PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' 'LEVELS OF USE' OF LEARNER-CENTRED METHODS IN DEDZA DISTRICT IN MALAWI

M.Ed. (PRIMARY- EDUCATION FOUNDATIONS) THESIS

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UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI

CHANCELLOR COLLEGE

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M.Ed. (PRIMARY- EDUCATION FOUNDATIONS) THESIS

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work which has not been submitted to any other institution for similar purposes. Where other people's work has been used acknowledgements have been made.

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this thesis represents the student's own work and effort and has been submitted with our approval.

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DEDICATION

To my parents, wife Margaret and children: Elena, Mphatso and Chikondi for their support throughout my course.

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ABSTRACT

The study was to investigate the primary school teachers' 'Levels of Use' of learner centred methods in Bembeke and Boma zones in Dedza District. The respondents were 165 teachers in the two zones. The study was informed and directed by quantitative research design and it used a survey methodology. The researcher used questionnaires and lesson observation checklists to generate data. Data was analysed by descriptive statistics and the results of the study have indicated that primary school teachers were at different 'levels of use' ranging from non use to renewal level. Again, in view of Concerns Based Adoption Model, the study has revealed that majority of primary school teachers are at upper levels of Levels of Use stratum from routine up to renewal levels. However, some teachers were still grappling with the use of learner centred methods in their lessons. In view of these findings, this study makes two critical recommendations. Firstly, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology through the Department of Teacher Education and Development should initiate school based in-service training so that all teachers are well grounded in the use of learner-centred methods. Secondly, teachers should be encouraged to be reflective and improve on their teaching approaches so as to meet different learning needs of their students.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CERT	Centre for Research Evaluation and Training
CBAM	Concerns -Based Adoption Model
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DIP	Diploma
DTED	Department of Teacher Education and Development
EFA	Education for All
IC	Innovation Configurations
IPTE	Initial Primary Teacher Education
FPE	Free Primary Education
LCE	Learner Centred Education
LoU	Levels of Use
MANEB	Malawi National Examinations Board
MIE	Malawi Institute of Education
MITEP	Malawi Integrated Teachers' Education Programme
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MOE	Ministry of Education
MSCE	Malawi School Certificate of Education
OBE	Outcome Based Education
ODL	Open and Distance Learning
PCAR	Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform

PIF	Policy Investment Framework
RTI	Response to intervention
SEGREM	Supporting Early Grade Reading in Malawi
SoC	Stages of Concerns
SoCQ	Stages of Concerns Questionnaire
SSA	Sub-Sahara Africa
TTC	Teacher Training Colleges
TALULAR	Is an acronym for teaching and learning using locally available resources
UNESCO	United Nations Education and Scientific Cultural Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Chapter overview

The chapter presents general background of the study, different modes of teacher training education in Malawi, introduction of Outcome Based Education in Malawi and definitions of learner-centred education. The chapter also presents the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance, and definitions of operational terms. Finally, the chapter has presented the chapter summary and thesis structure.

1.1 Background to the study

After the change of government in 1994, the government of Malawi offered free primary education (FPE). This resulted into high enrolment of primary school learners. The enrolment rose from 1.9 million to 3.2 million learners in the 1994/95 school session. In response to this rapid increase in learners' enrolment, government saw the great need to change the curriculum. Then the Malawi Government had announced the revision of school curriculum with the aim of making national education programmes which were more reflective of changing socio-economic and political realities and making it interesting to the learners by allowing them to take a central position in the learning process (Mizrachi, Padilla, Susuwere- Banda, 2010). In addition, the primary school

sector faced a lot of challenges such as large classes, high repetition and dropout rates, poor attendance, inadequate teaching, learning and assessment resources and non-conducive learning environment (World Bank, 2010). This scenario compromised the quality of education in the country.

In an effort to improve the quality of primary school education in Malawi, the Ministry of education, Science and Technology (MoEST) reformed primary school and primary teacher education curricula in 2007 from teacher-centred to learner-centred through the Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform (PCAR) (Mizrachi, Padilla, Susuwere-Banda, 2010). The change was very necessary because with teacher-centred teaching, learners were passively involved during lesson activities. In support, Qhobela (2012) in his study found that classroom teaching approaches were dominated by teacher-centred approaches which were characterised by minimal student talk. This emphasises the point that in teacher-centred teaching, a learner is indeed considered as an empty slate that he or she cannot contribute anything to what the teacher is teaching. Similarly, Kunje (2002) posits that in teacher centred approach, teachers initiate control of the sequences of the learning processes where at the end they ask and monitor what learners are learning. This is contrary to the principles of learner-centred education (LCE) which teach that learning must be a constructive process which aims to help a learner to build knowledge by interacting with the teacher and his or her fellow learners.

Additionally, Kunje (2002) argues that in learner-centred teaching, learners play an active role in the learning process; learning occurs in a self-regulated way and learners are the

ones involved in selecting appropriate learning goals, which guide the learning process. Studies have shown that the use of learner-centred methods (LCM) has encountered many challenges in many countries in sub-Sahara Africa including Malawi; hence the study has looked at primary school teachers levels of use of learner-centred methods. Tabulawa (2013) argues that not much has changed in terms of quality of teaching…no recognition at all of the learners' potential to construct knowledge, for those who try to use learner-centred methods do so without following proper procedures and techniques for conducting learner-centred methods. In view of the citation above, the study looked at "Levels of Use" (LoU) at which these teachers were on the use of learner-centred methods. The levels determine how teachers teach using learner-centred methods. Levels of use also focus on behaviour and how individuals react with respect to a specific change and it helps to determine the extent to which an innovation is being implemented using three levels of non-use and five levels of use (Hall, 2011).

Malawi teacher training and professional development activities are coordinated through the Department of Teacher Education and Development (DTED) within the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (Mizrachi, Padilla & Susuwere-Banda, 2010). The main aim of the pre-service teacher training programme in Malawi was to increase the number of qualified teachers at the primary school level in order to meet the demands of Free Primary Education (FPE) policy (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and Malawi National Commission for UNESCO, 2004). The current primary teacher education lasts for two years, one year is for college based and the other year is school year experience.

1.2 Initial Primary Teacher Education (IPTE)

In 2005, in part to respond to the obstacles of the Malawi Integrated Teachers' Education Programme (MITEP), the Government of Malawi instituted a new primary teacher training programme called Initial Primary Teacher Education (IPTE). This IPTE programme was also directly linked with Primary Curriculum Assessment Reform (PCAR) that aimed at putting in place an outcome based curriculum (Mizrachi et al., 2010). This new programme requires one full year of residence in a teacher training college followed by another one full year of school based assignment. The second year of the programme is supported by the Primary Education Advisor (PEA) and head teachers of the schools where the student teachers are doing their teaching practice. The students are expected to learn on job training, practicing the new theories they learnt in the previous year at college. In agreement, Kunje (2002) argues that the school based training in the form of teaching practice; student teachers are placed in one school for the entire academic year where they are expected to teach in collaboration with an experienced teacher.

1.3 Initial Primary Teacher Education - Open and Distance Learning (IPTE-ODL)

The most current mode of primary school teacher training is through a two year open distance learning mode where student teachers are taught for a period of two weeks at the colleges before they are posted to schools where they are expected to teach in collaboration with the experienced teachers in the school (Kunje, 2002). The programme is concurrently running with IPTE programme. The college training also takes place for a period of two weeks every end of term holiday for a two year period. Kunje (2002) adds

that in both programmes due to shortage of teachers, many student teachers teach by themselves because the experienced teachers are allocated other classes to teach. However, the statement above is true for ODL, while for the IPTE programme, student teachers are placed in groups of six or eight and teach while in pairs in one class. The IPTE-ODL programme started in May, 2010.

1.4 Outcome Based Education (OBE)

In addition to the change in teacher training format, there had been an emphasis placed on reforming the primary school curriculum (Mizrachi et al., 2010). The process began in 2001 as a result of the direction set by the policy investment framework (PIF). The Government of Malawi announced that the primary curriculum would be revised with the aim of making national education programmes more reflective of change on social, economical and political realities and making it interesting to the learners by allowing them taking central position in the learning process (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2003).

The new outcome based curriculum was introduced in primary schools in January, 2007 beginning with standard one. To align teaching practices with the new curriculum, the government reformed the teacher primary education curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2005). The process of reforming the teacher education curriculum was introduced into teacher training colleges later in 2006. The curriculum shifted from that of teacher-centred to that of learner-centred. So, the graduates from Teacher Training Colleges acquired the skills of handling learner-centred classes while those teachers who qualified before the introduction of outcome based education and curriculum, got the knowledge of

learner-centred education and its approaches through continuous professional development (CPD) which were done hurriedly, and in a very short time. Mizrachi et al. (2010) argue that some teachers indicated that the workshops over simplified the deployment of these new methods underestimated the challenging teaching methods after years of using teacher-centred methods.

1.5 Statement of the problem

Research on the learner-centred methods done in some sub- Sahara African countries has shown that learner-centred teaching is an effective means to achieve an effective learning (Metto & Makewa, 2014, p.5). Malawi through, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and its stakeholders in education has advocated for the use of learner-centred methods in teaching and learning process in primary schools in the country (Mizrachi et al., 2010). Though the Ministry of Education and stakeholders in education had put all their financial and material support in training teachers in different forums on the proper use of learner-centred methods, some teachers still use the traditional way of teaching. Tabulawa (2013) argues that not much has changed in terms of quality of teaching…no recognition at all of the learners' potential to construct knowledge. For those who try to use learner-centred methods were doing so without following proper procedures and techniques for conducting learner-centred methods.

Mizrachi et al. (2010) argue that some teachers indicated that when they returned to schools they found it is difficult to use the strategies and techniques they learnt at the workshops. CERT (2012) postulates that learners were not given sufficient time

opportunities to construct their own meaning or ideas. Similarly, learners were denied chance to reflect on the process they undertake in acquiring new knowledge. Teachers often are engaged in forms of learner-centred pedagogy without embracing the substance of pedagogical approach (Vavrus, Thomas & Bartlett, 2011). This is why the study wanted to find out primary school teachers 'levels of use' of learner-centred methods as this would encourage teachers to be reflective and improve on their teaching approaches so that they meet different learning needs of their students.

1.6 Purpose of Study

The study investigated the primary school teachers' 'Levels of Use' of learner centred methods in Dedza district.

1.7 Research question

The study was guided by the following grand tour question: What are teachers' 'Levels of Use' of learner-centred methods in primary schools?

1.7.1 Sub-research questions

- Do teachers' uses of learner-centred methods reflect varying levels of use according to Concerns Based Adoption Model?
- How often do primary school teachers use learner-centred methods?
- To what extent do teachers' classroom practices reflect learner-centred methodologies?

1.8 Significance of the study

This study was significant because it had concentrated on the levels of use of learner-centred methods. As the purpose of the study was to investigate teachers' levels of use of learner-centred methods, it was hoped that the results of the study would make primary school teachers improve their interaction with learners in the classroom so that learners can have positive contribution to learning. In addition, the study would enable teachers appreciate the importance of using learner-centred teaching practices in their classrooms in order to improve teaching and learning processes. Again, teachers might also find ways of how they could improve their performance. Lastly, the study is important because the successful completion of the study would help education officials and stake holders in education to realize the significance of supporting teachers by providing them with necessary skills on how to use learner-centred methods in a learner-centred classroom through continuous professional development at school level.

1.9 Definition of operational terms

Meanings of many terms commonly used can be interpreted in different ways. To ensure clarity for the reader the following definitions are provided.

Constructivism: It is "a philosophy of learning founded on the premises that by reflecting on our experiences, we construct our own understanding of the world we live in" (Santrock, 2009:349).

Learner-Centred Education: It is "a process of teaching and learning whereby the learners are responsible for their own learning" (MoEST, 2012:13).

Innovation: It is "a programme, process, practice, or activity specifically designed to bring about positive teacher and student change as evidenced by enhanced student outcomes, specifically, student achievement" (Selman, 1999:55).

Learner-centred learning /called child-centred learning: It is "an approach to education focusing on the needs of the learner, rather than those of others involved in the educational process, such as teachers" (Mtika & Gates, 2010:396).

Learner- centred methods: It is "the perspective that focuses on individual learners, their experiences, background, talents, interests, capacities and needs with a focus on learning" (Mkweteza, 2008:6).

Outcome Based Education: It is "an educational approach based on learners' achievement in which they build knowledge based on what already exists; their outcomes are also assessed continuously during the teaching and learning process" (Malawi Institute Education, 2008:2).

1.10 Chapter summary

The idea of promoting learner-centred teaching in the classrooms started some time back during the initiation of free primary education in the country to enable learners learn

on their own and become creative thinkers. The chapter has discussed the concepts of OBE in Malawi and a learner centred teaching through the introduction of PCAR. The chapter has presented the current mode of training, IPTE and IPTE-ODL. Finally, the chapter has discussed statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions and significance of the study. The next chapter presents literature review and the Concerns Based Adoption Model, a theoretical framework that has guided this study.

