools.”

- iii. Parents and the local community** will benefit through mentorship, guidance and counselling on good parenting skills and positive behavioral change between them with fellow parents and their children as well. According to Ojiambo, (2020), he states in the scavenger community, parents do not have anything to do with how their children present themselves to other individuals within or outside their homes and the community. There is little concern over their children or wards behavior hence at any level in society. There is a need indeed to prepare them for their future by providing them with education, personal and social guidance as they grow up and attend basic education at school. Thamarasseri, (2014), explains that Guidance and Counselling if used professionally has the capability to prepare learners to understand fully on the choices they make and responsibilities they must take as a precaution measure for their future endeavors.
- iv. The community** living around the garbage site do not have proper houses as they put up their homes without the involvement of the Planning Department of the City Council as these locations lack necessary provisions such as portable water, electricity and accessible roads. Mostly such communities are nomadic and do not have proper settlement provisions if compared to ‘other’

communities within the city. The scavenger community would therefore benefit by having portable safe drinking water and even a health clinic from the City Council and other stakeholders as a move towards provision of the scavenger community needs through their social responsibility programs.

v. The researcher will gain by having an in-depth knowledge of scavenger children and community lifestyle, needs and research gaps which need special attention apart from providing access to equity, equitable and inclusive education only. The knowledge gained would also be beneficial to future study conducted in the same area of study, especially from emerging issues from the study findings which could also prove the validity of this study's results.

vi. Ministry of Education, being a policy holder, will be able to link up with other line Ministries upon the results of the study. The Ministry will coordinate by networking through Technical Working Groups (TWG), workshops and symposiums on scavenger and out of school children inclusion in policies and strategies that would specifically have the purpose of covering their vulnerability when it comes to accessing education. There will be use of the already existing policies and strategies which will need to be reviewed, adjusted or developed to provide quality, equitable and inclusive education for all and leaving no child behind as has been the case with scavenger children in many instances.

From the study findings participants agree that it is not only the responsibility of the Government through line Ministries with education in the fore front, but also other stakeholders in education in the categories of NGOs, CSOs and the donor community. However, there are

emerging issues from the study findings that have highlighted numerous challenges when it comes to access to education for scavenger children and out of school youth. The issues are poverty, lack of resources, stigma and discrimination, health and safety, family responsibilities and lack of support for scavenger children's welfare in their community by responsible stakeholders.

5.5.2. Poverty

Firdous, (2020), observed that children from the scavenger community live in absolute poverty and they come from impoverished families that do not have the capacity to provide them with daily basic needs for them to stay in school and access education easily. The necessities range from food, shelter, clean drinking water and clothing just to mention a few. High poverty levels contribute to the lack of resources for garbage scavengers to access educational materials such as school supplies and modern technology. For example, at the primary school near the garbage site, desks are not adequate. Barre, (2015), estimated that, almost 2 out of 10 students sit at a desk while the rest sit on the floor for the senior classes. The tendency at the primary school is that all the junior students from standards 1 to 4 sit on the floor and it is very difficult for girls to stand up during lessons as they have dresses as school uniform. In circumstances where textbooks are adequate, learners are supposed to buy the textbooks, a thing which is impossible for scavenger children to afford and keep up with their studies. Craig-Dorough, (2003), discovered that most of the scavenger children drop out of school because of the hidden costs of primary education. For example, even though Malawi implemented the Free Primary Education (FPE) in 1994 in response to the global Education for All (EFA) Goals, primary education is not completely free because of the hidden cost such as school development fund, notebooks, school uniform, (though not compulsory but necessary) and many other small requirements that need money. The study therefore recommends that scavenger children and their community's poverty be researched so that

proper interventions by stakeholders could be implemented in the provision of quality, equitable and inclusive education.

....” Most of the children start going to school very well but later they stop going to school because of different reasons. The first one is that it is possible that their parent’s poverty that it’s difficult for them to provide for the school fees or uniform ...sometimes it could be the issue of toilets that are in bad shape. Some might not want to go to school because of bad toilets.” PTAFGD23062023

Therefore, scavenger children who drop out of school due to poverty and lack of learner friendly infrastructure could benefit in the categories of financial support and infrastructure development. The other areas to benefit from after this study would be through the social cash transfers provided by Government through Ministry of Local Government and sometimes Ministry of Gender. Those working on child vulnerability and school dropouts would simply address the issues of bursaries and scholarships, additional classroom blocks and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities, Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs). In terms of school furniture, and school meals, Ministry of Education and Local Government could use the already existing strategies and projects to approach the Donors Community such as UNICEF, Norwegian Church Aid or Embassy, Irish Embassy, European Union, and let NGOs and CSOs such as CAMFED, CSEC, CRECOM, Action Aid Malawi to extend their implementation and interventions accelerate access to quality, equitable and inclusive education for scavenger children through their communities and public schools around the garbage site. The 2030 Agenda, and Malawi 2063 stresses on leaving no one behind in accessing education and policies and strategies have been developed to address such issues. For example, the revised Re-admission policy and the National Inclusive Education Strategy.

5.5.3. Stigma and discrimination

According to Aryampa, (2019), children who come from the scavenger community are often seen as those from very low status by just looking at the way they dress and perform in

school without really finding out if they could perform well in class. He further stresses that, while inside the classroom scavenger, children face stigma and discrimination from their peers, teachers and even the way the seating plan is arranged has a lot to tell. Due to lack of motivation, scavenger children develop very low esteem, and this affects their performance in school and can lead to a lack of motivation and low self-esteem, which can hinder their academic performance. Kasinja and Tilley, (2018) commented that sometimes scavenger children are given names such as ‘ana a kumtaya” children of the garbage site. For most of the scavenger children, being called by different funny and diminutive names is the worst form of discrimination any child can face just because they come from a poor family and environment.

(R1) ... *“What really happen is that when a child goes to school on an empty stomach, they start to think if they have to go again the next day without eating anything or may think like maybe I should just stay? Even with clothing, they might find themselves having a uniform which they wash maybe once or twice a month. These children look dirty and awkward to their friends which make them shy and perform poorly...”*
SMCFGD23062023

This study therefore recommends that through detailed study in future, research on the marginalization, stigma and discrimination of scavenger children in their communities should be carried out to examine the hardships that scavenger children come across as they attempt to access quality, equitable and inclusive education especially when mixed with different classes of learners from the areas surrounding the garbage site. Government through Ministry of Education and line Ministries, Donors, NGOs and CSOs plus other stakeholders are eligible to assist in the provision of motivation factors to scavenger children such as psycho-social support, training of professional Counsellors or provision of Psychological First Aid (PFA) to the traumatized children intending to drop out of school especially during and after natural disasters, separation of parents, loss of loved ones, Gender Based Violence (GBV) from both at home and school and negativity from the communities around the garbage site.

5.5.4. Health and safety

Health and safety are paramount for every child regardless of their status in society. Chaturvedi, (2010), explained that a child's health is a very important aspect of the future mental, emotional and physical growth in any child's life. It is also very important that all children must undergo all the procedural anti-natal and post-natal processes which include receiving all the scheduled vaccines and routine checks to be protected to some of the communicable and viral infections such as polio, TB, Cholera, Malaria and Tetanus. Unfortunately, most scavenger children do not pass through this procedure even though garbage scavenging is a hazardous job that exposes children to a range of health risks, including exposure to toxic chemicals and diseases. These toxic chemicals have the capability to cause both short- and long-term health hazards on scavenger children, including cancer and respiratory diseases. Efendi, (2022), explains that children who do not get the appropriate child anti-natal clinics have difficulties attending school regularly and are not able to maintain good health, which can impact their academic performance. However, this is not that case for most of the scavenger children as their parents are busy with scavenging and their children's health well-being becomes secondary. A good number of scavenger children do not let their children access the vaccines due to their traditional and cultural beliefs while others because of their deep-rooted religious beliefs and faith. Tshivhase, (2022), explains that scavenging and solid waste management is one of the most dangerous activities globally and therefore protection of human health ought to be given priority by stakeholders, especially municipal councils and governments. There are instances whereby scavenger children are hit by private garbage vehicles which operate illegally and when there is serious physical harm in terms of broken limbs, legs and sometimes loss of life, not much attention is given to such occurrences. There is no follow up on such issues and scavenger children and communities do not get justice they

deserve as citizens. Genemo, (2022) observes that most of the people in the scavenger community are not aware of their rights as citizens.

(R2) ... *“If one has died after being run over by a car, it’s your own fault. Sometimes the driver of the vehicle can just help with a little something during the funeral but that matters less because you have already lost a person. People get run over because they try to get into the vehicle while it’s still moving. They even follow the car from the garbage collection points as the car makes its way here to dump some waste eventually, they get run over....”*

In Chapter 2, the literature touches on the child protection issues which affect scavenger children in several aspects such as, lack of child legal justice, criminology, child labor, Sexual Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV), emotional and physical harm among many other violations. Even though Malawi has a Legal Aid Department in the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, scavenger communities due to their lack of knowledge and low educational levels, do not know who to contact if in need of legal services. As a result, critical and criminal offences conducted at the garbage site are not reported to the appropriate authorities. Child labor has proved to be rampant in scavenger communities and individuals think it is normal for children to miss school and fend for their families at a very young age. Bennet, (2022), explains that children inherit their parents’ poverty which they do not deserve as citizens in a country where their economy is steady. However, children in the Sub-Saharan Africa are involved in child labor even if they are not scavenging children. Genemo, (2020), observed that in areas where poverty is rampant, children work in sand mining, commercial Agriculture, fishing industry and even hawking for their families to make ends meet while ignoring education. The same is the case with scavenger children, who are most of the time exposed to the worst form of child labor.