1.11 Thesis structure

The thesis has been arranged into five chapters with related sections as outlined as follows: The first chapter has presented general background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance, and definitions of operational terms. The second chapter has presented the concepts of learner-centred methods and similar studies done in various countries, worldwide including Malawi. Finally, the chapter has discussed the Concerns Based Adoption Model, the theory which has guided this study. The third chapter has presented the rationale for using the quantitative research design, selection of the respondents, data generation tools, data analysis and interpretation and limitations of the study. The chapter has also discussed the validity and reliability of results. Lastly, ethical consideration of the respondents has also been discussed. The fourth chapter has presented the discussions of the findings. Finally, chapter five has presented conclusions, recommendations and areas for further study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Chapter overview

The chapter has presented the concept of learner-centred methods, differences between learner-centred teaching and traditional teaching and benefits teachers get from teaching using learner-centred education. Secondly, the chapter presents concept of constructivism and its importance. Thirdly, the chapter presents implementation of learner-centred education worldwide including Malawi. Finally, the chapter presents Levels of Use, a dimension of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM), the theoretical frame work which has guided this study of primary school teachers' levels of use of learner-centred methods.

2.1 Learner-centred methods (LCM)

To begin with, the learner-centred classroom is defined as a learning situation where learners might not only choose what to study but how and why that topic might be an interesting one to study (Joshani-Shiran, 2008). This reflects the view point that knowledge is constructed by learners and that the teacher is a facilitator of learning rather than a presenter of information. Learners construct their own meaning by talking, listening, writing, reading, and reflecting on content, ideas, issues and concerns (Joshani-

Shiran, 2008). The term, "learner-centred" describes a concept and a practice in which learners and teachers learn from one another.

Secondly, learner-centred methods as the term suggests, is a method of learning or teaching that puts the learner at the centre (Joshani-Shiran, 2008). That is, student learning becomes the main preoccupation of the teacher and not his or her performance as a teacher or a raw number of facts to be transmitted to the learners. Similarly, when teaching using learner-centred methods, the learner is the hub of the whole learning process. Teachers articulate what learners are expected to learn and provide opportunities for them to demonstrate their success in achieving those expectations (Napoli, 2004). That is, learners are given enough and appropriate time to do activities according to their own pace.

Thirdly, a learner-centred method is an instructional approach in which learners influence the content, activities, materials, and pace of learning. The teacher provides learners with opportunities to learn independently. Properly implemented learner-centred methods can lead to increased motivation to learn, greater retention of knowledge, deeper understanding, and more positive attitudes towards the subject being taught (Nancy, 2003). On the same, learner-centred methods make learning and educational processes more flexible, in order for learners to participate as much as possible. Learners are actively involved during classroom activities.

In addition, when using learner-centred methods learners are treated as co-creators in the learning process, as individuals with ideas and issues that deserve attention and consideration (Weimer, 2002). Learners are constantly encouraged to formulate and re-formulate their suggestions in the solution of problems and tasks they work on. The duty of the teacher is to encourage them to give answers despite the mistakes made.

Learner-centred methods are used according to the purpose they serve. This helps the teacher in identifying the right methods for the particular activity he or she would like to initiate in class. Some of these learner-centred methods are: jig saw puzzle, demonstration, case study, question and answer, storytelling, project, futures wheel, groups work, games and singing.

2.2 Differences between learner-centred teaching and traditional teaching

The two concepts above have been discussed by several scholars in many studies worldwide. To begin with, traditional teaching regards learners as blank slates and knowledge is imparted without the child making sense of it. In view of this, learners are rarely used in lesson activities and almost all activities are guided by the teacher (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2012). So, learners are considered as receivers of knowledge while the teacher is the only source of knowledge and learners are not fully involved. Arends (2007) argues that one learns best if he or she is personally involved in the learning experience and knowledge has to be discovered by oneself if it is to mean anything to you or make a difference in your behaviour. That is, one learns better by doing.

Again, constructivist teaching is based on constructivist learning theory. This holds that learning always builds upon knowledge that a student already knows. In agreement, Slavin (2006) posits that meaningful learning requires the active involvement of the learner who has a host prior of experiences and knowledge to bring to understanding and incorporating new information and classroom activities are all constructed basing on theoretical frame work of constructivism. For example, learners are actively involved in lesson activities using learner-centred methods. For this to happen, the learning atmosphere must be conducive and encourage democratic practices so that learners are able to exchange their views. The lesson activities must be interactive and learner-centred in order to provide maximum opportunities for learners to achieve the desired goal of relational understanding. In the classroom, the teacher's work is to develop structures that promote shared commitments to learning (Weimer, 2012). So much of these activities are constructed so as to make the learners remember, thereby getting relational understanding.

Finally, the teacher's role is to motivate, provide guidance, teaching and learning resources and encouragement. In teacher-centred approach learners are taken as empty vessels and the teacher acts as a fountain of all knowledge. As Schaffer (2004) posits that children's solo performance is of interest and that a child's optimum level is achieved when working jointly with a more knowledgeable person, in this case, a teacher.

2.3 Benefits teachers get from teaching learner-centred education

The benefits of learner-centred education include increased motivation for learning and greater satisfaction with work; both of these outcomes lead to greater satisfaction (Blumberg, 2008). Research shows that personal involvement, intrinsic motivation , personal commitment, confidence in one's abilities to succeed and a perception of control over learning, lead to more learning and higher achievement. As teachers teach learners using learner-centred method, they benefit a lot. First, teachers benefit the skill of organizing activities. This is an important process in managing learner-centred education. It involves implementation of what has been planned in a coordinated manner according to priorities. On the other hand, learners will benefit from learner-centred teaching in that over time and with support and instructional guidance, they can create meaningful coherent representations of knowledge (Vavrus et al., 2011). In other words, teachers who are teaching using learner-centred methods become good organisers of activities. As they work in schools, they should make sure that learners are fully involved in class and school activities.

Secondly, a teacher who uses learner-centred methods becomes a good planner (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2008). Planning involves making in advance preparations of what one intends to perform. In managing learner-centred education, one learns how to accommodate new ideas, ensures that no important points are left out and that programmes are carried out on schedule. This is demonstrated when teachers write schemes of work, fill records of work and write learner-centred lesson plans. Thirdly, teachers who teach learners using learner-centred methods acquire the skill of

coordination. When managing LCE amongst stake holders within a school, there is need for coordination among head teacher, sections heads and teachers. The teacher at times coordinates with other stake holders outside school. Similarly, in an institution two or more teachers can plan and prepare schemes of work together. This greatly, improves team work and working relationships in an institution thereby contributing to the quality of education (MoEST, 2008).

In addition, when teachers are teaching using learner-centred methods, they acquire the skill of evaluating. Evaluation is an important process in managing learner-centred education as it involves the process of assessment of learner-centred approaches and comparison of results with set targets and objectives (MoEST, 2008). This is gained through continuous assessment as well as class visits, review of schemes and records of work.

Again, when the teacher is teaching using learner-centred methods she or he acquires the skill of mentoring or coaching. This is gained when the more experienced teacher is paired with less experienced teacher in order to assist teachers who are not yet informed on learner-centred methods. As new teacher joins the school, the management makes sure that he or she is paired with the more experienced teacher to provide on job training, mentoring and job shadowing (MoEST, 2008). The study investigated how primary school teachers' 'levels of use' of learner-centred methods in classrooms and the focus was on how teachers organize classroom activities during lessons. In addition, the researcher observed how different methods were being used by teachers as well as

learners when finding out challenging questions. Most of the time, teachers, though have learnt about the use of learner-centred methods switched to traditional methods consciously or unconsciously. This was emphasised by Mtika and Gates (2010) when they postulate that despite a decade of experience some countries including Malawi, the idea of learner-centred education has not taken root in the classroom.

2.4 Meaning of Constructivism

The learner-centred education is founded from constructivist approaches that emphasise positive interaction between teachers and peers. Constructivism is a philosophy of learning founded on the premises that by reflecting on our experiences, we construct our own understanding of the world we live in (Brooks & Brooks, 1993). That is, learning occurs where there is an interaction between an individual and the environment. Constructivist teaching practices rest on the assumption that learning is an active process of constructing knowledge (Gravett, 2001).

Social constructivist approaches on which my study of primary school teachers levels of use on LCM is grounded on, stress that knowledge construction is a shared process, thus, two people must act together in order to come out with something new. As such, there is need for teachers to encourage collaborative strategies such as pair work and group work and expose learners to multiple viewpoints. Constructivist approaches recognises five tools for making this happen: scaffolding, cognitive, apprenticeship, tutoring and cooperative learning (Santrock, 2009).

2.5 Importance of constructivism

Constructivism is an epistemological view of knowledge acquisition emphasising knowledge construction rather than knowledge transmission and the recording of information conveyed by others. The role of the learner is conceived as one of building and transforming knowledge. Constructivism is important because educational curricula and teaching methods are changing. In a traditional curriculum, a teacher transmits information to students who passively listen and acquire facts whereas in a transactional curriculum students are actively involved in their learning to reach new understandings.

Again, constructivist teaching tells us that learning in all subject areas involves inventing and constructing new ideas. It suggests that constructivist theory be incorporated into the curriculum, and advocate that teachers create environments in which children can construct their own understandings. Lastly, constructivist approach is used to create learners who are autonomous, inquisitive thinkers who question, investigate, and reason. On the other hand, it frees teachers to make decisions that will enhance and enrich students' development. Slavin (2006) agrees with Gray (1997) when he argues that scaffolding, based on Vygotsky's views, calls for teacher assistance to students at critical points in their learning. This demonstrates that constructivism is evident in current educational change.

2.6 Learner-centred education worldwide

The Education for All global monitoring Report of UNESCO 2005, entitled Education for All (EFA) stated that pedagogical renewal across sub-Sahara Africa has included

many attempts to switch to learner-centred, activity-oriented methods and away from teacher-dominated instructional practices (Vavrus et al., 2011). These efforts were greatly favoured by many international agencies such as United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA). In most countries concerned whichever attempts to institutionalise child-centred education in schools have produced better results. However, in some countries including Malawi, the shift has encountered so many drawbacks due to large enrolment and inadequate financial resources.

2.7 Implementation of LCM: The Case of United States of America

Though this study has focused on primary school teachers, the researcher has included few similar studies conducted in universities and secondary schools in order to have a wide understanding on how different implementers of learner-centred methods gained experience as they were teaching learners using learner-centred teaching practices. First, the learner-centred education was adopted by many countries worldwide including United States of America (USA) where learner-centred education was adopted in responsive to the declining of performance of students in Mathematics, Science and basic literacy. The studies conducted showed that learner-centred education was adopted due to its effectiveness. It enhanced the learning experience of students in higher education (Weimer, 2002). That is why the government saw the need to revamp the education system by introducing learner-centred education. The qualitative research was to investigate the links between the new and the old methods.

The findings demonstrate that features of learner-centred teaching can be directly connected with past significant learning experiences. The connections identified between learner-centred teaching and the significant learning experiences suggest that these principles of learning have been around for a long time. However, not all applied features of learner-centred teaching were connected to past significant learning experiences. The results of this study suggest that applied principles of learner-centred teaching can be connected to past significant learning experiences (Blackebury, 2012). When introducing innovations, it's better to incorporate some ideas from the old programme. Not all elements from the old programme can be of any use.

2.8 Implementation of LCM: The Case of Europe

Other studies on learner- centred approaches were done in Germany, Poland and Czech Republic schools between 1992 and 1994 (Strokes, 2007cited in Mkweteza, 2008). In all the studies were efforts to change teacher-centred environment to become learner-centred environment. The findings of the results revealed that the same teacher-centred methods used before the changes in the reform were still in place due to negative attitudes of both teachers and learners (Strokes, 2007). In view of the above, learners' negative attitudes towards LCM were due to how teachers were presenting their classroom work.

In agreement, Mill (2009) writes that the child's attitudes are not the only ones that need scrutiny. Teachers also have attitudes that are important to the learning process. This study is similar to mine which looked at primary school teachers' levels of use on learner-centred methods. Attitudes toward the innovation may affect how people work

toward the innovation. However, the findings of the study in Korea were that learners had positive attitudes toward learner-centred methods contrary to the findings of Germany, Poland and Czech Republic where learners had negative attitudes towards learner-centred methods.

2.9 Implementation of LCM: The Case of Africa

In Africa, studies on learner-centred methods were done in countries like Lesotho, Botswana, Kenya and Tanzania. In Lesotho, like in any other country, learner-centred education was employed because it wanted to address the problem of classrooms that were dominated by teacher-centred approaches with minimal students' talk (Qhobela, 2012). The experience in many sub-Sahara African countries was that learners were not talking much during lessons. So, learner-centred education was introduced to ease this challenge. Fortunately, the findings showed the positive results in Lesotho where learners started to participate actively and their records of performance showed some improvements (Qhobela, 2012). Botswana when the programme was evaluated it was found out that the programme's achievements were limited and teachers continued to teach using teacher-centred approaches (Tabulawa, 1998 cited in Chiziwa, 2013). Unlike many African countries, Ethiopian upper primary school teachers tried to employ learner-centred methods in the classrooms despite many challenges such as lack of teaching and learning resources, large enrolment of learners and shortage of teachers which bring high teacher-pupil ratio. In similar study conducted in Kenya, despite the benefits of student centred teaching, many primary school teachers continued to use teacher-centred approaches because teachers had not been trained and had never had personal experience

on how to use these methods (Marva, 2008). In addition, teachers could not use these methods because of high teacher-pupil ratio, scarcity of teaching and learning resources. Lastly, the learners themselves, many of whom came from poor backgrounds that lacked the necessary knowledge and motivation that suited the practice of learner-centred teaching and learning had contributed to the failure of the use of the programme (Metto & Makewa, 2014:12).