Like any other child, a scavenger child also faces the same challenges or even worse when it comes to Sexual Related gender Based Violence (SRGBV) in school, on the way to school and even at home. Maluwa-Banda, (2001), stressed that children must be given information about their sexual Reproductive Rights as this could assist them to identify sexual

exploitation and assault. But if the children are not in school then they easily become victims of SRGBV. It is therefore in this regard that it is a good idea to protect scavenger children by enrolling them in school so that they benefit from Life Skills subject which has all the information on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR).

....” organized crime reaches an extent of beating innocent people, burglary and running battles with the law enforcers. For such children abuse of alcohol and substance abuse is normal and they do not obey any authority.”

Apart from physical hazards such as being hurt by sharp objects or bitten by snakes, scavenger children are also victims of toxins and chemicals that come from the solid waste as they eat directly from the rotten heaps which cause serious illness and even death. Aryampa, (2019), insists that children who scavenge manually at the garbage site face extreme danger to their health as they do not have protective wear in form of masks, gloves and shoes.

The study therefore recommends that such findings should prompt other researchers in the scavenger community to research on exploring the effects of lawlessness including healthy and safety of scavenger children who frequent the garbage site for their survival.

5.5.5. Family responsibilities:

Scavenger children usually work long hours to support their families, and they do not have time to attend school. Newman, et.al, commented that most of the scavenger children do not attend school by following their parent’s demands while others do not enroll into school due to peer pressure. However, it has been learnt from this study that very small children indulge in casual labor in the construction and agricultural activities for survival. Aloise-Young & Chavez, (2002), observed that, for the girl child in the scavenger community, she is always a triple victim as she has to deal with household chores, looking after siblings and sick parents, face Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in and out of school and in some instances, they are forced into early marriages as most vulnerable families traditionally prefer to educate the

boy child than the girl child. However, Medeiros, (2007), also be noted that boys also face a lot of problems as they grow up in the scavenger communities in search of means to survive. For example, boys usually are involved in drug and substances abuse criminology activities such as fighting, armed robbery, being used by politicians especially during campaign period and indulging in unruly behavior if they enroll into school. There are also some instances whereby boys have reported being sexually molested by their seniors under the influence of drug and substance. Therefore, the provision of a Behavioral Change and Skills Development seems to be a better platform to address and impart good parental skills to the scavenger community so that scavenger children could be helped by their parent's right from their homes.

(R2) ...” In addition to that, apart from the issue of dumpsite at primary school, there is also molding of bricks. Some children get attracted to piece works of molding bricks and even ferrying bricks in vehicles. This too affects their presence at school. This kind of work happens in the morning. So, they prioritize such piece work instead of school, so that at the end of the day they get something to help themselves with.” SMFGD 20062023

5.5.6. Lack of support:

Experience has shown that rampant poverty and literacy poverty among parents for scavenger children, there is no support from parents when it comes to helping with homework after classes and that it is the children who seem to be more knowledgeable than the parents. For example, there are scenarios whereby a child who has enrolled into school can read and write while the parents are incapable of doing the same. According to Efendi, (2020), garbage scavenger children lack support from their parents, family members, community, school management and their peers as well as stakeholders responsible for the provision of education to vulnerable communities. As a result, there is a lack of parental participation, provision and availability in the children's education as scavenger children have been enrolled into school and strive to stay in school longer. Firdous, (2022), observed that scavenger parents and their society face huge negativity from other sectors of the economy which believes that associating

with scavenger communities is a taboo. Most of the scavenger parents succumb to the negative pressure and they let their children earn for their survival at a tender age; a thing which drives them away from accessing quality, equitable and inclusive education. Further to this scavenger, children face harassment, harsh attitude and discrimination from those in authority which may lead to psychological problems, such as unruly behavior both at home and in school if enrolled. Therefore, there is great need for the provision of Guidance and Counselling which may encourage scavenger children to stay in school and other motivating factors such as school meals and availability of adequate teaching and learning materials.

....."it is in this respect that parents and teachers should showcase some willingness to offer some help to their children to perform better in school so that barriers in accessing education should be eliminated. For example, scavenger children have barriers on lack basic needs such as food, shelter, portable and clean drinking water and health care. most of them do not attend school regularly or drop out of school due to lack of basic needs or simply lack of interest due to poor performance and being over aged within the recommended education cycle."

This study therefore recommends that there should be a study in future on the effects of parental participation. Provision and availability on the education of scavenger children living around the city of Lilongwe garbage site. It seems there is a need for awareness and sensitization to parents and guardians on the benefits of education to the scavenger families or any other family and the whole community if children get education which will in turn minimize or eradicate the economic vulnerability they are currently facing. Newman, et.al, (2019), insists that educated youth brings out an empowered and informed generation if parents have been involved in their children's choices throughout the education journey.

....." Parents must take a responsibility to be advising their children.... If the chiefs would say there shouldn't be any school-going child at the dumpsite as a bi-law, which as a by-law, which will mean that the children will not be found there. if spotted, then his parent will be fined.... And that if a child is also found in piece works during harvesting or molding bricks shall be treated the same.... So, parents can also give advice to their children. ... So, parents can also give advice to their children. ...

Apart from that, the Ministries also have a part to play, because the parents show that it's difficult on their own to control their children..." SMSFGD 23062023

Therefore, it is rightly concluded that the emerging themes that have been discussed could be the right platform for other researchers in their future studies. Such an intervention would assist the other researchers to understand better and obtain a deeper understanding of the vulnerability of scavenger children and their communities as most of them are in the category of out-of-school youth (scavenger children) who have either dropped out of school or are on the verge of dropping out.

Once Nelson Mandela stated that "Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that a daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that a son of a mineworker of can become head of the mine, that a child of a farm worker a president of a great nation. It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another."

5.6.0. Conclusions

In conclusion, it can be summarized that the research study on the role of stakeholders in the provision of education to out of school (scavenger children), has shed more light on the multifaceted challenges and opportunities in ensuring equitable access to education for this vulnerable and marginalized group. There have been several major findings which came out as emerging issues that have also prompted future research studies. And while stakeholders such as line ministries, NGOs, CSOs, local communities, school management, parents and the scavenger children themselves are key to having the barriers to education eliminated, the other emerging issues need to be scrutinized and acted upon with urgency. Mohanty, (2010), explains that scavenger children do not stay in school for a long time because of lack of basic needs in their homes so much so that they resort to drop out of school or succumb to non-enrolment. Literacy poverty is very high in the scavenger communities such that the scavenger communities have been stagnant in the improvement of their social-economic status. There is rampant urban poverty and so much vulnerability for scavenger children if they attempt to

enroll into school. In chapter 2, literature reviews most of the discussion concentrated around lack of basic needs for scavenger children who ought to be in school.

...” Lack of basic needs for scavenger children to get education are many but some of them are food, shelter, portable water and good clothing to enable them to stay in school comfortably. However, even if they may have the mentioned things as home factors; there are also school factors that hinder scavenger children access to education such as dilapidated infrastructure, teaching methods, stigma and discriminatory acts by both teacher and other children who do not frequent the garbage site for their survival.”

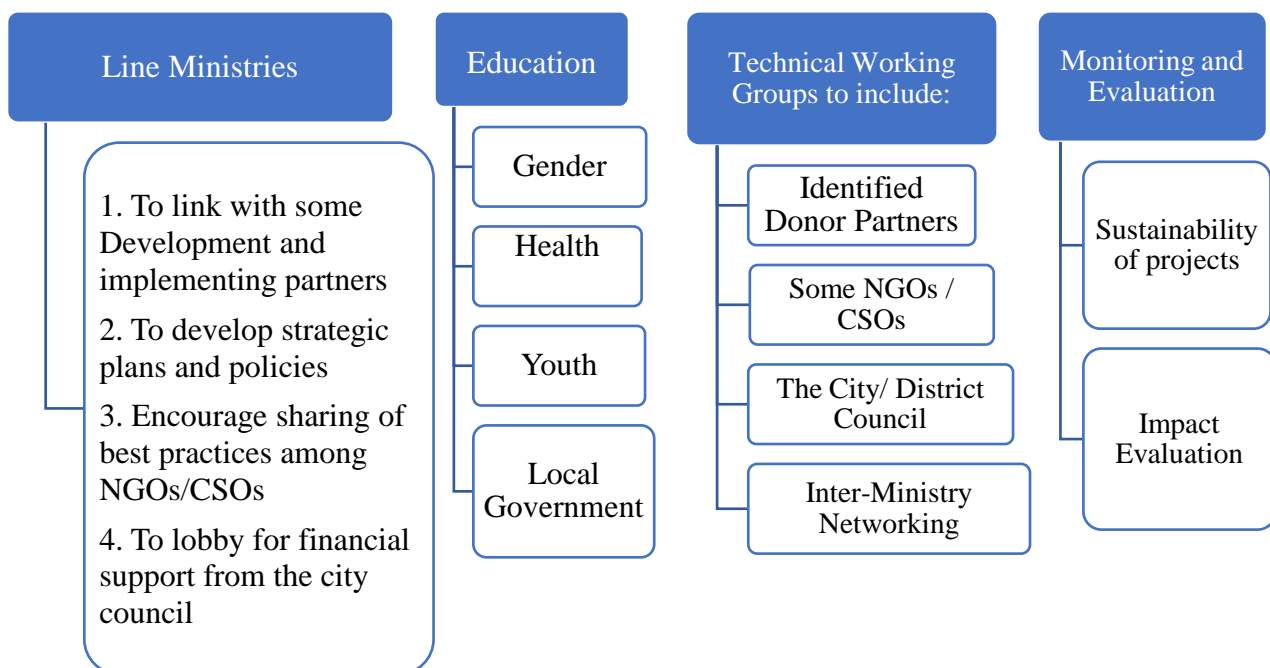
However, in chapter 1, Research question 1 attempts to look for answers on the role of stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children. The study findings indicated that while concerted efforts are being put into place by some stakeholders in education, there are serious barriers for scavenger children to access quality, equitable and inclusive education so much so that there are significant gaps which are persisting. Among the gaps there are financial constraints which result in poverty, stigma and discrimination, lack of child friendly infrastructure at the school, lack of advocacy and awareness campaign about the importance of education within the scavenger communities for parents to take a leading role in their children’s education.

However, even if there are such challenges within the scavenger communities, there are innovative and promising practices by some government and other stakeholders in the provision of quality, equitable and inclusive education to scavenger children. These are provision of teaching and learning materials to primary and secondary schools near the garbage site, child protection services, social cash transfers by Ministry of Gender though scanty and targeting just a few households and in some cases lacking sustainability of such programs or projects. Nonetheless, scavenger communities believe that the role of stakeholders is to intervene mostly at school level and disregarding their households because most of the interventions take place at school level where scavenger children do not frequent as most of them drop out of school.

... *“The government has a role to play. If they may come and train teachers on proper class management and not to scorn learners or asking them out, that their role is to mould them to be able to progress into secondary school. So, teachers who have bad intentions may now start concentrating on their primary role of teaching and assisting our learners..... people behave as if they have understood but in fact, they haven’t.... but later, you will still see that things have not changed... their children are still going to the dumpsite... What can we do as a community to make sure that each parent is sending their children to school?”*
PTAFGD23082023

The study has recommended that there should be community-centered approaches, such as the establishment of Community-Based Education (CBE) programs, which have the capability to overcome literacy poverty being faced by the scavenger communities among parents and children due to high rates of school dropouts and non-enrolment. Efendi, (2020), there are inadequate number of stakeholders who ought to help scavenger children to stay in school. It has been observed that the provision of education to scavenger children is a multi-stakeholder issue and it needs coordinated and harmonized efforts at all levels. Networking and collaboration with Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Society Organizations has also been identified in the recommendations as a way in which government and stakeholders in the provision of education ought to plan and work better. It is the responsibility of all stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of policies and strategies to eliminate or minimize critical barriers that hinder access to quality, equitable and inclusive education by scavenger children within their communities. Aloise-Young & Chavez, (2002), stressed that causes for dropping out of school are not similar, hence the recommendation that barriers for scavenger children to stay in school should have their interventions implemented both at school and community levels. For example, traditional and religious beliefs have impacts both at school and home.

The following collaboration model created by the researcher, there is capacity to assist in the harmonization of efforts to include scavenger children in the stakeholder’s plans and strategies to provide quality and equitable education to scavenger children at school and within their communities with a minimal of prohibitive barriers.

Figure 18*Collaboration Approach Model (CAM)*

Source: *Global Social Service Workforce Alliance:* <https://www.socialserviceworkforce.org>

'The CAM was adapted from the (2010), Global Social Service Workforce Alliance guidelines developed by UNICEF, SAVE THE CHILDREN and UNESCO on strategies to collaborate and network on child vulnerability and protection by concerned stakeholders in education.'

In the recommendations the Collaboration Approach Model (CAM) is advocating on the involvement of all stakeholders both governmental and non-governmental to work towards harmonizing efforts in the inclusion of scavenger children to access quality, equitable and inclusive education despite the critical barriers scavenger children face in their everyday activities of their lives. This is a message to the Ministry of Education and other line Ministries such as Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare, Ministry of Youth and possibly Ministry of Health to continue with networking and collaborating through the already existing Technical Working Groups (TWGs) to strategize and put deliberate efforts to harmonize their efforts in reaching out to scavenger children. For example, provision of school

meals has to become sustainable and coordinated by several stakeholders including governmental and non-governmental to make their provisions in both material and finances on a larger scale rather than in a fragmented way so that learners do not drop out of school unlike the current intervention by some of the NGOs and CSOs working through Ministry of Education and Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare which in most cases does not become sustainable.

The research study, with reference to the Anomie Theory, is mainly dealing with delinquent juvenile behavior of scavenger children in conjunction with high drop-out rates and the study's literature review explains as to why high dropout rates and non-enrolment are imminent for scavenger children and their communities. Barre, (2015), observed that there are a lot of negativities towards scavenger children as they are always found at the garbage site and most of the time at the wrong side of the law especially when they turn into rebellion and withdrawal.

.... "Theoretical models for the study revolve around theories that go along with scavenger children's community natural behaviors in their day-to-day lives. ...The Anomie/Strain theory often results in rebellion, retreatism, ritualism, conformity and innovation which has been linked with the study's conceptual variables as independent and dependent models..... For example, change in the school environment could affect dropout rates and enrolment numbers; meaning that the school environment is an independent variable which influences the rate at which scavenger children drop out and enroll in school....., in this case, governmental and non-governmental stakeholders are the ones that should be in the forefront to achieve inclusion of scavenger children in education programs. These are the usual Ministries of Education, Health and Gender, the Lilongwe City Council through Local Government intervention and other NGOs and Development Partners working in the areas of child vulnerability

According to this research study findings, it is so significant and important that stakeholders should manage to find solutions to negative behaviors by scavenger children with reference to the Anomie theory. Grant, (2014), states that the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) gives guidance on theory driven thinking that behavioral change is gradual and cannot happen overnight. For example, if an individual is an alcoholic, even if they undergo counselling session, behavioral change will be gradual and sometimes the victim may

experience a lapse in their behavior but later they succeed gradually at the end of the counselling sessions. Therefore, establishment of a Behavioral Change Centre (BCC) ought to be a solution to the negative effects of urban poverty and its effects on the scavenger children's access to quality, equitable and inclusive education within and outside their community. It has been evidenced by Mohanty, (2014), as cited in Barre, (2015), that the main culprit is rampant urban poverty, which is causing anxiety, stress, depression and high rates of criminology among scavenger children within the scavenger community and even in the school environment. Mostly children who experience such negative emotions do not perform well in class even if when they are allowed to attend classes, they face barriers most of the time as narrated by the school management. In addition, psychosocial support is an important aspect in the process of creating a conducive learning environment with the integration of counseling services. It is very important to allocate trained professional counsellors in all schools so that such children should be identified before they succumb to trauma, depression, anti-social behavior and withdrawal. These services could be offered at the intended Behavioral Change Centre (BCC) within the scavenger community and even at the nearest school. However, it should be noted that this intervention would work properly and successfully if it could be handled by all stakeholders in the provision of education to out of school youth so that there should be sustainability of the Centre and its activities towards assisting scavenger children. Nonetheless, most of such intended interventions favor those that are already in school, but the dropouts remain marginalized until they have a chance to be re-admitted back into school and be motivated to stay in school.

As the global world has gone digital, Malawi, through Ministry of Education has also embarked on digitizing education starting from basic education level. Ortega-Ruiz, (2012), describes waste management practices in developing countries that are unique, such as introduction of transactions by waste pickers using internet straight from the landfills. It is

reported that waste pickers in developing countries use social platforms to communicate, such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter in their small-scale endeavors and transactions. However, such practices require learning the basics in school in the categories of numeracy and literacy, plus computer skills with proper guidance from teachers. Another requirement is ownership or access to gadgets such as tablets or smartphones which are an expensive commodity for scavenger communities unless they are funded.

The Malawi Government collaborated with Donors and other Implementing Partners (IPs), such as Germany (KFW), Norwegian Church Aid and VSO through the Basic Education Directorate introduced Unlocking Talent (UT) Project to assist learners to read for standards 2 to 4 in the rural areas using tablets and the internet. Such intervention could also be provided to scavenger children if they were able to access education while at the garbage site. It is therefore the role of both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in education to find and implement initiatives such as the use of tablets, smartphones plus radio/ TV educational programs as an alternative mode of delivering education even to scavenger children at the proposed Behavioral Change Center (BCC). Such an intervention is likely going to be a promising vehicle to reach scavenger children with basic educational content in their communities. Assad, (2019), describes informal employment as a basis of positive outcomes of skills development provided to children to have a meaningful future. Strengthening of skills development programs, including vocational training in the areas of carpentry, Information Communication Technology (ICT), tailoring, and cookery, could offer pathways for empowering scavenger children to improve their future livelihoods and break the cycle of poverty which has engulfed their communities.

The significance to this research study is that the scavenger community will no longer be sidelined or marginalized when it comes to delivery of quality and equitable and inclusive education by all stakeholders in the provision of education to out of school youth living around

the garbage site. Arunthantiyar, (2010), reports that most of the children that are marginalized and discriminated against and most of the time fall prey to being abused due to their vulnerability levels at school. For example, if scavenger children face teasing and bullying maybe by just the way they dress, approach certain tasks in class or have nothing to eat at break time. Nonetheless, there is need for the line Ministries and all stakeholders to advocate for policy recommendations for reviews and development which are crucial in the implementation of the systematic changes which will allow scavenger children to be prioritized at both local and national levels while also dealing with elimination of teasing and bullying in schools, especially for vulnerable children. The areas for governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in education and child welfare to concentrate on should be advocating for compulsory education in Malawi, mainstreaming for gender equality, child protection and inclusive education policies and strategies which should be developed with focus on the unique needs of scavenger children in their communities.

..... “Due to the negative effects of discrimination and being sidelined within the school environment, scavenger communities develop a negative attitude towards education against their survival needs. For example, if they go begging or engage in child labor activities, they get a little something for food and survival whilst if they go to school, they stay hungry for the rest of the day....., explain that scavenger families have a negative attitude towards education, and they believe that education is for the elite only. Stakeholders need to find ways and strategies to address such situations or develop deliberate policies that would give them a mandate to intervene. On the contrary, most of the current interventions target the in-school children while those who have dropped out and are out-of-school are not considered.... scavenger communities are sidelined and forgotten, meaning that all the protocols Malawi has ratified on the rights of children and achievement of the SDGs goal number 4 are a non-starter, unless the policy gaps should be identified and addressed accordingly.”