2.10 Implementation of LCM: The Case of Malawi

In Malawi, similar studies on learner-centred education were done by Mizrachi, Padilla and Susuwere-Banda (2010), on active-learning pedagogy. The study explored its effort to shift to an active approach as one initiative towards education reform. Mkweteza (2008) on investigating how learner-centred approaches were being implemented using English lessons; Chiphiko 2014 on how primary school teachers implemented learner-centred approaches to instruction. The findings of these studies revealed that learner-centred education had faced a lot of challenges including negative attitudes of teachers towards learner-centred teaching. The findings of the studies were different from the findings of studies conducted in Lesotho.

In addition, teachers under the area of study had experienced inadequate teaching and learning resources, large classes just to mention a few (Chiphiko, 2014). However, the findings of the study were similar to the study done in Ethiopia. The studies above were different from my study in that it was based on the primary school teachers' levels of use of learner-centred methods. In addition to that, this study was conducted in a quite

different environment. However, in all the above studies results revealed that the policy of shifting from teacher centred approaches to learner centred approaches was just being introduced without involving the implementers, thus teachers.

2.11 Theoretical framework

The study was guided by "Levels of Use" one of the three dimensions of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) of which the researcher had used to investigate the primary school teachers' "Levels of Use" of learner-centred methods in the teaching and learning processes. The CBAM is conceptual framework that provides tools and techniques for assessing and facilitating reform in an educational environment (Bybee, 1996). It is explained to describe how individuals undergo the change process. Loucks (2003) describes diagnostic components of CBAM into three dimensions such as stages of concerns, levels of use and innovation configurations. Fuller (1969) writes that CBAM was primarily concerned with concerns which teachers had as they acquired pedagogical skills. Since then, the model has been further refined by Hall and Hord (2001) as an important tool to describe and explain concerns of implementers of educational innovations.

The major premise of CBAM is that new educational innovations are not implemented uniformly by teachers and that these teachers as they are implementers of change go through the stages of concerns (SoC), Levels of Use (LoU) and Innovation Configurations (IC) (Chiziwa, 2014). CBAM looks at change as a process not an event. That is, when site decides to adopt a modern programme, time is needed to prepare the

individuals and the organisations for new roles, responsibilities, and resource allocation. Additionally, results for the innovation may take two or more years to occur or materialise.

A diagnostic component and prescriptive component have three dimensions (Shirley, 2006). The first is “Stage of Concerns” (SoC) which deals with feelings of individuals involved in change, followed by “Levels of Use” (LoU) which describes how individuals interact with the new programme, then “Innovation Configurations” (IC) which deals with the adaptations made in the programme itself. The dimension of levels of use has the following typical behaviours: Non-Use, Orientation, Preparation, Mechanical use, Routine, Refinement, Integration, and Renewal (refer to Table1). The eight levels of use describe individuals as they gain experience (Hall & Hold, 2000) and can provide a "snapshot" of individuals within an organisation before, during, or after implementation (Loucks, 2003).

A gain, the three dimensions of CBAM can be used to examine the components of innovations, track the progress of implementation, report the findings objectively and to design interventions or strategies that will move the process forward (George, Hall & Stiegelbauser, 2006).

The CBAM was originally based on research that showed that beginning teachers went through developmental stages and expressed predictable concerns at each stage as they learned to teach (Hall & Shirley, 2006). The model was later adapted to measure

concerns teachers expressed as they learned to use new practices and the extent to which they actually implemented innovations. Today's educational systems involve numerous individuals responsible for facilitating change. These facilitators need a means of assessing the needs of the individuals with whom they work so that the most appropriate assistance can be given.

Hord (1987) stresses that change is a personal process that individuals experience differently each at his or her own pace. That is, the change process is an extremely an individualistic experience and how it is perceived by an individual will strongly influence the outcome of the innovation. Thus, when planning for programmes and organisational change, individuals who are the implementers must be put in mind. Therefore, it is important that teachers must be put in mind when MoEST plans for new programmes to be initiated in the primary schools.

Lastly, Loucks (2003) argues that though individuals change at different rates, they undergo a similar growth of pattern in terms of feelings they have about behaviour they develop as they become increasingly involved in the new programme. CBAM is based on the assumptions that when persons responsible for the implementing change are able to provide appropriate and effective support, the innovation will not fail.

2.12 Strengths of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model

CBAM pays attention to individuals and their various needs for information, assistance and moral support. When innovation has been introduced, implementers expect a lot

from it; and when it does not meet their expectations, they become depressed and frustrated. So, in this situation, individuals need encouragement through supervision and continuous professional development. In other words, there is need for giving implementers additional information about the innovation in order to help them improve on what they are doing.

CBAM gives people a set of lenses through which to view and understand the change process. For the innovation to materialise there is need for people to look at the interest, readiness and abilities of the implementers. Implementers will use the innovation in varying degrees. Some may not be thinking about using it at all; while some may be using it in a very mechanical way and some may refine it for maximum impact (Hall & Hold, 2013). Again, CBAM reminds officials to pay attention to individuals and their various needs for information, assistance and moral support. In addition, CBAM helps to change facilitators in making appropriate decisions about how to use resources and when to provide interventions to individuals to guide school improvement to a point of successful implementation (Mc Carthy, 1982). Lastly, CBAM provides the opportunity to do a more fine-grained analysis of the relationship between using and not using the innovation and its outcomes (Hall & Shirley, 2006).

2.13 Challenges of Concerns-Based Adoption Model

Like any other theory, CBAM has its own limitations when dealing with change or innovations. First, CBAM does not deal with changes which emanate from within the schools or teachers themselves (Marsh & Jordan-Marsh, 1985 cited in Chiziwa, 2014).

Secondly, CBAM does not accommodate concerns of people who have rejected to implement innovations (Kember & Merzger, 1990 cited in Chiziwa, 2014).

Table 1: Levels of Use of the innovation

Levels of Use	Behaviour indicators of Levels of Use
8. Renewal	The user is seeking more effective alternatives to the established use of the innovation.
7. Integration	The user is making deliberate efforts to coordinate with others in using the innovation.
6. Refinement	The user is making changes to increase outcomes.
4. Routine	The user is making few or no changes and has an established pattern on use.
3. Mechanical	The user is making changes to better organise use of the innovation.
2. Preparation	The user has definite plans to begin using the innovation
I. Orientation	The user is taking the initiative to learn more about the innovation.
0. Non-Use	The user has no interest, is taking no action with respect to innovation.

Adopted: SEDL, 2006 (19/01/2016)

The Levels of Use in the Table 1 were used to describe teachers as they gained experience when they were teaching using the learner-centred methods. In addition, they were used to determine the extent to which learner-centred methods were being implemented by primary school teachers in the district. These descriptions have been done in the chapter of presentation and discussion of the findings.

2.14 Implementation requirements

Any innovation needs some requirements in order to have full implementation. Advocates for CBAM give some of the implementation requirements for levels of use. First, Huberman and Candall (1982) write that innovation needs to have estimated cost in order to cater for travel and material requirements. Any innovation needs money for the facilitators and participants for travel expenses and meals. That is, financial and material support is very necessary for any innovation to be carried out successfully. Again, LoU needs training which is followed by follow ups. Indeed, there is need for checking and see what is on the ground. The constant interplay between those involved in the change must be monitored and appropriate adjustments must be made (Bybee, 1996). That is, people responsible for the change must work in adaptive and systematic way where progress needs to be monitored constantly.

In addition, LoU needs personnel who will be the implementers or facilitators of the innovation (Huberman & Candall, 1982). These people will be taking part in organisational arrangements, for proper running of the innovation which is necessary for its smooth completion or fulfilment. Those concerned with innovation must make sure that enough and qualified people are available for the change to be fully implemented.

CBAM is one of the many models that attempt to explain the change process of the teachers implementing reform. Change is a multifaceted complex process; no single model can claim to be so thorough in aiding our understanding of the change process (Chiziwa, 2014). For example, CBAM does not adequately address the impact of

contextual factors on the adoption and implementation of the innovations. Williams and Burden (1997) cited in Chiziwa (2014) argue that student' expectations, institutional beliefs, the nature of the task and characteristics of teachers are key factors in understanding classroom practice dynamics.

A number of studies on Concerns Based Adoption Model were done by (Williams, 2001; Cade, 2013; Alshmmari, 2000; Chiziwa, 2014; Julius 2007; Marva, 2008; Laura, 2013). However, the most current studies done have began to examine the adoption of the innovations. Studies done by Laura (2013) found that teachers were at similar stages of concern and LoU of response to intervention and teachers' response to intervention concerns scores remained highest in the Self phase and lowest in the Impact phase of concern at all three intervals of data collection. Again, findings of the study done by Julius (2007) indicated that the greatest concern of the majority of the first-year teachers participating in this study laid within the Stages One and Two, which were defined as the stages in which self-concern was great and little thought is spent on others or the use of technology.

Further, a study on the LoU done by Marva (2008) in Tobago on teachers' perceptions on continuous assessment revealed that the success of the innovation depended on training, administration support, parental involvement and resources. These studies were similar to this study in the sense that in these studies primary school teachers were involved in the innovations. However, the studies differed in that this study was looking

at primary school teachers unlike the other studies which were dealing with teachers at secondary or tertiary education.

Lastly, the other studies used several tools such as stages of concerns questionnaire, levels of use interview guide and innovation configuration checklist matrix. This study used levels of use questionnaire, observation form and informal interviews. The researcher could not access the levels of use branching chart. Levels of Use interview tool helps determine how well staff, both individually and collectively, is using a programme and combining it with first-hand observations, this information can help staff effectively implement a new programme. However, there is a tendency to interviews as self reporting, rather than the information being objective. Information obtained from an independent source can be assumed to be more accurate where as there is concern that interviews can be biased in their reporting.

2.15 Chapter Summary

The chapter has presented the concept of learner-centred methods, differences between learner-centred teaching and traditional teaching and benefits teachers get from teaching using learner-centred education. Secondly, the chapter has also presented concept of constructivism and its importance. Thirdly, the chapter has presented implementation of learner-centred education worldwide including Malawi. Finally, the Concerns-Based Adoption Model, the theoretical frame work which has guided this study, has been presented. The next chapter presents the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Chapter overview

The chapter presents research design methodologies that supported this study. The researcher has also presented the setting of the study and selection of respondents. Data generation methods, data generation tools, data analysis and interpretation are discussed. Further, limitations, validity and reliability of the study are elaborated. Finally, ethical principles that were followed during the study are also discussed.

3.1 Research design and methodology

Research design refers to a frame work for the collection and analysis of data (Bryman, 2008). This study used quantitative research designs as it enabled the researcher to obtain focused information and understand teachers' levels of use in the use of learner-centred methods. The design also helped the study answer the research questions, examine, interpret and confirm data. Again, the design ensured that evidences obtained would enable one to answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible (Simwa & Yangu, 2005). Quantitative research is a research that aims at measuring numbers (Gilbert, 2008). Also it is the research that involves the manipulation of numbers to make claims, provide evidence, describe phenomenon, determine relationships or determine causation. This research design deals with a logical problem and not a logistical problem.

On the same, the researcher used quantitative approach because it is considered attractive as it is perceived as objective and interpretation of responses can be presented numerically. Numbers are important to determine when hypothesis has been confirmed or not because they are precise measures and they are mutually exclusive and relative to each other. In this design, data can be measured and presented by numbers.

Again, Callan and Reed (2011) postulate that quantitative approach appears to save time as it does not involve direct researcher's participation. This approach is also more of objective than the other types of research designs. However, the method does not imply any particular form of data collection which can be quantitative. Interpretation of data is not an easy thing to do as there is no guarantee method of determining the impact of an event that has not been systematically controlled or where there is an absence of baseline information against which impact can be compared (Brewerton & Millward, 2001). In addition, phenomenologist believe that quantitative research is simply an artificial creation made by the researcher as it is asking only limited amount of information without explanations (Popper, 2004). Bryman (2008) argues that quantitative research design fails to distinguish people and social institutions from the world of nature; measurement process possesses an artificial and spurious sense of precision and accuracy; and the reliance on the instruments and procedures hinders the connection between research and everyday life. That is, quantitative design lacks real life experiences.

Nevertheless, to a lesser extent, qualitative research design was used. Qualitative research refers to exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to social or human problems (Creswell, 2009 cited in Koshy, 2010:80). The qualitative research design was used in order for the researcher to have more important information and understand teachers' experiences when they are teaching learners using LCM. The study collected experiences, opinions and views of teachers in regard to the study. Therefore, the qualitative approach was important for this study for respondents were observed and interviewed in their natural environment. In agreement to the above statement, Weis (1998) cited in Mkweteza (2008) argues that qualitative researchers tend to study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. With this research design the researcher observed 33 teachers in classroom situations. Thereafter, the researcher carried out feedback sessions with the research participants in whom teachers had given their views on how learner centred methodologies were used.

Further, the study used lesson observation method in order to have first hand information about the teachers' experiences on the use of learner-centred methods. Also the focus in the lesson observation was on finding out how often do primary school teachers use learner-centred methods in the teaching and learning process. By combining the two approaches, the researcher was able to counter act the weaknesses encountered in carrying out the study for the qualitative research stresses words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. Lastly, the study used observation checklists in order to come up with true teachers' classroom behaviours.