As stated in the recommendations, exploring alternative learning models which are flexible for scavenger children’s lifestyle will be very important to the provision of education in scavenger communities. Bennet, (2022), attaches the importance of advocacy on learning models such as flexible non-formal education approaches to out of school youth. The introduction of mobile classrooms could assist scavenger children to be accommodated in the education cycle without taking them off the garbage site premises as behavioral change in this

scenario seems to be gradual. For example, introduction of mobile classrooms with motivation factors could be a recipe for scavenger children to become excited and attend classes while dealing with minimizing high dropout rates around the garbage site. Motivation factors could be in form of sustainable provision of food items, clothes, educational videos, and provision of teaching and learning materials in the form of pencils, notebooks and textbooks and in addition, take home rations.

Candaleza, (2020), explained that parental involvement continues to play a huge role in the education of scavenger children who drop out due to lack of basic needs and marginalization by governmental and non-governmental stakeholders including the line Ministries. The marginalization acts vary from data collection, classroom participation, seating plans which become questionable at times, sharing of resources and lack of personal belongings plus the teasing that accompanies such acts if there is no one to defend scavenger children. According to Bennet, (2022), the lifestyles and social-cultural beliefs of scavenger families are determined by the educational levels attained by parents, and they have much influence on their children's education. Scavenger families can either have one meal or nothing a day and for them it is proper and adequate while other well-to-do families may call it starving. The same goes with their poor clothing, shelter and water and hygiene services which are found at their disposal. In Chapter 2 of this thesis, it has been insisted that parental participation, provision and availability is crucial to scavenger children for the school management to operate properly. It is therefore very important that school management should relate to parents through constituting the Parents Teacher Association (PTA), which is an approved body by the Ministry of Education. The PTA has the mandate to investigate learner welfare starting from their homes up to the school environment. The study indicates that the motivation of scavenger children plays a very big role in the attempt to keep them in school. Efendi, (2020), states that motivated learners perform very well in class and are eager to learn more. As stipulated in the literature

review, most of the scavenger parents prioritize their means for survival while education seems to be the last resort.

“.....lack of interest among parents is one of the factors that increases high dropout and non-enrolment rates for scavenger children.... These are attached to tradition and cultural beliefs within their communities. There is evidently lack of motivation from scavenger parents to their children as they do not make efforts to participate in their children’s education. This creates a very big emotional gap between the scavenger children and their parents. broken homes are a source of demotivation for children to perform better in school, and they are likely to be exposed to emotional damage.” (Chapter 2)

Strengthening advocacy on good parenting skills especially as children are growing up and passing through emotional challenges being part of the vulnerable scavenger communities. Candaleza, (2020) stresses the need for parents to be aware of what is happening in their children’s everyday life at school and join in some of the school activities such as assisting with homework, attending school meetings and becoming part of the fundraising activities to show support to their education. Parents should benefit in such a way that they must realize their role as instant role models for their children as the saying goes, *‘charity begins at home,’ whatever a child does in terms of mannerism, reflects the parents’ behavior...*

According to this research study, lack of basic needs for scavenger children has become the main hinderance to such vulnerable children to enroll into school or access quality, equitable and inclusive education within their community. Scavenger children may want to be in school but first they need food, shelter and clean drinking water on top of teaching and learning materials plus child friendly infrastructure for them to stay in school. UNICEF, (2015), explained that key stakeholders in the provision of education to out of school youth need to address issues of basic needs first before joining the ‘back to school campaign,’ for the children who drop out of school due to several reasons. However, lack of important school factors such as conducive infrastructure, to be specific ‘girl friendly infrastructure,’ water points, toilets and adequate qualified teachers prevent scavenger children staying in school longer. As such, it is in this respect that all stakeholders at all levels should strategize and come up with deliberate policies and strategies which could end up finding a mechanism to provide additional

classrooms, Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs), furniture and use of Life Skills and subject to do away with stigma and discrimination towards vulnerable children who have the courage to get enrolled into school.

It is in this regard that more policy reviews and development of strategies should be geared towards scavenger children and out of school youth accessibility to quality, equitable and inclusive education so that they can have meaningful and productive future livelihoods in their societies. In essence, the research study brings out the numerous hiccups and factors which stakeholders must face influence the provision of education to scavenger children. One of the factors obviously is that these children are hard to reach since they are not likely to be found in school there should be a proper strategy on how to engage them easily without facing problems with their communities and families. Mohanty, (2010) alludes to the idea that there is need for stakeholders working in the provision of education to out of school youth to put in place innovative strategies which are likely to strengthen collaboration and networking among themselves. For example, there is a need to harmonize efforts on provision of bursaries and scholarships, such as selection criteria, bursary package and life span of the projects. As already discussed, in the recommendation and implications of the study, innovative strategies assist in the advocacy for policy reforms have the capability to bring out meaningful progress towards access to quality education for scavenger children. For example, the re-admission policy can be used to advocate for the 'go back to school campaign' in the scavenger communities as well as outside the scavenger communities. It should be noted that the reviewed Readmission Policy has included several reasons as to why learners drop out of school, hence all dropouts have been captured. According to the revised Readmission Policy, the reasons for dropping out, ranges from pregnancy, child marriages, illness, relocation due to divorce or natural disasters, lack of interest, poverty and parental requests among others. The Ministry of Education, Gender, NGOs and CSOs are working tirelessly around child protection, and they are the right

platforms for such interventions. On the contrary, the policies lit in the literature review have stated just a little bit about out-of-school youth but not scavenger children per say so that it is not adequate to address the issues of scavenger children who are unique in nature and need assistance. Stakeholders in education such as the LCC have not shown their full potential in their social responsibilities to serve the communities around the garbage site in terms of provision of school related support or alternative learning models. Even if the garbage site might be moved to another area outside the city boundaries, it should be noted that the scavenger communities will still linger in the vulnerable area, and they need positive intervention and implementation of the current policies on child protection.

The Malawi 2063 and the 2030 MW Implementation plan stresses on leaving no child behind which should prompt for immediate action. The recommended interventions range from financial support to infrastructure and psycho-social support and skills development. Therefore, stakeholders in the categories of Donors and implementing Partners are requested to act through donations, social responsibility and humanitarian aid to the scavenger communities living around the garbage site. It is assumed that this study will bring out issues that will bring stakeholders in education to think through and provide the much-needed education to scavenger children and begin to address some of the barriers to such as basic needs and economic empowerment of the scavenger communities through provision of knowledge and sensitization campaigns on the importance of education to their communities and the nation as a whole.

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APPENDICES: Research Tools

Appendix A: Questionnaires



QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCAVENGER COMMUNITY & PARENTS (Face to Face, Focus Group Interviewer administered and observation)

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Student : Grace Kafulatira Mulima
Student's E-mail Address : gkafulatira@gmail.com
Students phone number : 265888922475 / 265999229568
Student ID : R1707D3175784
Supervisor : Dr. Constance Chifamba
University Campus/Program: Unicaf University in Malawi: PhD Doctor
 of Philosophy
 - Education
Research Project Title : **EXAMINING THE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS
 IN THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION TO
 SCAVENGER CHILDREN: A CASE OF
 LILONGWE CITY GARBAGE SITE**

Part 1: Debriefing of Participants

Purpose, Aim and Significance of the study

The aim of the study is to investigate the level of involvement stakeholders take to provide education to the out-of-school youth that frequent garbage site in the city of Lilongwe and interventions that could possibly solve the problem of dropping out of school with parental involvement in behavioural change. The significance of the study is that it assumed that there will be a lot of positive changes in the community for scavenger children such as economic and environmental benefits after the study. It is believed that provision of education could reduce the high rate of school dropouts and health risks.

The significance of the study is that: -

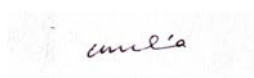
i. Out of school youth are child scavengers who drop out of school due to a number of reasons like poverty, lack of interest and child labour will benefit through identification of stakeholders in education who have the capability to assist in provision of school blocks, libraries, teaching and learning materials and school feeding programmes to keep students in school. Such actions will minimize absenteeism and truancy by scavenger children.

ii. Parents and the community will benefit through mentorship, guidance and counselling session's students will benefit in positive behavioural change.

iii. The community around the garbage site will benefit through provision of water, electricity and accessible roads.

iv. There is a possibility that after the study the community will benefit by getting portable water and even a health clinic from the city council.

You have been chosen to participate in this study because you play an important part in the investigation on the provision of education to out of school youth.



Student's Signature:

Part 2: Certificate of Consent

Do you agree to participate in the study? Please tick the appropriate response. **Yes/No**

Participant's Signature :

Witness (if signature is not applicable):

.....

Date:

You are invited to complete the following questionnaire which aims at examining the roles of stakeholders take to provide education to out of school youth.

This interview will take approximately 30 minutes, and it includes **14 main Questions**. Participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. Submitting a completed survey is an indication of your consent to participate in the study. You have the right to withdraw at any stage of the research without any consequences and without providing any explanation. In this case, the data collected will be deleted. All aspects of the study, including the results, will be strictly confidential. Individuals will be de-identified in all reports relating to this study and will be labeled only with identification numbers.

Please complete all questions and make sure you follow the instructions for each question.

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

1. What gender do you identify as? Choose one option.

1	Male	
2	Female	
3	Other	
4	Prefer not to answer	

2. What is your age? Write the exact age in years

.....