3.2 Role of the researcher

Simon (2011) argues that in the quantitative studies, the researcher's role is theoretically nonexistent. However, in this study, the researcher had taken the role of an observer and recorder, especially during the lesson observation. In this role, as noted by Creswell (2005), a researcher had first-hand experience with primary school teachers; the researcher recorded information as it unfolded and unusual aspects were noticed during the observation. The recorded behaviours of teachers enabled the researcher to capture significant actions and came up with descriptions of the behaviours.

3.3 Setting of the study

The study took place in Dedza district, in particular, Bembeke and Boma Zones. The zones were in the southern and central part of the district along the M1 road. In Bembeke zone, there were fourteen primary schools with 105 teachers while in Boma zone there were nine primary schools with 144 teachers. In total, there were 249 teachers. The study had targeted all the teachers in the two zones as research population, but due to factors such as absenteeism and other official responsibilities, the study had 165 respondents. For the research purposes, the researcher randomly sampled seven primary schools in Bembeke zone and five in Boma zone in order to have enough and relevant data. The two zones were conveniently sampled because they were closer to the researcher's place of residence. Cohen et al. (2000) define convenience sampling as a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher. That is, the zones were easier to reach for the study by the researcher. However, the choice of the zones did not have full representation of the

entire population of the district for in all forms of research, it would be ideal to test the entire population. The researcher preferred this sampling technique because it is fast, inexpensive, easy and the subjects are readily available.

3.4 Selection of respondents

Koshy (2010) defines a sample as a small set of cases a researcher selects from a large pool and generalises it to the population. In support, Gilbert (2008) postulates that a sample is a subset of the members of a population. In this study, the researcher used random sampling to select schools in order to deepen understanding about how teachers used learner-centred methods. In addition, random sampling was done in order to open up new theoretical insights and reveal distinctive aspects of people or social setting or deepen understanding of a complex situations, events or relationships. In support, Neuman (2011) posits that sampling is being done in order to open up new theoretical insights and reveal distinctive aspects of people or social setting or deepen understanding of a complex situations, events or relationships.

This study also used convenient sampling to select the zones as they were closer to the researcher's residence. This eased the work of the researcher as he was residing closer to the area where the research took place. All teachers in the selected schools formed the targeted participants for the study. The selection was based on the fact that they all had knowledge on learner-centred education and its learner-centred methods.

Finally, the study had used purposive sampling to select one teacher in each section for lesson observations. The sections were purposively sampled in order for the researcher to have a good picture of how primary school teachers teach learners using learner-centred methods. Again, teachers in these sections have different experiences when it comes to handling of learners due to various factors such as age and class enrolment. In support, Bryman (2008) argues that purposive sampling is a non-probability form of sampling in which the researcher does not seek to sample participants on a random basis. However, purposive sampling has a sampling bias and that the sample is not representative of the entire population and it is difficult to generalise. To minimise the biasness, the researcher had taken the position of the observer and stuck to the tools used. In addition, the researcher had used over 52% of the schools present in the two zones to make the sampling be more representative.

3.5 Data generation methods

Data was generated in the third week of the second term of the primary school calendar that is from 18th January to 27th February, 2016. This was to allow teachers get settled in their work. The researcher distributed the two questionnaires, one on the levels of use and the other on the learner-centred methods. Respondents had to tick one level they felt they belonged to at the time they were having the questionnaire. In the second questionnaire, respondents had to circle very often, often or not used against the particular method. Later in February, the researcher had lesson observations, one from infant, junior, and senior sections. The aim was for the researcher to have a good picture on how primary school teachers teach learners using learner-centred methods.

Again, alongside lesson observation, the researcher had to look at lesson plans which the respondents were using during teaching sessions. This was to find out how respondents were preparing for their work for learner-centred lessons. There were also feedback sessions where the researcher had to write some comments pertaining to the use of learner-centred methodologies.

3.6 Data generation tools

In carrying out this study, a set of data generation tools were developed: questionnaires and lesson observation checklists. They were used to find out the primary school teachers' levels of use of learner-centred approaches.

3.6.1Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from the respondents (Denzin, 2003). In addition, Simwa & Yangu (2005) argue that questionnaire is simply a tool for collecting and recording information about a particular issue of interest. The researcher used the questionnaire because they enabled him to collect background and base line information quite easily and provided information which can be followed up. In addition, the researcher used questionnaires because he wanted to capture a large sample of information needed in the study as this could contact a large number of people. In support, Popper (2004) posits that using questionnaires makes the researcher to collect a large amount of information from a large number of people in a short time and is relatively cost effective.

In addition, questionnaire has standardised answers that make it simple to complete data. However, the standardised answers may also frustrate the respondents; the construction of questionnaire is not a straight forward undertaking and requires the researcher to consider multiple influences on the potential quality of data obtained (Brewerton & Milliward, 2001). Questions are sharply limited by the fact that respondents must be able to read the questions and respond to them. In view of this, some demographic groups conducting a survey by questionnaire may not be concrete. Further, the researcher may be subjective and introduce bias in the type of questions he asks and responses to questions may be influenced by what the respondents believe you want to hear. Finally, Bryman (2008) argues that questionnaires cannot collect additional data; it's difficult to ask a lot of questions; it's not appropriate for some kinds of respondents and there is greater risk for missing data. More so, Popper (2004) argues that questionnaires make it difficult for the researcher to understand some forms of information such as changes of emotions, behaviours and feelings of the respondents.

Furthermore, a questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from the respondents. It gives evaluators a tool with which they can anchor a mixed evaluation design that looks at quantitative measures to assess the effects of interventions to promote the use of innovation (Bouchelle, 2003).

Finally, this study has used two questionnaires to answer question number one and two. The first questionnaire consists of places which indicate the name of the school, date

gender and highest qualification of the respondent. It has also columns of which has a statement which describe the eight levels of use and place where the respondents had to tick one level of use that best indicates the overall level of use of learner-centred methods. The second questionnaire consists of places which indicate the name of the school, date, gender and highest qualification of the respondent. It has also columns of which have a list of learner-centred methods. In addition, the questionnaire has a phrase or word such as very often, often and not used where respondents had to circle, 1, 2, or 3 depending on how often the method is being used (refer to Appendix 5).

3.6.2 Lesson observation checklist

One of the methods that were used in the study to collect the quantitative data was lesson observation using observation checklist (refer to Appendix 6). Observation is a way of generating data by watching behaviour, events or noting physical characteristics in the natural setting. This involves the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviours and artefacts in the social setting chosen from the study (Marsha & Rossman, 1999 cited in Mkweteza, 2008). In agreement, Creswell (2005) writes that observation is a process that relies on researcher seeing, hearing, tasting and smelling; it is also a process of gathering open-ended, first-hand information by observing activities in the research site.

What people say they believe and say they do is often contradicted by their behaviour. Given the frequency of this human inconsistency, observation can be a very powerful check against what people report about them. The researcher used this method because it is the most conveniently used method especially in studies related to behavioural sciences

(Kothari, 2004). When using this method, information is sought by way of investigator's own direct observation without asking from respondents. In support, MoEST (2006) postulates that lesson observation is the most obvious way to identify good or bad practices since it is valuable for improving the quality of teaching.

Again, the researcher used lesson observation to gather first hand information about the teachers' experiences on the use of learner-centred methods. This method had also to confirm or not on what was collected in questionnaires especially on the LCM often used by teachers in their teaching practices. As it is indicated, observation enabled the researcher to gather information that would be unavailable when using other instruments such as questionnaires. In support, Marshall and Rossman (1999) cited in Mkweteza (2008) argue that observation is used to discover complex interactions in natural setting. Lesson observation helped the researcher to collect focused information on how teachers were using classroom teaching practices in learner-centred lessons. That is, observation was employed as an alternative data collection method to complement findings collected using the questionnaires.

Though lesson observation is subjective, bias can be eliminated if observation is done correctly and information obtained under this method relates to what is currently happening and therefore it is not complicated by either the past or future intentions or attitudes (Kothari, 2004). Lesson observation enables the researcher to truly see, hear, and know exactly how teachers practice and experience learner-centred methods from actual setting (Thorp, 2001). Finally, observation permits the generation of more detailed,

holistic and context related information which would not be collected using the questionnaires (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2005). In brief, lesson observation was used to get a real picture of learner-centred practices from the participants. However, the method is expensive; information provided is limited and is prone to the "hawthorn effect," that is, people usually perform better when they know they are being observed, although indirect observation may decrease this problem.

The observation form used consisted of places which showed learning area ,class, topic, number of learners date and time when the lesson observation had taken place. It had also a place which indicated gender of the participants. Furthermore, the form had columns which have roles of the teacher and places where the respondent had to tick either on "Yes", "Partly" or "No" depending on how learner centred teaching practices have been displayed (refer to Appendix 6). Soon after the lesson observations, the researcher had feedback sessions with the participants. The researcher had asked the participants to evaluate their lessons. This was where the researcher had collected the views of the participants concerning the use of the learner-centred teaching practices.

Again, before the data generation phase, the researcher had conducted the pilot study in three primary schools to make sure that the instruments would answer the research questions. The study had used 12 of the targeted number of primary schools. This made it easier for the researcher to seek common understanding and interpretation. The study also used several instruments such as questionnaires and lesson observation checklists;

and the data was edited by cross questionnaire checks in order to improve the validity of the finding.

3.6.3 Informal Interviews

One of the methods that were used in the study to collect the qualitative data was informal interviews. Soon after lesson observation the researcher had feedback sessions with the participants on whom he wanted to find out the successes and challenges of the lessons. These sessions were helpful because they were uncontrolled and unstructured. These helped the researcher to understand how some things happened the way they did during class observations. This technique acted as a follow up to the observation technique. Informal interviews are widely used in educational research generally and in teacher research more particular with a distinct advantage for the teacher researcher working within a known culture with fellow professionals (Mkweteza, 2008). These informal conversations constituted important course of data and they were used as a way of triangulation. This is in agreement with Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2005) who stress that triangulation is the application and combination of several research methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon.

Koshy (2010) postulates that using triangulation would ensure that the quality of what is gathered is full-bodied and it is without bias. Additionally, triangulation can be useful technique where a researcher is engaged in a study in order to respond to the multiplicity of perspectives present in a social situation. Koshy (2010) also explains that the process of triangulation involves sharing and checking data with those involved. This enabled the

researcher to construct a more reliable picture. Cohen et al. (2005) suggest that credibility in a naturalistic inquiry can be addressed by triangulation of methods, sources, investigators and theories. In order to present fairly any conflicting viewpoints that might be observed, the researcher had to ask the teachers soon after the lesson observation a few questions pertaining to the use of learner-centred methodologies.

3.7 Data analysis and interpretation

Data analysis is the process of extracting, compiling and modelling raw data for purpose of obtaining constructive information that can be applied to formulate conclusions or supporting decisions in a business and science settings (Turkey, 1982). It is also a computation of certain indices or measures along with searching for patterns of relationships that exist among the data groups (Kothari, 2004). Data analysis is an important part of the research study as it would assist the researcher to make conclusions of the study. This enabled the researcher to find out main issues which came out of the data collected.

First, the researcher edited the data manually where the forms were reviewed to spot irregularities and problems that escaped notice or correction during monitoring. In agreement, Popper (2004) stresses that there is need to edit data before serious analysis as this will catch errors as soon as possible. The researcher analysed the data by descriptive statistics because they help describe raw data. Grids were prepared to gather the data provided in the questionnaires. Later, information was placed in tables in the form of frequencies and percentages which assisted the researcher to find out how many

respondents had given a particular response. This enabled the researcher to obtain usable and useful information. The analysis may: describe and summarise the data; identify relationships between variables; compare variables; identify the difference between variables and forecast outcomes.

Koshy (2010) argues that charts and diagrams are worthwhile for they make it easier for readers to understand information and break up continuous prose which can sometimes be tedious for readers trying to make sense of numerical data. Data generated was analysed in order to evaluate and enhance data quality; to describe the study population and its relationship to some presumed source; to assess potential bias such as non-response, refusal, and attrition and comparison groups; and to seek further insights into relationships observed or not observed.

As the process was ongoing, data was edited, tallied and frequencies and percentages were calculated and thereafter graphs and pie charts were constructed using Microsoft excel. During data analysis, the researcher moved to and forth making reflections, giving meanings and interpretation that were attached to the respective data with regards to teachers levels of use of learner-centred methods and their teaching practices. Though using tables and graphs is the way to display large amount of data, they are less effective in trying to show a trend over time, one particular data point cannot be effectively evaluated and too many variables may make difficult to read.

Again, diagrams, tables and checklists were also used to synthesize a holistic sense of the findings. Neuman (2011) posits that visual presentations such as diagrams and charts help organise ideas and assist in systematically investigating data. Concurring with the statement above, Kothari (2004) states that tables conserve space, reduce explanations and descriptive statements to a minimum. Further, tables facilitate the process of comparison, summation of items and detection of errors and omissions. Tables were also preferred because they convey more information in a simple form (American Psychological Association, 2010).

Finally, soon after the data collection period, the researcher started transcribing conversations from feedback sessions into written texts. This was meant to provide texts which could easily be subjected to analysis and interpretation process. This process unknowingly allowed the researcher to relieve the feedback sessions vividly recalling the verbal and non verbal responses of the participants. The transcriptions of the lesson observations helped the researcher to complement observations which the researcher had. This made him to construct character part of classroom which could then be subjected to further analysis.

3.7.1 Analysis of questionnaire

The questionnaires were distributed to primary schools which were later distributed to teachers. Soon after they were collected, data was edited manually where forms were viewed to spot irregularities and problems that escaped notice or collection during monitoring. Later grids were prepared to gather data provided in questionnaires. In the

questionnaires, data were categorised into small sets of categories. Later, proportions of the respondents answering each category of each question were calculated into tallies, frequencies, percentages and graphs.

Table 2: Questionnaire analysis framework

No	Levels of Use	Frequency
1	Non-use	
2	Orientation	
3	Preparation	
4	Mechanical	
5	Routine	
6	Refinement	
7	Integration	
8	Renewal	
Totals		

Source: SEDL (2006)

3.7.2 Analysis of lesson observations

Lessons were observed in 33 classrooms and the researcher recorded what the primary school teachers were doing using the observation checklists (refer to Table 3). The observation checklists mainly focused on the roles of a teacher in a learner-centred lesson. The roles were: providing conducive environment to learners; organising learners' activities; guiding learners on how to do activities; providing teaching and learning resources; giving more time to learners to talk than themselves; giving information input and feedback to learners in appropriate manner (refer to Table 3).

Table 3: Lesson analysis frame work

Indicators	**Percentage of learner-centred teaching practices observed (N=33)**		
	Yes	**Partly**	**No**
Ability of teacher to create a conducive learning environment, rapport, reinforcement and seating plan.			
Ability of teacher to organise learners' activities.			
Ability of teacher to guide learners on how to do activities.			
Ability of teacher to provide adequate and relevant teaching, learning and assessment resources.			
Ability of teacher to give learners more time to talk than himself/herself.			
Ability of teacher to give information input.			
Ability of teacher to give a feedback to learners in appropriate manner.			
Overall average percentage			

Source: MoEST (2012)

3.7.3 Analysis of feedback sessions

The feedback sessions were analysed by thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) stress that thematic analysis is a method for identifying and reporting patterns which are within data. The researcher familiarised with the data, generated initial codes, searched

for themes and later reviewed them. Again, the researcher defined and named the themes. Thereafter, the researcher came up with the data extracts which assisted him to make the arguments to the research questions. In other words, thematic analysis involves the searching across a data set to find repeated patterns of meaning. This is a flexible and useful research tool which can potentially provide a rich and detailed yet complex account of data. However, thematic analysis makes developing specific guidelines for higher phase analysis difficult (Braun et al., 2006, p. 27).

3.8 Limitations of the study

The study had focused on the primary school teachers levels of use on learner-centred methods. However, the study has the following limitations: a sample of primary school teachers selected was limited to two zones. The other zones which were not included in the study might have had different approaches to teaching and learning using learner-centred methods; the study lacked branching chart for finding the levels of use of primary school teachers on learner-centred methods. This would have supplemented the findings of other instruments used in the study. Finally, the researcher did not have second lesson observations. This could have given the researcher more information on teaching practices done by primary school teachers in learner-centred methods.

3.9 Validity and reliability

The research findings and claims to knowledge will be more powerful if you validate them (Koshy, 2010). In view of the citation above, the findings of the study were valid because the researcher during lesson observation phase took the position of royal observer. A royal observer simply watches and studies particular events and then

considers being an expert (Hornby, 2000). The researcher also used several instruments: questionnaires, lesson observations and informal interviews to triangulate the data. These assisted the researcher to get more and relevant data pertaining to the study. In addition, the researcher focused on the research questions during the development of data collection tools, collection of data, data analysis and interpretation. Further, the researcher made sure that the respondents took part in the research whole heartedly, that is without being forced.

"Reliability is described as consistency or stability of a measure and consideration of whether if the measure is repeated one would obtain the same results" (Koshy, 2010:98). The researcher ensured that the study is reliable by having a pilot study in three primary schools before the actual study. This enabled the researcher to identify errors or challenges when using the instruments. In addition, the pilot study assisted the researcher to check whether the instruments were really answering the research questions. Secondly, the researcher had refined and standardised the items on the questionnaires so that the questions were unambiguous and clear to the respondents. This focussed on minimising measurement errors when questions were being answered. However, Cohen et al. (2005) argue that reliability in observations can be addressed in stability of observations. That is, whether the researcher would have made the same observations and interpretations of these if they had been observed at different time or place. The researcher in this study had one observation on each participant.

3.10 Ethical considerations

It is unethical for researchers to reveal the content found during research study. It is therefore important for the researchers to make sure that participants are treated according to the ethical standards. In agreement, Escobedo, Guerrer, Lujan, Ramirez and Serrano (2007*)* stress that all those who are participating in an experiment are required to give voluntary consent free of undue influence such as coercion, threat, or deceit. Like in any method of research, the research respondents may feel under intense scrutiny if they know that they are being researched. To minimise that scenario, the researcher gave letters of consent to the respondents in which the issue of confidentiality has been well explained (refer to Appendix 3).

3.10.1Access negotiation

Ethical issues were considered in the study since the researcher was working with people. Before the beginning of the study, the researcher went to the District Education Manager's office to give an introductory letter which he obtained from Chancellor College (refer to Appendix 1). The researcher collected the approval letter from the District Education Manager's (DEM) office to allow him to do the study in the primary schools (refer to Appendix 2).This letter was photocopied and was distributed to the Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) of the two zones and head teachers of the primary schools so that the researcher is accepted to carry out the study in the schools using teachers as research participants.

3.10.2 Informed consent

Informed consent is a vital step to any research project and is a key principle in social research ethics (Bryman, 2008). Concurring, Bulger (2002) argues that informed consent is a process in which participant consents to participate in a research project after being informed of its procedures, risks, and benefits. In view of the above citation, participants in any study should give consent only when they have been told about the aim of the study. In this study, the participants were not obliged to take part and were asked to withdraw from the study at any time (refer to Appendix 3).

3.10.3 The right to withdraw from the study

In research, respondents should have legal capacity to have an agreement of taking part in the activity without being forced. Horman (1991) postulates that voluntary consent of the human subject is absolutely essential. In view of the above statements, the respondents were given letters of consent to read before answering the questionnaires. After they had read the letters, the respondents signed to show that they had agreed to take part in the research as the fundamental ethical principle narrates that never coerce anyone into participation. Therefore, letters of consent clearly explained that the respondents had the right to withdraw (refer to Appendix 3).

3.10.4 Anonymity

The core of anonymity in research is that information provided by participants shall in no any way reveal their identities. In this study, participants were assured of anonymity. Corden and Sainsbury (2006) stress that anonymity through the use of pseudonyms is still

the norm. In view of the citation above, schools and participants were identified using codes such as Schoo1 A and Teacher 9. This encouraged them to freely share their experiences in the use of learner-centred methods in their respective primary schools.

3.10.5 Confidentiality

Wiersma and Jurs (2005) argue that confidentiality is not disclosing the identity of the participants or indicating from whom the data were obtained. In this study, confidentiality of the identity of the participants was taken into account. The researcher protected the respondents from increased risk of arrest and injury by: no names were written on the questionnaires and schools were given numbers from School 1 to School 12; the respondents were assured that the information obtained from them would not be disclosed to the public.

3.10.6 Potential benefit to participants

This study was helpful to the participants for it contributed to the professional development of the teachers in the sense that it allowed them to reflect on their teaching practices in view of the use of learner-centred methods. Creswell (2012) argues that in research, individuals needed to make every effort to know how the results would be used and likely social consequences the study would have been on their lives. This type of reflection is a critical element in the professional growth of teachers. In this study, before the start of activities, the respondents were informed of the practical significance of the research.

3.11 Chapter Summary

The chapter presented the rationale for the use of quantitative and qualitative research designs that supported this study. This enabled the researcher to obtain focused information and understanding of teachers' LoU in the use of learner-centred methods. The chapter has also presented the setting of the study and selection of respondents. Various data generation methods and data generation tools were also discussed. Later data analysis and interpretation were also presented. Further, validity and reliability of the study were also elaborated. Finally, the fact that the study was dealing with people, ethical principles that were followed were also discussed at length. The next chapter presents the discussion of the findings.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.0 Chapter overview

The purpose of the study was to investigate the primary school teachers "Levels of Use" of learner-centred methods. Results are presented and discussed according to eight levels: Non-Use, Orientation, Preparation, Mechanical use, Routine, Refinement, Integration, and Renewal as articulated in the Concerns Based Adoption Model. The results are based on the questionnaire responses, lesson observations and informal interviews which were conducted during the data generation period. The chapter concludes with chapter summary.

4.1 Characteristics of the respondents

This study had involved 165 primary school teachers with varied academic qualifications, teaching experiences and training status with learner-centred methods.

4.1.1Number of respondents by gender

The study had involved both male and female teachers (refer to Table 4).

Table 4: Demographic data of the respondents by gender

	GENDER		
	Male	**Female**	**Total**
Number	62	103	165
%	38	62	100
Position	All respondents were primary school teachers.		

Source: Researcher's data analysis (25/02/16)

The findings revealed that 62% of the respondents were females while 38% were males. This informs the researcher that in the two zones, there are many female teachers than male teachers. The findings also showed that there were more female teachers in Boma zone which is semi-urban/ town than in Bembeke zone which is rural area. For example, at School 8 there was only one male respondent against 24 female respondents. The studies done by Mkweteza, (2008) and Chiphiko (2014) agree to this finding. One of the findings was unequal distribution of female teachers which favoured the urban schools. This means that in the remote areas there is less number of female teachers. That means female learners have very few role models in the primary schools which brings negative effects on the education of girl child.

Table 5: Demographic data of the respondents by academic qualification

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION					
	DIP	**MSCE**	**JCE**	**N/A**	**TOTAL**
Number	3	133	12	17	165
%	2	81	7	10	100
Position	All respondents were primary school teachers.				

Source: Researcher's data analysis (25/02/16)

Currently, Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) is the standard qualification of the primary school teachers in Malawi. However, in the past the Junior Certificate Education (JCE) candidates had been recruited. With the high number of MSCE holders (133), the researcher had an expectation of observing very good lessons during the observation phase. As Haberman and Candall, (1982) write that those concerned with innovations must make sure that they are well qualified people so that the change will be fully and well implemented. The Table 5 also informs that only 3 of the respondents had diploma certificates.

4.1.2 Length of involvement with learner-centred methods

In this study, the findings showed that 96% of the respondents had been involved in learner-centred methods. The generated data revealed that 7 had never been involved with LCM, 24 were in first year of use of LCM, 27 were in second year of use of LCM, 22 were in third year of use, 30 were in fourth year of use of LCM and 52 were five or more years in the involvement with LCM (refer to Figure 1).

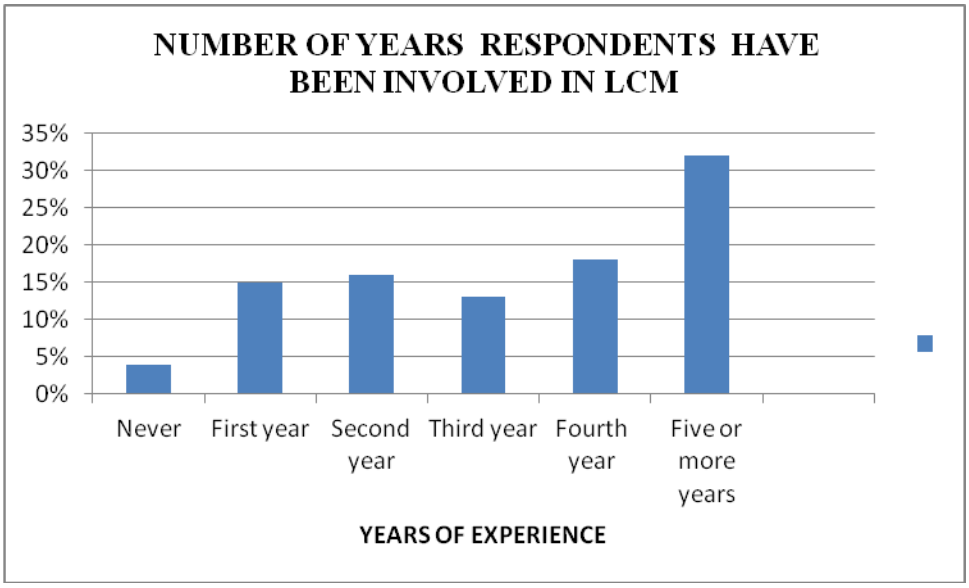

Figure 1: Number of years respondents have been involved in LCM

Source: Researcher's data analysis (05/03/16)

Figure1 discloses that 96% of the primary school teachers have been involved with learner-centred methods and 4% have never been involved. This representation indicates that many primary school teachers should have had a wide range of teaching experience on the use of learner-centred methods.

4.1.3Training status of the respondents

The findings revealed that 115 (70%) of the respondents had received formal training on learner-centred methods. On the other hand, the responses also revealed that 50 (30%) of the respondents had never received any formal training on learner-centred methods. The MoEST could not afford to give training to each and every teacher who was already in the system during the time of introduction of the LCM due to inadequate funds available (Schweinfurt, 2011). In addition, time between introduction and implementation was too

short. However, some could have had received training through continuous professional development (CPD) at school level during the implementation phase. Confirming to this, MoEST (2008) argues that the implementation of learner-centred methods was facing a lot of challenges including financial resources. The Table 6 gives a summary of the training status of the respondents.