3. Specify your marital status?

1	Single	
2	Married	
3	Divorced/separated	
4	Widowed	

4. What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed? Choose one option.

1	None	
2	PSLCE	
3	JCE	
4	MSCE	
5	Diploma	
6	Bachelor's Degree	

7	Master's Degree	
8	PhD	
9	Prefer not to say	

5. What is your current employment status? Choose one option.

1	Employed Full-Time	
2	Employed Part-Time	
3	Seeking opportunities	
4	Retired	
5	Not employed	
6	Prefer not to say	

5. What is your role?

1	Parent/guardian of an out of school youth	
2	Parent/guardian	
3	Community Leader	
4	Community member	

SECTION 2: MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE

Key: (Please type a number or tick against the appropriate response)

1= Strongly Disagree (SD)

2= Disagree (D)

3= Not sure (NS)

4= Agree (A)

5= Strongly Agree (SA)

7. Why are your children currently out of school? ((Relevant if 7 = 1)

		S D	D	N S	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
A.	Financial constraints is the reason why my child is currently out of school					
B.	Lack of interest in education is the reason why my child is currently out of school					
C.	Lack of access to educational facilities is the reason why my child is currently out of school					
D.	Health issues is the reason why my child is currently out of school					

8. Do you believe that parents have a role to play in ensuring that out-of-school youth receive an education? [No restriction, relevant to all]

		SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
4	Yes, I believe that parents have a role to play in ensuring that out-of-school youth receive an education					

9. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement

		SD	D	NS	A	SA

	1	2	3	4	5
I have communicated with my child's school administration about my child's educational needs					

10. If you Agree OR strongly agree to 10, how has the school administration responded to your concerns?

	SD	D	NS	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5
Yes, the school administration responded positively with support to my concerns					

11. What measures do you think schools can take to provide education to out-of-school youth?

	SD	D	NS	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5
A Creating alternative education programs					
B Providing financial assistance for education					
C Partnering with community organizations to provide educational opportunities					

12. Have you or anyone you know worked with community organizations or directly with a ministry or any national level stakeholder to provide education to out-of-school youth?

	SD	D	NS	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5
A Yes, I have or I know someone who has ever worked with community organizations to provide education to out-of-school					

	youth					
B	Yes, I have or I know someone who has ever worked with a government ministry to provide education to out-of-school youth					
C	Yes, I have or I know someone who has ever worked with a national level stakeholder to provide education to out-of-school youth					

13. What challenges do you think exist in providing education to out-of-school youth, and how can these challenges be addressed?

		SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
A	Lack of resources is a challenge that exist in providing education to out-of-school youth					
B	Lack of interest from the youth is a challenge that exist in providing education to out-of-school youth					

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

		SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
A	It is important for community stakeholders, such as parents and school administration, to be involved in providing education to out-of-school youth					
B	Flexible learning environment and provision of meals improve learner retention and daily attendance					

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your responses will be valuable in understanding the perceived consequences of a high number of out-of-school students and strategies for addressing this issue.



QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCHOOL MANAGEMENT: (Face to face, Interviewer administered)

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Student : **Grace Kafulatira Mulima**

Student's E-mail Address : gkafulatira@gmail.com

Students phone number : **265888922475 / 265999229568**

Student ID : **R1707D3175784**

Supervisor : **Dr Constance Chifamba**

University Campus/Program: **Unicaf University in Malawi: PhD Doctor of Philosophy - Education**

Research Project Title : **EXAMINING THE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION TO SCAVENGER CHILDREN: A CASE OF LILONGWE CITY GARBAGE SITE**

Part 1: Debriefing of Participants

Purpose, Aim and Significance of the study

The aim of the study is to investigate the level of involvement stakeholders take to provide education to the out-of-school youth that frequent garbage site in the city of Lilongwe and interventions that could possibly solve the problem of dropping out of school with parental involvement in behavioural change. The significance of the study is that it is assumed that there will be a lot of positive changes in the community for scavenger children such as economic and environmental benefits after the study. It is believed that provision of education could reduce the high rate of school dropouts and health risks.

The significance of the study is that: -

- i. Out of school youth are child scavengers who drop out of school due to a number of reasons like poverty, lack of interest and child labour will benefit through identification of stakeholders in education who have the capability to assist in provision of school blocks, libraries, teaching and learning materials and school feeding programmes to keep students in school. Such actions will minimize absenteeism and truancy by scavenger children.
- ii. Parents and the community will benefit through mentorship, guidance and counselling sessions. Students will benefit in positive behavioural change.

iii. The community around the garbage site will benefit through provision of water, electricity and accessible roads.

iv. There is a possibility that after the study the community will benefit by getting portable water and even a health clinic from the city

You have been chosen to participate in this study because you play an important part in the investigation on the provision of education to out of school youth.



Student's Signature:

Part 2: Certificate of Consent

Do you agree to participate in the study? Please tick the appropriate response. **Yes/No**

Participant's Signature :

Witness (if signature is not applicable):
.....

Date:

You are invited to complete the following questionnaire which aims at examining the roles of stakeholders take to provide education to out of school youth.

This interview will take approximately **30** minutes, and it includes **16 main** questions. Participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. Submitting a completed survey is an indication of your consent to participate in the study. You have the right to withdraw at any stage of the research without any consequences and without providing any explanation. In this case, the data collected will be deleted. All aspects of the study, including the results, will be strictly confidential. Individuals will be de-identified in all reports relating to this study and will be labelled only with identification numbers.

Please complete all questions and make sure you follow the instructions for each question.

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

1	Male	
2	Female	
3	Other	
4	Prefer not to say	

2. What is your age? Write the exact age in years

3. Specify your marital status?

1	Single	
2	Married	
3	Divorced/separated	
4	Widowed	

4. What is the category of your organisation?

1	Government Ministry	
2	Donor Partner	
3	Implementing Partner	
4	Prefer not to answer	
6	Other, specify	

5. What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed? Choose one option.

1	Diploma	
2	Bachelor's Degree	
3	Master's Degree	
4	PhD	
6	Prefer not to say	

6. What is your current employment status? Choose one option.

1	Employed Full-Time	
2	Employed Part-Time	
3	Seeking opportunities	
4	Retired	
6	Prefer not to say	

SECTION 2: FULL QUESTIONNAIRE

Key: (Please type a number or tick against the appropriate response)

1= Strongly Disagree (SD)

2= Disagree (D)

3= Not sure (NS)

4= Agree (A)

5= Strongly Agree

7. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements on provision of education to scavenger children		SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
A	Government should take lead in providing education to out of school youth (scavenger children)					
B	Parents and the local community have a part to play in their children's education					
C	Other stakeholders are equally responsible as government to provide education to out of school youth					

8. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements on effects of coordinated efforts in providing education to out of school youth		SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
A	If more stakeholders take part in providing education to out-of-school youth, the number of dropouts will decrease					
B	Sharing of best practices by stakeholders in education to promote provision of education for scavenger children					

9. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements on factors that derail provision of education to scavenger children		SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
A	Lack of friendly infrastructure such as toilets, classrooms and water points decreases numbers of children to be enrolled at the school					
B	A community that participates in school programs is likely to decrease number of dropouts					

10. On the scale provided please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement	SD	D	NS	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5
A Ministry of Education should lead in the provision of Guidance and counselling and child protection					
B Ministry of Gender should lead in the provision of Guidance and counselling and child protection					
C Ministry of Youth should lead in the provision of Guidance and counselling and child protection					

11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement	SD	D	NS	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5
A I am satisfied with government and other stakeholder's involvement in awareness campaign and sensitization on behavioural change for scavenger children.					

12. Do you agree that the primary responsibility to facilitate linking and harmonization of efforts to reduce crime rate for scavenger children should be led by the following:	SD	D	NS	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5
A. Ministry of Education					
B. Implementation Partners					
C. School Administrations					
D. Parents and Community leaders					

13. How satisfied are you with parental participation, provision and availability in the provision of education to scavenger children in the following areas	SD	D	NS	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5
A Encouraging and motivating school drop outs to pursue education					
B Providing logistical support (transportation, meals, etc.) for educational programs					
C Ensuring out-of-school youth are re-admitted and attend classes					
I Providing financial support to their children					

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following are policies and strategies that assist in the provision of education to out-of-school youth	SD	D	NS	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5
A. Re-admission policy					
B. The National Youth policy					
C. The National Inclusion Strategy					
D. National Girls' Education Strategy					

15. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following are key for stakeholders working together to improve the provision of education to out-of-school youth especially scavenger children?	S	D	NS	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5
A. Advocating for policies and funding to support out-of-school youth					
B. Engaging with parents/guardians and community members to increase support for education					
C. Provision of skills development to scavenger children					

16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following as the most effective strategies for reducing the number of out-of-school students?		S	D	NS	A	SA
		D				
		1	2	3	4	5
A.	Providing free or low-cost education					
B.	Offering incentives to encourage families to send their children to school					
C.	Addressing cultural and social barriers to education					

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your responses will be valuable in understanding the perceived consequences of a high number of out-of-school students and strategies for addressing this issue.



QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAKEHOLDERS IN PROVISION OF EDUCATION: LINE MINISTRIES, DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS. (Online self-administered and discussion through WhatsApp/ Skype: Interviewer administered depending on the availability of the respondents)

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Student : Grace Kafulatira Mulima
Student's E-mail Address : gkafulatira@gmail.com
Students phone number : 265888922475 / 265999229568
Student ID : R1707D3175784
Supervisor : Dr. Constance Chifamba
University Campus/Program: Unicaf University in Malawi: PhD Doctor of Philosophy Education
Research Project Title: Examining the role of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children: a case of Lilongwe city garbage site

Part 1: Debriefing of Participants

Purpose, Aim and Significance of the study

The aim of the study is to investigate the level of involvement stakeholders take to provide education to the out-of-school youth that frequent garbage site in the city of Lilongwe and interventions that could possibly solve the problem of dropping out of school with parental involvement in behavioral change. The significance of the study is that it assumed that there will be a lot of positive changes in the community for scavenger children such as economic and environmental benefits after the study. It is believed that provision of education could reduce the high rate of school dropouts and health risks.

The significance of the study is that: -

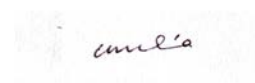
- i. Out of school youth are child scavengers who drop out of school due to a number of reasons like poverty, lack of interest and child labor will benefit through identification of stakeholders in education who have the capability to assist in provision of school blocks, libraries, teaching and learning materials and school feeding programs to keep students in school. Such actions will minimize absenteeism and truancy by scavenger children.
- ii. Parents and the community will benefit through mentorship, guidance and counselling sessions. Students will benefit in positive behavioral change.
- iii. The community around the garbage site will benefit through provision of water, electricity and accessible roads.

iv. There is a possibility that after the study the community will benefit by getting portable water and even a health clinic from the city

You have been chosen to participate in this study because you play an important part in the investigation on the provision of education to out-of-school youth.

Student's

Signature:



Part 2: Certificate of Consent

Do you agree to participate in the study? Please tick the appropriate response. **Yes/No**

Participant's Signature :

Witness (if signature is not applicable):

.....

Date:

You are invited to complete the following questionnaire which aims to examine the roles of stakeholders take to provide education to out-of-school youth. This interview will take approximately **30** minutes, and it includes **15 main questions**. Participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. Submitting a completed survey is an indication of your consent to participate in the study. You have the right to withdraw at any stage of the research without any consequences and without providing any explanation. In this case, the data collected will be deleted. All aspects of the study, including the results, will be strictly confidential. Individuals will be de-identified in all reports relating to this study and will be labelled only with identification numbers.

Please complete all questions and make sure you follow the instructions for each question.

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

1. What gender do you identify as? Choose one option.

1	Male	
2	Female	
3	Other	
4	Prefer not to say	

2. What is your age? Write the exact age in years

3. Specify your marital status?

1	Single	
2	Married	
3	Divorced/separated	
4	Widowed	

4. What is the category of your organisation?

1	Government Ministry	
2	Donor Partner	
3	Implementing Partner	
4	Prefer not to answer	
6	Other, specify	

5. What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed? Choose one option.

1	Diploma	
2	Bachelor's Degree	
3	Master's Degree	
4	PhD	
6	Prefer not to say	

6. What is your current employment status? Choose one option.

1	. Employed Full-Time	
2	Employed Part-Time	
3	Seeking opportunities	
4	Retired	
6	Prefer not to say	

SECTION 2: MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE

Key: (Please type a number or tick against the appropriate response)

1= Strongly Disagree (SD)

2= Disagree (D)

3= Not sure (NS)

4= Agree (A)

5= Strongly Agree (SA)

7. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements on causes of discrimination for scavenger children at school		SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
A.	Squatter areas around the garbage site are illegal settlements therefore they do not deserve services from government and implementing partners					
B.	Scavenger communities are full of violence and anti-social behaviour therefore it is not safe to be in contact with them.					

8. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements on importance of education motivational factors to keep students in school		SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
A.	Provision of school meals can reduce numbers of school dropouts					
B.	Provision of scholarships and bursaries can motivate students to stay in school and reduce absenteeism					
C.	Delinquent behaviour can be reduced by providing Guidance and Counselling to scavenger children for their future meaningful livelihoods.					

9. On the scale provided	SD	D	NS	A	SA
please rate the extent to which	1	2	3	4	5

	you agree or disagree with each statement					
A	Apart from provision of education, scavenger communities also lack other basic needs to stay in school					
E	The number of school dropouts is on the rise because there are not to fewer programs by government and stakeholders aimed at enforcing them to get back to school.					
C	I am satisfied with government and other stakeholders' involvement in the implementation of these Policies and strategies in providing education to scavenger children					

	10. On the scale provided please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement	SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
A	Ministry of Education lead in the provision of education to scavenger children in connection with government					

	policies and strategies?					
E	Ministry of Gender lead in the provision of education to scavenger children in connection with government policies and strategies?					
C	Ministry of Youth lead in the provision of education to scavenger children in connection with government policies and strategies?					
I	Should Development and implementing Partners lead in the provision of education to scavenger children in connection with government policies and strategies?					

11. Do you agree that the primary responsibility to facilitate linking and harmonization of efforts to provide education to scavenger children should be led by the following		SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	
A.	Ministry of Education					
B.	Implementation Partners					

C.	School Administrations					
D.	Community leaders					

12. To what extent do you agree or disagree are that Ministry of Education and partners' priority areas should be geared towards improvements in the provision of education to scavenger children?		SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
A.	Infrastructures development					
B.	Provision of teaching and learning materials					
C.	Providing direct education services to out-of-school youth					
D.	Get-back-to school awareness campaigns					
E.	Providing funding for educational programs					
F.	Advocating for the child rights and protection					
G.	Developing policies to support out-of-school youth					

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following are key for stakeholders working together to improve the provision of education to out-of-school youths, especially scavenger children?		SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
A.	Collaboration and partnership between NGOs, government, and other stakeholders					
B.	Advocating for policies and funding to support out-of-school youth					
C.	Engaging with parents/guardians and community members to increase support for education					

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following as the most effective strategies for reducing the number of out-of-school students		SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
A	Providing free or low-cost education					
B	Offering incentives to encourage families to send their children to school					
C	Increasing access to schools and educational resources					

D	Addressing cultural and social barriers to education					
----------	---	--	--	--	--	--

15. To what extent do you agree with the opinion that government should add deliberate policies and strategies to address the issue of lack of education to out-of-school youth (scavenger children)		S	D	NS	A	SA
		D				
		1	2	3	4	5
A.	Government to address the phenomenon using the same policies.					
B.	Government should add other policies and strategies to address the issue of lack of education for scavenger children					

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your responses will be valuable in understanding the perceived consequences of a high number of out-of-school students and strategies for addressing this issue.

KOBO toolbox link: <https://ee.kobotoolbox.org/x/3vpcwo6U> Stakeholder /Community
Questionnaire

Appendix B: Gate Keeper Letter**GATE KEEPER LETTER****Personal Information for students and Supervisor**

Student: Grace Kafulatira Mulima

Student's E-mail Address: gkafulatira@gmail.com

Students phone number: 265888922475 / 265999229568

Student ID: R1707D3175784

Supervisor: Dr. Constance Chifamba

University Campus/Program: Unicaf University in Malawi: PhD Doctor of Philosophy
- Education

Research Project Title: **EXAMINING THE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN THE
PROVISION OF EDUCATION TO SCAVENGER CHILDREN:
A CASE OF LILONGWE CITY GARBAGE SITE**

Research Project Description

The research project aims at examining the level of involvement stakeholders take to provide education to the out-of-school youth that frequent garbage site in the city of Lilongwe and interventions that could possibly solve the problem of dropping out of school with parental involvement in behavioral change. It is assumed that there will be a lot of positive changes in the community for scavenger children such as economic and environmental benefits after the study. It is believed that provision of education could reduce the high rate of school dropouts and health risks.

The Headteacher

Mchitanjiru CDSS/Primary School

24th April, 2023

Dear Sir/Madam.

RE: DATA COLLECTION FROM MCHITANJIRU CDSS AND PRIMARY SCHOOL

My name is Grace Kafulatira and I am currently working on the procedures to embark on a research project on data collection for my: PhD Doctor of Philosophy at Unicaf University Malawi pending approval by UREC. This study will be using face to face interviews, informal discussions and questionnaires to examine the role of stakeholders in the provision of education to out of school youth living around the City of Lilongwe garbage site.

I am writing to request your coordination through your office to arrange for the scheduled interviews and communication to the proposed participants such as members of staff, parents/guardians and the community. You will have to make sure that all participants have voluntarily agreed to participate in the study and are given informed consents before interviews.

The interviews will not take a long time as each respondent will not take more than 20 minutes.

Therefore, you are requested to prepare a timetable to avoid clashes between interviews sessions.

This is to assure you that all data collected, and conclusions made from the interviews will be kept strictly confidential and anonymity will be maintained. I will be asking for staff and parents/guardians.

volunteers to participate, who will have the right to withdraw their information at any time.

Part 2.

Please tick (✓) to confirm your understanding of the study and that you are happy for your organization to take part.

1. Making sure that written and verbally informed consents are given to research participants

before interviews. ()

2. Linking and coordinating between the researcher and the Parent Teacher Association in

order to reach out to the community and out of school youth. ()

3. Setting up a timetable for the intended interviews with the members concerned of the community. ()

4. Briefing members of staff on their roles in connection with the project. ()

5. Making sure that there are no clashes between the scheduled interviews and lessons in the school. ()

Mr. Benjamin Jere: Date: Signature:

Grace Kafulatira : Date: Signature.....