Table 6: Training status of the respondents on learner-centred methods

	Number of respondents	**Percentage (%)**
Those involved in LCM workshops	115	70
Those **not** involved in LCM workshops	50	30
Total	**165**	**100.00**

Source: Researcher's data analysis (29/02/16)

The findings show the various experiences primary teachers had on the use of learner-centred methods. The experiences were: Non user, novice, intermediate, old hand and past user. The pie chart below presents the experiences teachers had in the use of LCM. 3% represents non users of LCM, 21% represents novices, 47% represents intermediate, 24% represents old hand and 5% represents past users (refer to Figure 2).

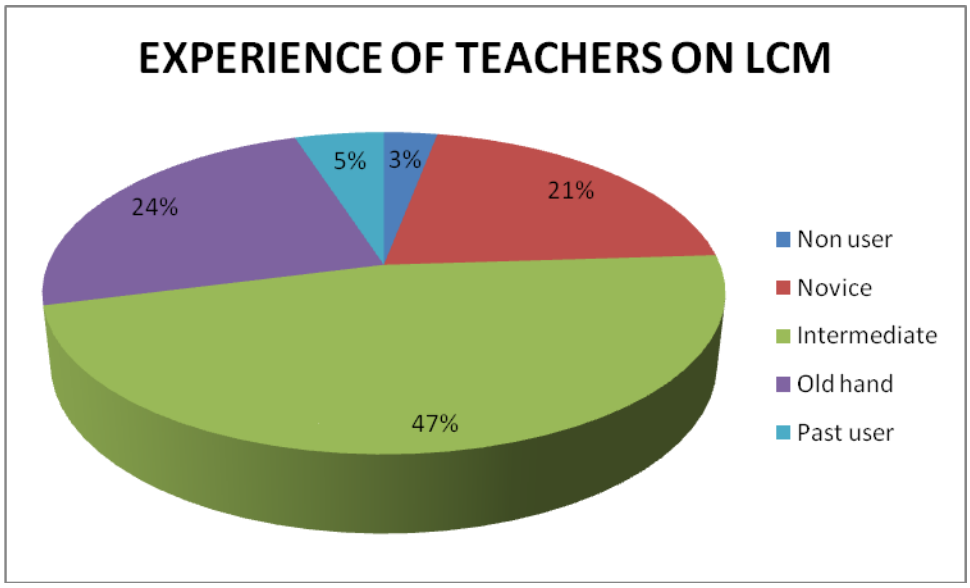

Figure 2: Experience of teachers on LCM

Source: Researcher's data analysis (15/04/16)

4.1.4 Involvement of respondents on major teaching programmes

The findings show that 34% were on major teaching programme: Supporting Early Grade Reading in Malawi (SEGREM) and 66% were not. SEGREM is the teaching program which involves teachers who are currently teaching in standards 1, 2 and 3. This aims at improving reading skills among learners in the above mentioned classes.

4.2 Primary school teachers' Levels of Use of learner-centred methods

This section discusses the levels of use of learner-centred methods. The responses were tallied and frequencies and percentages were calculated (refer to Table 7).

Table 7: Levels of Use" of learner-centred methods

No	Levels of Use	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Non-use	11	8
2	**Orientation**	**6**	**5**
3	Preparation	18	13
4	Mechanical	31	23
5	**Routine**	**37**	**28**
6	Refinement	7	5
7	Integration	11	8
8	Renewal	14	10
Totals		**135**	**100.00**

Source: Researcher's data analysis (20/03/16)

4.2.1 Non use level of use

The study has found out that 11 out of 135 primary school teachers were at Non use level of use of learner-centred methods. In this level, the user has little or no knowledge of the innovation, no involvement with the innovation, and is doing nothing towards becoming involved. During lesson observation, the researcher found out that 33 teachers used methods such as question and answer, demonstration and group work. This indicates that some teachers had little or no knowledge on the use of LCM. As the traditional methods have been used for a long time, even the newly qualified teachers just do what other older teachers are doing. Again, in the study, it was revealed that 92% of the teachers often use question and answer, 67% use demonstration and 80% use group work.

Even though group work which is considered as learner-centred method was used, many of these teachers did not follow the right procedure for the use of LCM. Tabulawa (2013) stresses that those who try to use learner-centred methods do so without following proper procedures and techniques for conducting them.

In support, Mizrachi et al. (2010) posit that when teachers returned to school, they found it difficult to use the strategies and techniques they learnt at the workshops. That is, teachers used group work for the sake of using it and not to make learners benefit from it. In some cases, learners had more time on one activity in order to let time pass as there was very little work prepared for the lesson (refer to Appendix 7). Further, a teacher at School C said:

> "The problem with learner-centred teaching was that it was introduced when I was already in the system and am used to teacher-centred methods*". Ndiye mbatata ikapindika siongoka*. (When the potato is bent it cannot be straightened) **(Interview – Teacher 9 – School C – 12 /02/16).**

The excerpt above reveals that old teachers who are used to traditional teaching are finding it hard to teach using learner-centred methods though LCM have been in the system for almost ten years. Confirming to this, the study has found that 3% of the primary school teachers were non users of the LCM and 24% were past users.

In the similar study done by Hall, Dirksen and George (2013) on dance curriculum, in United States of America found out that 58% of the teachers were non users on the innovation. In a study conducted in Kenya, despite the benefits of student centred

teaching, many teachers continue to use teacher-centred teaching approaches because teachers had not been trained and had never had personal experience on how to use learner-centred methods. In a similar study conducted in sub-Sahara Africa by Vavrus, Thomas, & Bartlett, (2011) revealed that in Tanzania, though learner-centred approaches were the best according to the Ministry of Education and Culture, this did not mean that Tanzanian teachers were prepared to implement this.

Brown and Rogers (2014) confirm that when innovation has been introduced implementers expected a lot from it; and when it doesn't meet their expectations, they become depressed and frustrated. The researcher says that teachers who were in this situation, needed encouragement through supervision and CPD. Though it's not practical to orient each and every teacher due to various factors such as money, still there was need to give teachers more knowledge about the LCM in order to help them improve on how to use them in the classroom situation.

4.2.2 Orientation level of use

The study also found out that 6 out of 135 primary school teachers were at Orientation level of use of learner-centred methods. In this level the user is taking the initiative to learn more about the innovation, and teachers in this level may be eager to learn more about the learner-centred methods but they consider using them later in future. During the observation phase the study found out that teachers at School 4, School 6 and School 10 had used relevant teaching, learning and assessment resources. Teachers also gave ample time to learners to work on their activities and later revised the activities within the

lessons while involving the learners. The teachers used locally available resources such as reeds, stones and learners themselves.

The above mentioned teachers showed some interest in demonstrating some learner-centred teaching practices. However, the lessons were somehow superficial because the head teacher at School 4 had said:

> "When you want to observe lessons, please try to inform us some days before so that teachers can get prepared for the lessons**" (Interview – Head teacher – School D – 22/02/16).**

The quote above shows that the head teacher wanted to be informed in advance because he wanted teachers to get prepared for the class. In most cases, the researcher is taken to the best teachers so that he or she gets a good picture of what he or she wanted to get. This meant that in normal situation teachers do not use LCM in the teaching and learning processes. On this day, all the 3 teachers used LCM for the sake of convincing the researcher and teachers had teaching and learning resources just because they were prepared for the lessons. They wanted to convince the researcher that learner-centred methods are used by teachers in their teaching and learning processes.

In support, Cohen et al. (2005) argue that many research participants may be prone to the 'hawthorn effect'. That is, people usually perform better when they know that they are being observed. Teachers in learner-centred lessons are encouraged to be creative and resourceful. In agreement, MoEST (2008) posits that in order to be successful, outcome based education relies upon the school to have and make use of a wide variety of resources which are locally available. These teachers might be getting used to the use of

LCM. Hall and Hold (2011) argue that in CBAM, a theory which has guided this study, professional development is not a one-time event but is instead ongoing and is immersed in a support group of others who help and learn from each other. The researcher explains that teachers indeed need to continuously learn from one another if they want to benefit from the use of LCM.

Finally, the study also found out that 63 % of participants in lesson observation were teachers who were in first years of use of learner-centred methods. In view of the above statement, these teachers being newly qualified were intrinsically motivated. Being teachers who were in their first year of use of LCM, they had feelings of satisfaction when they were observed by the researcher from higher institution. Confirming to the above statement, Blumberg (2008) states that benefits of learner-centred education includes increased motivation for learning and greater satisfaction with work. In view of the above, the researcher argues that there is need for Ministry of Education officials to really follow the progress of the use of learner-centred methods in primary schools for its sustainability. Teachers need encouragement from Ministry officials in order to work effectively.

4.2.3 Preparation level of use

Further, the study found out that 18 out of 135 primary school teachers were at Preparation level of use of LCM. In this situation, the user is preparing for first use of the innovation. During lesson observation, the researcher found out that there were teachers who deliberately prepared very little work for the lessons and many lessons ended before

time. These teachers did not want to be seriously involved in the teaching using LCM though they have knowledge through workshops or training period at college and did not want to use it. A teacher at School H before the lesson said:

> *Kodi mukatiyendera malipoti adzapita kuti? Ndimayesa kuti zijapita kwa DEM.* After observation where do the reports go? I thought that they will go to DEM's office **(Interview – Teacher 23 – School H – 17/02/16).**

The quotation above indicates that the teacher is afraid of the education officials. Despite being informed of the purpose of the research study, the teacher was not willing to take part in the lesson observation for fear of being reported to the DEMs office. There are a lot of teachers who are afraid of being supervised. They do not want their weaknesses to be revealed to the higher authority or to the public. That is, they do not want to be painted black by administration. This could also mean that teachers were not concerned with the success of the learners though they have knowledge on the use of LCM. Further, these teachers never aim high and are satisfied with the present level of their working conditions.

The results of the findings were contrary to the study done in North Carolina by Williams (2001) on stages of concerns of primary school teachers which indicated that teachers were concerned about the success of students in the classrooms. Teachers with less experience had higher informational concerns than their peers with more teaching experience. Becoming skilled in using an innovation requires a great deal of learning (Hall & Hold, 2013). Teachers at Preparation level of use of the LCM have the potential to teach but they lack confidence.

Also, Hall and Hold (2006) postulate that the sequence of LoU is logical, but there is no guarantee that an individual will move through all levels in a lock-step development fashion. In view of the citation above, there is need for the school leadership to encourage teachers in the use of LCM and direct intensive follow-ups should be designed to address barriers seemed not to support in innovation. Many head teachers do not supervise teachers in the classrooms. Finally, the researcher argues that there is need for checking on how teachers are using the new programmes in order to see what is on the ground and make sure that interplay between those involved in the change must be monitored and appropriate adjustments must be made.

4.2.4 Mechanical level of use

The study also found out that 31 out of 135 primary school teachers were at mechanical level of use. The user focuses most effort on the short-term, day-to-day use of the innovation with little time for reflection (Brown & Rogers, 2014). Changes in use are made more to meet user needs than client needs. The user is primarily engaged in a stepwise attempt to master the tasks required to use the innovation, often resulting in disjointed or superficial use. During the observation period, the researcher observed that teachers at School 12 and School 8 were not teaching lessons which they prepared to teach; instead they chose to teach the lessons taught in the previous day. This was to make sure that learners were seen participating during the lessons. The teachers were not fully prepared for that day's lessons. Probably, the teachers were afraid of showing their weaknesses in their teaching as they were teaching without getting prepared.

The study has also disclosed that some primary school teachers in their teaching practices do not think of the learners but for themselves. For example, the study found out that 6% of the primary school teachers were not able to give learners more time to talk than themselves. Teachers do not consider learners as they teach. For them, they just wanted to cover the syllabus and not want to teach the required content. On the same, during the feedback session, one teacher said:

> *"Kungoti anawa chizungu chimawavuta. Ndiye lesoni singayende bwino. Komabe ndimayesetsa kuti dziwaphunzitsa mchizungu.* However, I will try hard to be using English in each and every lesson **(Interview– Teacher 32 – School L – 16/02/16).**

In the extract above, the Teacher 32 is very much concerned on how she interacts with learners when using English. It seems that many learners have a problem with English language. She feels that with that situation it's not easy to have a good lesson. However, she tries had to teach using English in each and every lesson.

The teacher above was just trying to put blame on learners for failing to have a good interaction in the classroom as they failed to respond in English. In many cases, teachers try to blame either learners or leadership of the school when they are reflecting on their lessons. The researcher assumes that the problem was not the learners but many teachers are also not conversant with English, as it is their second language. So, they also find it difficult to use English as the mode of communication. Instead of accepting their weaknesses, they are blaming learners. However, some teachers try had to use English as the mode of communication during lessons.

Again, it was observed that many teachers prepared very little work which resulted into finishing the lesson within few minutes. On the same, the researcher also observed that a good number of teachers taught in a hurry without considering whether learners understood the work or not. On the other hand, Jones (2005) defined learner-centred classroom as a place where the needs of the learners are considered and learners are encouraged to participate in the learning process at all times.

On the same, Slavin (2006) stresses that meaningful learning requires the active involvement of the learner who has a host prior of experiences and knowledge to bring to understanding and incorporating new information. Nevertheless, at times teachers teach in a hurry without following learner-centred approaches due to national examinations. For example, standard eight examinations which are set to begin in the middle of third term, forces teachers teach using teacher centred approaches of which do not need much time.

Finally, in a similar study, made in United States of America by Weimer (2002), results indicated that learner-centred teaching did not work as teachers were fixated by the importance of examinations. CBAM, a theory which has guided the study, states that implementers will use the innovation in varying degrees. Some may not be thinking about using it at all while others may be using it in a very mechanical way and some may refine it for maximum impact. Though teachers are to vary in the teaching using learner-centred methods, there is need for school leadership to see to it that all teachers in a school are putting all their effort in using LCM for the benefit of the child. However, the researcher

suggests that the introduction of usage of English as the mode of communication should start right away from standard one so that learners get used to speaking English.

4.2.5 Routine level of use

The study has found out that 37 out 135 primary school teachers in the area of study were on routine level of use. On this level, the use of the innovation is stabilised. Few if any changes are being made in ongoing use. Little preparation or thought is being given to improving innovation on use or its consequences. Teachers at this level have stopped looking on how they can use LCM for the better. During lesson observation, it was observed that teachers at School 6 and School 8 were teaching using teachers guides. Teachers did not want to prepare work according to the needs and level of learners; they did not want to change anything from the teachers' guides. That is, they just followed steps which were written in these teachers' guides. This made her not break the topics into teachable units. As a result, learners will not understand the concepts taught easily. When one teacher was asked, why did she use a teacher's guide? She answered:

> "I did not write a lesson plan because I was busy, sir". Most of the time, I'm busy marking learners' work **(Interview – Teacher 16 – School F - 08/02/16).**

In the quotation above, teacher 16 tries to give reasons for not writing lesson plans. Many teachers do not write lesson plans due to negligence of duty. They are not committed to their work. However, due to large classes and number of subjects taught per day (six to eight lessons) it's not easy for a teacher to write all the lesson plans. In most of the time not all subjects are taught in each day. So, teachers find it unnecessary to

write all the lesson plans. This is contrary to the demands of outcome based education which needs full preparation of the work to be taught. Nancy (2003) states that learner-centred teaching makes learning and educational process more flexible in order for learners to participate as much as possible. In view of this, teachers were supposed to prepare work to suit the ability of their learners and not just coping work from the teachers' guides.

In the same study, it was disclosed that 63% of the participants were teaching without lesson plans. However, some teachers had written sketchy lesson plans (refer to Appendix 7). Lesson planning could assist the teacher to make necessary changes on the lesson presentation. Using a teacher's guide means the teacher did not want to change her approach to the topic. In support, MoEST (2008) argues that lesson planning encourages the teacher to teach in a logical order. It is also a creative process that allows teachers to synthesise our understanding of teaching methods with the knowledge of our learners, the curriculum, and the teaching context. Jensen (2001) argues that lesson planning produces more unified lessons; gives teachers the opportunity to think deliberately about their choice of lesson objectives, the types of activities that will meet these objectives, the sequence of those activities, the materials needed and how much time each activity will take.

In CBAM, Hall, Marijin, Mette and Walsh (2014) argue that the eight levels of use describe how individuals change as they gain experience. Teachers at routine level did not want to improve on the use of LCM though they had worked for some time using

LCM. As teachers teach they are supposed to gain new experiences as experience makes the best teacher. McKinnon & Nolan (1989) disagree with the findings of this study when they write that 75% or more of the persons doing the changed practices must be at routine level of use or higher for that change to have sustained impact. The study has revealed that only 28% of the teachers were at routine level of use. Therefore, it is necessary for many teachers to be at routine or above in order for the teaching using LCM to be effective. The researcher suggests that for the teachers to be at higher levels than routine level there is need for the MoEST to find ways of making these teachers go for other courses related to teaching.

4.2.6 Refinement level of use

The study also found out that 7 out 135 primary school teachers were at Refinement level of use of the learner-centred methods. The user varies the use of the innovation to increase the impact on learners within immediate sphere of influence. Variations are based on knowledge of both short-and long-term consequences for learners. In the lesson observation, it was observed that teachers at School 4 and School 10 had very good lessons which were taught in English throughout; learners were involved using group work and discussion methods, and more time was given to each activity for the learners to practice the skills.

In view of the above, the teacher wanted to make learners benefit from what they prepared to teach. As in refinement level of use, the user makes changes to increase the outcomes as the teachers in the above mentioned schools followed the demands of OBE.

Falkenberg (2002) stresses that Levels of Use and creativity served to better differentiate the teachers' skills. That is, teachers who are active and resourceful will meet the outcome of the new programme. There is need for giving implementers additional information about the innovation in order to help them improve on what they are doing. The training mode needs to train teachers who are creative and resourceful. The Ministry of Education officials needed to plan a lot in terms of training, personnel and infrastructure before the implementation phase of LCM.

The study was contrary to the study done by Laura (2013) in that it addressed the problem of implementing responses to intervention and the findings indicated that teachers were at similar stages of concern and levels of use of responses to intervention. Therefore, the researcher argues that for the learner-centred teaching to have a lasting impact there was need for the implementers to be looking for more knowledge and ways of doing it in the classroom situation.

CBAM, a theory which has guided the study, suggests that when persons responsible for the implementing change are able to provide appropriate and effective support, the innovation will not fail. Teachers need to become more and more knowledgeable about LCM for its sustainability. The researcher suggests that for LCM to be sustainable in the primary schools there is a great need for teachers to be sent for refresher courses for professional growth.

4.2.7 Integration level of use

The study found out that 11 out of 135 primary school teachers were at integration level of use. In this level, the user is combining her / his own efforts to use the innovation with related activities of colleagues to achieve a collective impact on learners within their common sphere of influence. During the feedback session, a teacher at School I reported:

> "Though I have never been officially oriented on the use of LCM, I enjoy teaching learners using LCM". "Learner centred teaching is the best way of teaching learners, even in large classes**." (Interview–Teacher 27 – School I - 19/02/16).**

The passage above illustrates the worries the teacher has on the use of LCM. Though she has never been oriented on use of LCM, she is able to teach using it. Some teachers took initiative to learn and practice the teaching using LCM on their own and of course, through the use of teachers' guides. However, training in any new programme is necessary. In support, Hall et al. (2013) states that the training component of an innovation provides knowledge base, opportunities for acquisition of new skills and feed back for the intended innovation. As it is indicated, some teachers in this study did not want to take the initiate to learn on their own. However, for teachers to teach using LCM effectively, they needed some kind of official orientation from the experts.

In support, Hall et al. (2013) in their study of early childhood Mathematics curriculum found out that 60% of the teachers who had not been using the innovation had become users, after an official training. This indeed shows the importance of official training on the innovation. Similarly, one of the findings of my study was that 30% of the teachers

have not received any formal training on LCM. Many of these teachers had to work on their own or through assistance from friends to increase their knowledge on the use of LCM. Still more, a head teacher at School 12 had asked the researcher to come and give a CPD to teachers on some of the learner-centred methods. In CBAM, a theory which is supporting my study, personal involvement, intrinsic motivation , personal commitment, confidence in one's abilities to succeed and a perception of control over learning, lead to more learning and higher achievement. The researcher suggests that teachers need to be encouraged to learn on their own or through study circles in order to increase their knowledge on the use of LCM for the benefit of the learner.

4.2.8 Renewal level of use

Finally, the study found out 14 out of 135 primary school teachers were at Renewal level of use on LCM. At this level of use, user re-evaluate the quality of use of the innovation, seeks major modifications of alternatives to the present innovation to achieve increased impact on learners, examines new development in the field, and explores new goals for her/him and the system. During lesson observation, teachers evaluated their lessons. A teacher at School F when asked to evaluate her lesson said:

> My lesson was good, learners had participated very well. However, the lesson lacked enough text books; time was not enough to cover all the activities; and there is need to improve on the mode of communication using English. You know these learners are coming from standard four. **(Interview – Teacher 18 – School F – 08/02/16).**

The verbatim above confirms that in many primary schools, there is great shortage of teaching and learning resources including text books. Teachers really want to improve on the use of LCM; however, the only challenge is that they lack teaching resources. For

example, in some schools, one text book belongs to 20 learners. Again, the verbatim reveals that the use of Chichewa in lower classes makes it difficult for both teachers and learners to interact in upper classes as the mode of communication is English. Instead, teachers teach lessons using Chichewa so that learners understand the concepts easily.

Further, the quote reveals that many teachers do not say the truth on how they perform during lessons. This will not encourage them to work hard. In support, Brooks and Brooks (1993) argue that reflecting on our experiences; we construct our own understanding of the world we live in. This makes us improve for the better on our day to day activities. The researcher suggests that teachers need to self-evaluate their lessons truthfully in order to have better lessons in future. Teachers also needed to prepare enough and have relevant resources for the learners to interact with.

This study is similar to the study done by Hopkins (1988) on curriculum. Its finding was that variance in curriculum utilisation could be accounted for by the prevailing school climate and the nature of the individual teacher. Not all teachers do evaluate their lessons after they have taught. They do not mind on the successes and failures of the lessons. CBAM, the theory which has guided the study stresses that change process is an extremely personal experience and how it is perceived by the individual, will strongly influence the outcome. Individual differences play a great part in the use of LCM in primary school teachers. However, a supportive, non punitive environment with no pressure on teachers to become users of LCM would promote teacher use of LCM.

Hall et al. (2006) argue that some may not be thinking about using it at all; while some may be using it in a very mechanical way and some may refine it for maximum impact. It is therefore important that teachers should be encouraged to be evaluating their lessons so that they see the way forward for further improvements of their work. The researcher also suggests that there should be a mechanism of making teachers become resourceful and creative in order to make lessons attractive to learners.

Finally, the findings reveal that primary school teachers in Bembeke and Boma zones are at different LoU ranging from non use to renewal level of use. However, the majority of them are at routine level of Levels of Use of learner-centred methods (refer to Table 8).

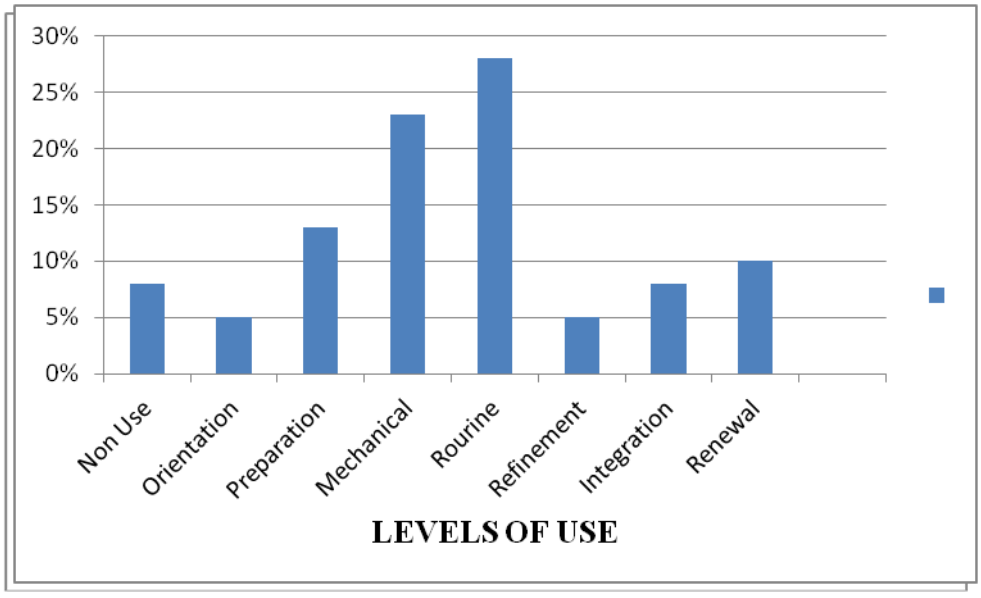

Figure 3: Levels of use of teachers on LCM

Source: Researcher's data analysis (20/04/16)

4.3 Comparing male and female teachers on levels of use of learner-centred methods

The study had used 62 male teachers and 103 female teachers. Looking at this large number of female teachers, the researcher found it interesting to find out the levels of use of male and female teachers of learner-centred methods. To begin with, the study found that there were many female teachers than male teachers on routine level of use. Questionnaire analysis revealed that 31% of the female respondents were on routine level of use while 21% was for the male respondents.

In addition, the researcher observed that half of the lessons conducted by female teachers ended before time; more time could be spent on one activity; many lessons were taught without lesson plans. This showed that they were not preparing for the lessons. Possibly female teachers had negative attitudes toward LCM as it is too involving; they were busy with family affairs so that they had little time for preparation of the work. The Malawi Institute of Education, (2008) posits that a lesson plan acts as a guide throughout lesson presentation. As the use of LCM is too involving, female teachers could probably have negative attitudes towards them. Hall et al. (2013) and Vavrus et al. (2011) argue that teachers as facilitators need to provide materials and self-learning activities to create problem solving opportunities for the learners to support their knowledge process. This confirms that in learner-centred teaching teachers really need to be involved in terms of preparation for content, resources and procedure. At School K, female teacher said:

> *"*Learner-centred methods are best fit in the upper classes, *chifukwa ana ang'onoang'ono sangakambirane zakupsya. Kuonjezera apo ana ambiri amangotaya nthawi ndi kusewera. Ndiye sangaphunzire chilichonse."* **(Interview – Teacher 33 – School K - 09/02/16).**

Considering what is said in the quotation above, the teacher claimed that learner-centred methods are workable in the upper classes for the younger ones cannot discuss sensible things. On the same, young ones just waste time playing, so that they cannot learn anything from the discussions. Some teachers think that learners in lower classes cannot discuss concepts on their own because of their lower thinking capacity. They forget that different learners learn at different pace according to their learning abilities. The truth of the matter is that learners in all the sections are able to organise themselves; however, the level of the discussion will differ depending on the level of their thinking capacity. Therefore, in all the three sections workability of the LCM will depend on the approach the teacher takes during the teaching process.