Type of interview:

Witness:

Date:

Appendix C. UREC APPROVAL



UREC Decision, Version 2.0

Unicaf University Research Ethics Committee Decision

Student's Name: Grace Kafulatira Mulima

Student's ID #: R1707D3175784

Supervisor's Name: Dr Conistance Chifamba

Program of Study: UU-PhD-Edu-900-3

Offer ID /Group ID: O59636G61108

Dissertation Stage: DS3

Research Project Title:

EXAMINING THE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN PROVIDING EDUCATION TO OUT OF SCHOOL YOUTH: A CASE OF CITY OF LILONGWE GARBAGE SITE

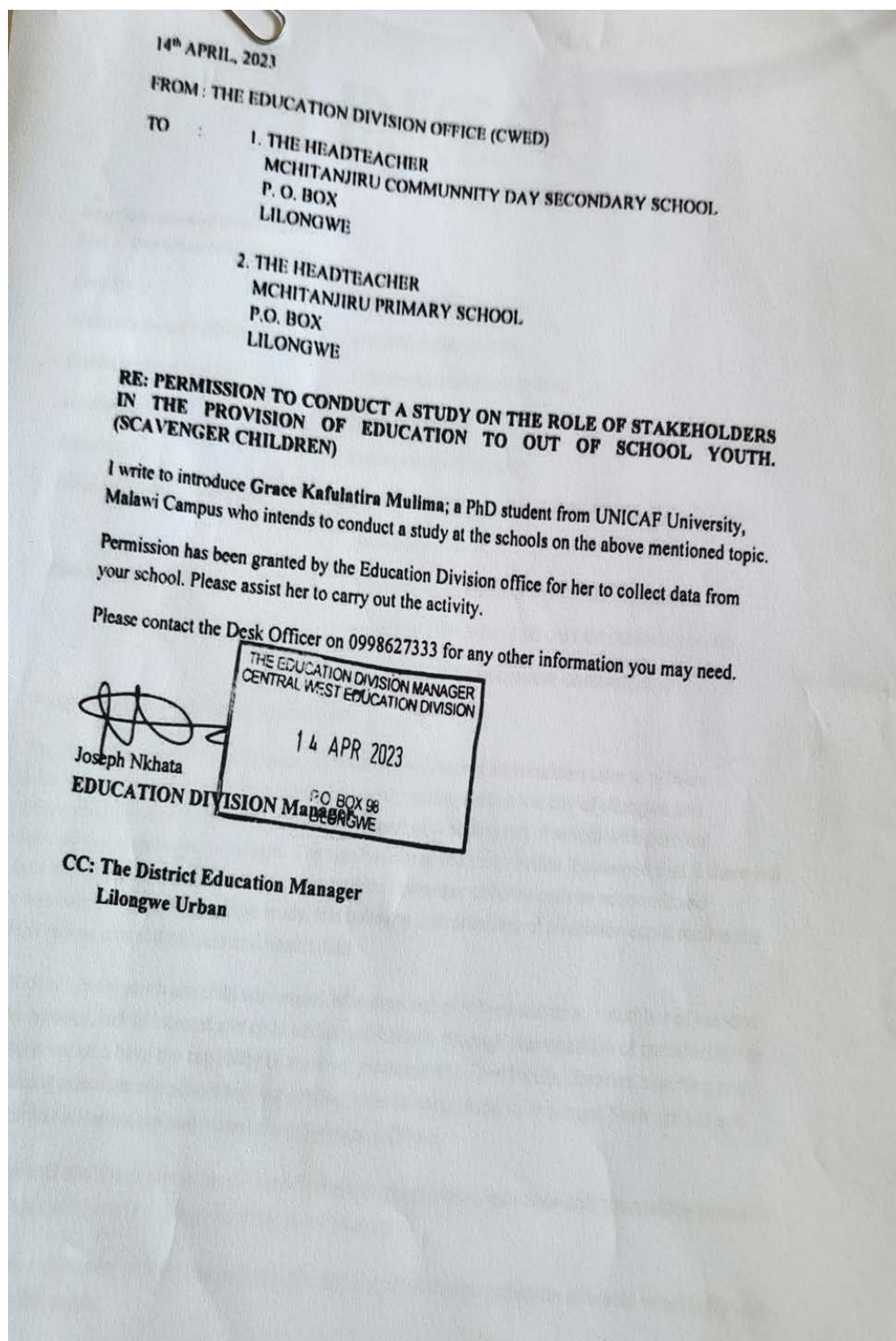
Comments: No comments.

Decision*: A. Approved without revision or comments

Date: 10 May 2023

*Provisional approval provided at the Dissertation Stage 1, whereas the final approval is provided at the Dissertation stage 3. The student is allowed to proceed to data collection following the final approval.

Appendix D: Approval



Appendix E: REAF DS



REAF_DS - Version 3.3

UNICAF UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM DOCTORAL STUDIES		UREC USE ONLY: Application No: _____ Date Received: _____
Student's Name:	GRACE KAFULATIRA MULIMA	
Student's E-mail Address:	gkafulatira@gmail.com	
Student's ID #:	R1707D3175784	
Supervisor's Name:	DR. CONSTANCE CHIFAMBA	
University Campus/Program:	Unicaf University Malawi: PhD Doctorate of Philosophy - Education	
Research Project Title:	EXAMINING THE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN PROVIDING EDUCATION TO OUT OF SCHOOL YOUTH: A CASE OF CITY OF LILONGWE GARBAGE SITE	

1. Please state the timelines involved in the proposed research project:

Estimated Start Date: 27-Mar-2023 Estimated End Date: 10-Sep-2023

2. External Research Funding (if applicable):

2.a. Do you have any external funding for your research?

YES NO

If YES, please answer questions 2b and 2c.

2.b. List any external (third party) sources of funding you plan to utilise for your project. You need to include full details on the source of funds (e.g. state, private or individual sponsor), any prior / existing or future relationships between the funding body / sponsor and any of the principal investigator(s) or co-investigator(s) or student researcher(s), status and timeline of the application and any conditions attached.

2.c. If there are any perceived ethical issues or potential conflicts of interest arising from applying for and/or receiving external funding for the proposed research then these need to be fully disclosed below and also further elaborated on, in the relevant sections on ethical considerations later on in this form.

3. The research project

3.a. Project Summary:

In this section fully describe the purpose and underlying rationale for the proposed research project. Ensure that you pose the research questions to be examined, state the hypotheses, and discuss the expected results of your research and their potential.

It is important in your description to use plain language so it can be understood by all members of the UREC, especially those who are not necessarily experts in the particular discipline. To that effect ensure that you fully explain/define any technical terms or discipline-specific terminology (use the space provided in the box).

The purpose of the study is to engage stakeholders in education within Lilongwe City Council (LCC) on their role in providing education to vulnerable child garbage scavengers and have no access to education. And, also work on provision of Guidance and Counselling for behaviour change to reduce high drop out rates. The project aims at investigating the level of involvement stakeholders take as a role or social responsibility to provide education to the out of school youth.

Research Questions: 1

i. What is the responsibility of stakeholders in providing education to out of school youths at the garbage site?

Research Question: 2

i. How effective is Guidance and Counseling at reducing delinquent behavior caused by lack of basic needs?

ii. To what extent can provision of meals improve learner retention and daily attendance?

Research Question: 3

i. How effective are the policies and strategies that MoE and other stakeholders use in reintegrating drop out child scavengers back into school?

iii. To what extent does lack of basic needs affect accessibility to education and livelihoods of garbage scavenger children?

1. H0 hypothesis that if out of school youth are provided with appropriate intervention by relevant stakeholders in education then drop-out rates will be minimized.

ii. H1 Null hypothesis that providing out of school youth with proper intervention by relevant stakeholders in education will not minimize high school drop-out rates.

The reason for undertaking the study is that there is a high rate of dropouts in the scavenger communities and lack of good parenting skills to enroll children into school but rather engage in garbage scavenging which gives rise to child labour, GBV and anti-social behaviour such as violent behaviour, organised crime, child marriage and vandalising of school infrastructure. However, if such communities are provided with education and other basic needs, the assumption is that economic and environmental benefits will change their attitude towards education and an improved social-economic status of the scavenger communities for the future livelihoods will be a reality.

3.b. Significance of the Proposed Research Study and Potential Benefits:

Outline the potential significance and/or benefits of the research (use the space provided in the box).

The significance of the study is that it assumed that there will be a lot of positive changes in the community for scavenger children such as economic and environmental benefits after the study. It is believed that provision of education could reduce the high rate of school drop outs and health risks for communities living around the garbage site.

- i. Out of school youth are child scavengers who drop out of school due to a number of reasons such as poverty, lack of interest and child labour will benefit through identification of stakeholders in education who have the capability to assist in provision of school blocks, libraries, teaching and learning materials and school feeding programmes to keep students in school. Such actions will minimize absenteeism and truancy by scavenger children.
- ii. Parents and the community will benefit by acquiring good parenting skills through mentorship, guidance and counselling session's students will benefit in positive behavioural change.
- iii. The community around the garbage site the assumptions is that they will benefit through provision of water, electricity and accessible roads by the City Council.
- iv. There is a possibility that after the study the community will benefit by getting portable water and even a health clinic from the City
- v. Ministry of Education will be able to network and coordinate its efforts with other stakeholders through Technical Working Groups. (TWG)
- vi. The researcher will get an in-depth knowledge about the phenomenon.

4. Project execution:

4.a. The following study is an:

- experimental study (primary research)
- desktop study (secondary research)
- desktop study using existing databases involving information of human/animal subjects
- Other

If you have chosen 'Other' please Explain:

The study will use positivism and interpretivist research paradigms. The quantitative approach will use tools such as questionnaires and checklist interviews in face to face. While for the statistical analysis, the qualitative research approach will use observations and focus group interviews.

4.b. Methods. The following study will involve:

- a Quantitative methodology
 a Qualitative methodology
 a mixed methods approach

If you have chosen mixed methods please state below whether you are going to proceed with triangulation or not.

- YES NO

4.c. Please state below which tools you are going to use:

A Select the tools to be used in your study	B Select how the tools selected in column A will be administered (select one or more)	C Select what types of questions will be included in the tools previously selected in column A (select one or more)
Interviews <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online with camera (synchronous live discussion with camera) <input type="checkbox"/> Audio only (synchronous live discussion without camera, i.e., via phone)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open-ended questions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Close-ended questions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Includes section related to demographics
Focus Groups <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online with camera (synchronous live discussion with camera) <input type="checkbox"/> Audio only (synchronous live discussion without camera, i.e., via phone)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open-ended questions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Close-ended questions <input type="checkbox"/> Includes section related to demographics
Questionnaire <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face self – administered questionnaire <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online, i.e., via phone or any other platform. The researcher reads the questions to the participants <input type="checkbox"/> Online asynchronous self-administered questionnaire (i.e., via email)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open-ended questions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Close-ended questions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Includes section related to demographics

A Select the tools to be used in your study	B Select how the tools selected in column A will be administered (select one or more)	C Select what types of questions will be included in the tools previously selected in column A (select one or more)
Experiments <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face <input type="checkbox"/> Online with camera (synchronous live discussion with camera) <input type="checkbox"/> Audio only (synchronous live discussion without camera, i.e., via phone) <input type="checkbox"/> Asynchronously via any online platform	<input type="checkbox"/> Open-ended questions <input type="checkbox"/> Close-ended questions <input type="checkbox"/> Includes section related to demographics
Tests <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face <input type="checkbox"/> Online with camera (synchronous live discussion with camera) <input type="checkbox"/> Audio only (synchronous live discussion without camera, i.e., via phone) <input type="checkbox"/> Asynchronously via any online platform	Provide a brief description of the test in the box 'Other' below.
Other	Policy documents from relevant offices will be analyzed accordingly.	

5. **Participants:**

5 a. Does the Project involve the recruitment and participation of additional persons other than the researcher(s) themselves?

- YES If YES, please complete all following sections.
- NO If NO, please directly proceed to Question [7](#).

5 b. Relevant Details of the Participants of the Proposed Research

State the number of participants you plan to recruit, and explain in the box below how the total number was calculated.

Number of participants

(20) stakeholders in education, (20) school management (40) community leaders will respond to the quantitative approach using face to face interviews, while and (50) local assembly, (30) social welfare officers, (120) students, (80) parents/guardians and (80) out of school youth for qualitative approach of FGI and observations. Participants calculated from 3,750 population plus 290 stakeholders, total 4,400.

Describe important characteristics such as: demographics (e.g. age, gender, location, affiliation, level of fitness, intellectual ability etc). It is also important that you specify any inclusion and exclusion criteria that will be applied (e.g. eligibility criteria for participants).

Age range From To

Gender Female
 Male

Eligibility Criteria:

- Inclusion criteria
- Exclusion criteria

Disabilities/Disorders: You should only include the participants who can provide informed consent for themselves. Individuals who have a mental disability and are not in a position to provide their own consent should not participate in the study. Please provide information for any other disabilities/disorders the participants may have:

Other relevant information (use the space provided in the box):

5 c. Participation & Research setting:

Clearly describe which group of participants (described in 5b) is completing/participating in the material(s)/tool(s) described in 4c above (use the space provided in the box)

1. The group of participants will include a representation of stakeholders in the provision of education to scavenger children, Municipal Council City Assembly, Principal Secretaries from the line Ministries, Selected Directors, Deputy Directors, LCC Chief Executive and Mayor, Social Welfare and Child Protection Officers and School Management information will be gathered through face to face interviews using quantitative method questionnaire.
 2. Parents and guardians, community leader in school and out of school youth information will be through Focus Group Interviews using first quantitative questionnaire and later qualitative research design.
 3. Identification of participants will be through purposive, random and convenience sampling since it will be a mixed research.

5 d. Recruitment Process for Human Research Participants:

Clearly describe how the potential participants will be identified, approached and recruited (use the space provided in the box).

Recruitment of participants from line Ministries, Development and Implementing Partners, Municipal Council officers and Social Welfare & Child Protection officers will be through emails, phone calls or physical appointments. While for the school Management recruitment will be through the Education Division Office. Students will be recruited through engagement with Parents and the scavenger community through a Parents Teachers Association meeting at the school. Contacts will be obtained through Social Welfare and Child Protection offices, Personal Assistants, Public Relations Officers and the Education Division Manager's offices.

5 e. Research Participants Informed Consent.

Select below which categories of participants will participate in the study. Complete the relevant Informed Consent form and submit it along with the REAF form.

Yes	No	Categories of participants	Form to be completed
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Typically Developing population(s) above the maturity age *	Informed Consent Form
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Typically Developing population(s) under the maturity age *	Guardian Informed Consent Form

* Maturity age is defined by national regulations in laws of the country in which the research is being conducted.

5 f. Relationship between the principal investigator and participants.

Is there any relationship between the principal investigator (student), co-investigators(s), (supervisor) and participant(s)? For example, if you are conducting research in a school environment on students in your classroom (e.g. instructor-student).

YES NO

If YES, specify (use the space provided in the box).

6. Potential Risks of the Proposed Research Study.

6 a. i. Are there any potential risks, psychological harm and/or ethical issues associated with the proposed research study, other than risks pertaining to everyday life events?

YES NO

If YES, specify below and answer the question 6 a.ii.

6 a.ii Provide information on what measures will be taken in order to exclude or minimise risks described in 6.a.i.

6 b. Choose the appropriate option

		Yes	No
i.	Will you obtain a written informed consent form from all participants?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii.	Does the research involve, as participants, people whose ability to give free and informed consent is in question?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iii.	Does this research involve participants who are children under maturity age? If you answered YES to question iii, complete all following questions. If you answered NO to question iii, do not answer Questions iv, v, vi and proceed to Questions vii, viii, ix and x.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv.	Will the research tools be implemented in a professional educational setting in the presence of other adults (i.e. classroom in the presence of a teacher)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
v.	Will informed consent be obtained from the legal guardians (i.e. parents) of children?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
vi.	Will verbal assent be obtained from children?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
vii.	Will all data be treated as confidential? If NO, explain why confidentiality of the collected data is not appropriate for this proposed research project, providing details of how all participants will be informed of the fact that any data which they will provide will not be confidential.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
viii.	Will all participants/data collected be anonymous? If NO, explain why and describe the procedures to be used to ensure the anonymity of participants and/or confidentiality of the collected data both during the conduct of the research and in the subsequent release of its findings.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No
ix. Have you ensured that personal data and research data collected from participants will be securely stored for five years?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
x. Does this research involve the deception of participants? If YES, describe the nature and extent of the deception involved. Explain how and when the deception will be revealed, and who will administer this debrief to the participants:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

6 c. i. Are there any other ethical issues associated with the proposed research study that are not already adequately covered in the preceding sections?

Yes No

If YES, specify (maximum 150 words).

6.c.ii Provide information on what measures will be taken in order to exclude or minimise ethical issues described in 6.c.i.

6 d. Indicate the Risk Rating.

High Low

7. Further Approvals

All researchers are advised to check the regulations pertaining to research and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the country in which the research will take place as each country may have different restrictions on conducting research. **Are there any other approvals required (i.e., from a ministry or public agency in the country, in addition to ethics clearance from UREC) in order to carry out the proposed research study?**

YES NO If YES, specify.

Conducting research in the school premises will need an introductory letter from the Education Division Manager (EDM) responsible for schools in the Division and City of Lilongwe inclusive. The EDM's office will notify the Headmaster of the School and copy the District Education office.

8. Application Checklist

Mark if the study involves any of the following:

- Children and young people under 18 years of age, vulnerable populations such as children with special educational needs (SEN), racial or ethnic minorities, socioeconomically disadvantaged persons, pregnant women, elderly, malnourished people, and ill people.
- Research that foresees risks and disadvantages that would affect any participant of the study such as anxiety, stress, pain or physical discomfort, harm risk (which is more than is expected from everyday life) or any other act that participants might believe is detrimental to their wellbeing and/or has the potential to / will infringe on their human rights / fundamental rights.
- Risk to the well-being and personal safety of the researcher.
- Administration of any substance (food / drink / chemicals / pharmaceuticals / supplements / chemical agent or vaccines or other substances (including vitamins or food substances) to human participants.
- Results that may have an adverse impact on the natural or built environment.

9. Further documents

Check that the following documents are attached to your application:

		ATTACHED	NOT APPLICABLE
1	Recruitment advertisement (if any)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Informed Consent Form / Guardian Informed Consent Form	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Research Tool(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Gatekeeper Letter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Any other approvals required in order to carry out the proposed research study, e.g., institutional permission (e.g. school principal or company director) or approval from a local ethics or professional regulatory body.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Final Declaration by Applicants:

- (a) I declare that this application is submitted on the basis that the information it contains is confidential and will only be used by Unicaf University for the explicit purpose of ethical review and monitoring of the conduct of the research proposed project as described in the preceding pages.
- (b) I understand that this information will not be used for any other purpose without my prior consent, excluding use intended to satisfy reporting requirements to relevant regulatory bodies.
- (c) The information in this form, together with any accompanying information, is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and I take full responsibility for it.
- (d) I undertake to abide by the highest possible international ethical standards governing the Code of Practice for Research Involving Human Participants, as published by the UN WHO Research Ethics Review Committee (ERC) on <http://www.who.int/ethics/research/en/> and to which Unicaf University aspires to adhere.
- (e) In addition to respect any and all relevant professional bodies' codes of conduct and/or ethical guidelines, where applicable, while in pursuit of this research project.



I agree with all points listed under Question 10

Student's Name: GRACE KAFULATIRA MULIMA

Supervisor's Name: DR. CONSTANCE CHIFAMBA

Date of Application: 26-Apr-2023

Important Note:

Save your completed form (we suggest you also print a copy for your records) and then submit it to your UU Dissertation/project supervisor (tutor). **In the case of student projects, the responsibility lies with the Faculty Dissertation/Project Supervisor.** If this is a student application, then it should be submitted via the relevant link in the VLE. Please submit only electronically filled in copies; do not hand fill and submit scanned paper copies of this application.