Similarly, the study done by Ramoutar-Bhawan (2013) revealed that female teachers had more logistics, time, and management concerns than did male teachers. However, my study is contrary to the study done by Cade (2013) whose findings were that female teachers had higher impact concerns about learners because they had positive attitudes towards teaching. Contrary, Hopkins (1996) in Botswana found out that LCE had faced a lot of challenges including negative attitudes of teachers towards it. Teachers working under these conditions normally develop negative attitudes toward teaching profession and get frustrated until reaching the point of seeking another job (Orodho, 2013). CBAM, the theory which has guided this study stresses that when innovation has been introduced, implementers expect a lot from it; and when it doesn't meet their expectations, they become depressed and frustrated (Shirley, 2006). So, there is need to motivate both female and male teachers so that they work effectively in using LCM.

The study also found out that male respondents were many on Non-use, Orientation, Preparation, and Integration 'levels of use' while female teachers were many on Mechanical, Routine and Renewal levels of use (refer to Table 4). Further, the analysis of the questionnaire responses revealed that 55% of the male respondents were on Non-use, Orientation, Preparation, and Integration levels of use while 45% of female respondents were on Mechanical, Routine and Renewal levels of use. In addition, during the lesson observation phase, many male teachers willingly allowed the researcher to observe their lessons, unlike female teachers. At School G one male teacher stated:

> "*Sir, pepani, sinakonzekere, kungoti zimmayi amene anauuzidwa anakana.* Sir, I was not ready, I have taught because the lady teacher who was asked to teach had refused **(Interview -Teacher 20-School G -17/02/ 16).**

The quote above explains that the mentioned female teacher is not courageous enough to be observed on the use of LCM. Again, this indicates that the female teacher is not fully committed to her work while the male teacher was committed to the use of LCM as he could accept his lesson to be observed at a very short notice. Commitment refers to willingness to work hard and give your energy and time to do a job or an activity (Hornby, 2000). In commitment, there is a great interest in learning more details, knowing available resources, and understanding necessary requirements for using the innovation (Ramoutar-Bhawan, 2013).

Contrary to these findings, many male teachers were supposed to be on Mechanical, Routine and Renewal levels of use because as indicated earlier male teachers willingly allowed the researcher to observe their lessons. This is an indication that they were ready

to learn from their mistakes. By reflecting on our experiences, we construct our own understanding of the world we live in (Brooks and Brooks, 1993). However, female teachers could be on stated levels of use because of the involvement in SEGREM which encourages the use of LCM. Over 60% of the female teachers teach lower classes where SEGREM is practiced.

In agreement, in the similar study, Falkenberg (2002) argues that LoU and creativity served to better differentiate the teachers' skills. That is, teachers who are active and resourceful will meet the outcome of the new programme. All the same, there is need for giving implementers additional information about the innovation in order to help them improve on what they are doing. The researcher argues that the training mode needs to train teachers who are creative and resourceful and the Ministry of Education officials needed to plan a lot in terms of training, personnel and infrastructures before the implementation phase of LCM. Figure 4 shows the comparisons of male and female respondents on the use of LCM.

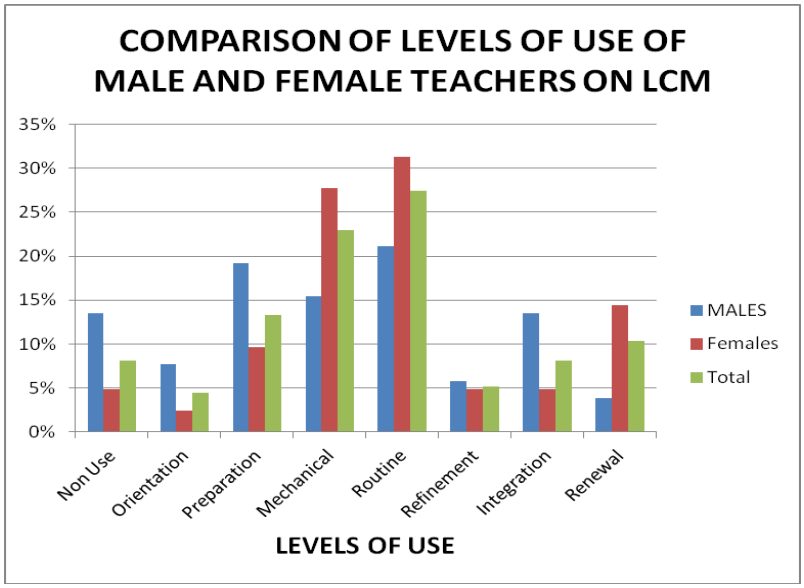

Figure 4: **Comparison of Levels of Use between male and female teachers of LCM**

Source: Researcher's data analysis (20/04/16)

4.4 Methods which were used in learner-centred methods by primary school teachers

This section discusses learner-centred methods which are used by primary school teachers in the learner-centred classrooms. These were analysed in the following areas: "very often" and "not used".

4.4.1 Learner centred methods used by primary school teachers

Table 8: Teaching methods

NO	LCM	VERY OFTEN (%)	OFTEN (%)	NOT USED (%)
1	Games	23	**53**	24
2	Demonstration	**67**	32	1
3	Singing	**59**	32	9
4	Jig saw puzzle	26	48	26
5	Story telling	31	**63**	6
6	Onion ring	13	23	**64**
7	Project	7	32	**61**
8	Case study	**48**	38	14
9	Group work	**80**	16	4
10	Futures' wheel	28	42	30
11	Question and answer	**92**	6	3
12	Fish bowl	8	25	**67**

Source: Researcher's data analysis (30/04/16)

The study found out that the learner-centred methods which 33 primary school teachers used very often in teaching classroom practices were question and answer, discussion, demonstration, singing and group work (refer to Table 8). This was confirmed in lesson observation exercise where the researcher also recorded methods: question and answer, demonstration and group work as the methods that were used very often by primary school teachers. It seems that many teachers take advantage of these methods as they do not need much preparation by teachers. In most cases, group work is used to make

learners help teachers find answers to difficult questions. In addition, procedures for group work were not followed. Further, a teacher at School L after a lesson said.

> "Most of the methods which were in the questionnaire were new to me. So, I just use the teaching methods which I am comfortable with." **(Interview – Teacher 10 – School L - 16/02/16).**

In view of the citation above, the teacher was honest enough to say that she has very little knowledge on the use of LCM and one cannot expect her to use various LCM in her teaching and learning process. The teacher had not come across most of the LCM which were in the questionnaire. This is why she used teaching methods such as question and answer, demonstration and group work. In agreement, Mtitu, (2014), in his study found out that more often, teachers' teaching practices were characterised by teacher centred instructional methods such as teacher controlled question and answer methods. Again, another study done in Korea and USA where the use of learner-centred methods were negatively affected due to past significance learning experiences which suggest that these principles of learning have been around for a long time. As the case in Malawi, the traditional way of teaching has been used since the teaching had started and it's not easy for many teachers to stop using it. For, example, at School K a teacher said:

> *"Ife ntchito tinayamba kale kale, 1989, panopa tingodikira kupuma sitimavutika ndi zambiri".* We started work some time back in 1989, this time we are just waiting for retirement. We don't need to be troubled with a lot of things **(Interview –Teacher 31 – School K - 09/02/16).**

The quotation above shows that the teacher is not committed to the use of LCM because she is about to retire and does not see any need to struggle with the new programmes. With this mentality teachers cannot learn to improve any innovation such as LCM. This

was why all the 33 participants had used question and answer, demonstration, group work and singing because they have used them for too long and many teachers are used to them especially those who were in the profession before the introduction of LCM. In support, the study also found that 24% of the primary school teachers have been in the teaching system for a long time. Confirming with CBAM (LoU), a theory which has guided the study, Hord and Hall (1987) argue that change is an extremely personal experience and when planning for organisational change, individuals who are implementers must be put in mind. That is, the teachers had to be considered first as there were of different teaching experiences and the use of LCM in the teaching and learning processes would also be done differently. It is the view of the researcher that before the introduction of any innovation such as LCM the working experiences of the primary school teachers are to be considered first as this contributes a lot to its implementation. In most cases, many teachers are side lined when new programmes are being introduced and this brings negative impact when it comes to its implementation as the result teachers do not take the ownership of the programme.

4.4.2 Learner centred methods which are not used by primary school teachers

The study also found out that learner-centred method such as futures' wheel, jigsaw puzzle and project were not used by teachers. In the entire lessons observed, no teacher had used any of the methods mentioned above. Again, when the researcher visited the schools, head teachers from School 4, School 7 and School 11 wanted the researcher to shed more light on the methods: ball bearing, fish bowl and onion ring. This implies that teachers in the schools do not use these methods. For the teacher to employ the use of

these methods needs to get well prepared. For example, the project method, a teacher needs to have permission from various stake holders such as head teacher. In addition, the teacher needs to have various teaching resources. Additionally, project needs a lot of time for its completion to take place. Malawi Institute of Education (2008) posits that limitations of the project methods include: time consuming and objectives may not be achieved if there is little supervision. Confirming, Chiphiko (2014) posits that some teachers regarded learner-centred strategies as too involving during lesson delivery as well as during lesson planning. In addition, a newly qualified female teacher at School L said:

> "*Ma methods enawa ndi achilendo,* so it's not easy to use them". Are you going to conduct a CPD on the LCM after your study? *Mukadzatero, mudzatithandiza kwambiri* (**Interview–Teacher 30–School L-16/02/16).**

The quote above illustrates that the teacher is not familiar with many learner-centred methods and it's not easy to use them. On the other hand, conduction of CPD would assist much in teaching using LCM. This confirms that in teacher training colleges not all LCM methods are practiced and mastered by student teachers. Many student teachers come out of the college with little knowledge on the use of many LCM. This is why many teachers in primary schools were not conversant with the LCM and they needed CPD so that they were taught on how the learner-centred methods are used. This might be an indication that there is need for more time to be spent in college so that many LCM are practiced. The researcher suggests that there is need to resume the two year mode of training programme in teacher training colleges in order for the student teachers get conversant with all the learner-centred methods before graduating.

Furthermore, the methods above were not used because they were not easily understood by many teachers either during workshops or training in college. Teachers did not understand how these methods could be used. As it was stated earlier, the only methods used were question and answer, demonstration and group work. In agreement, Mtika and Gates (2010) postulates that despite a decade of experience some countries including Malawi, the idea of learner-centred education had not taken root in the classroom.

This agrees with CBAM when Bybee (1996), posits that people need sustained help along the way if they are going to fully implement new ideas and they will require different kinds of help as their needs change. In this view, adoption of learner-centred methods is a demanding change which required profound shifts in a learner-teacher power relations and teacher professional learning. Teachers needed to be more knowledgeable on the use of learner-centred methods. Also, today's educational system involves numerous individuals responsible for facilitating change. In Levels of Use, the facilitators need a means of assessing the needs of the individuals with whom they work so that the most appropriate assistance can be given (Hall & Shirley, 2006). The researcher explains that the facilitators of change had to be seriously assessing how the LCM were being implemented so that wherever there were challenges, solutions could be given instantly for better progression of the programme.

4.5 Classroom practices and learner-centred methods

This section discusses the extent to which teachers demonstrate in the learner-centred classrooms. The researcher had observed 33 teachers, three from each school; one teacher from each section, thus infant, junior and senior. The lessons dwelt much on the indicators (refer to Table 9).

Table 9: The extent teachers demonstrated on learner-centred teaching practices

Indicators	**Percentage of learner-centred teaching practices observed (N=33)**		
	Yes	**Partly**	**No**
Ability of teacher to create a conducive learning environment, rapport, reinforcement, seating plan.	**49**	49	2
Ability of teacher to organise learners' activities.	**15**	70	15
Ability of teacher to guide learners on how to do activities.	45	49	6
Ability of teacher to provide adequate and relevant teaching, learning and assessment resources.	45	24	31
Ability of teacher to give learners more time to talk than himself/herself.	**6**	82	12
Ability of teacher to give information input.	42	52	6
Ability of teacher to give a feedback to learners in appropriate manner.	**18**	73	9
Overall average percentage	**31**	**57**	**12**

Source: Researcher's data analysis (29/04/16)

4.5.1 Conducive learning environment, rapport, reinforcement, seating plan

In the lesson observation phase the researcher had observed 33 teachers and the study found out that 49% of primary school teachers are able to create a conducive environment, rapport, reinforcement and seating plan and (49%) of the primary school teachers could partly do the same while 2% of the teachers were not able to create conducive learning environment. This was obtained from the analysis of the questionnaire responses. This was also observed by the researcher during lesson observation period.

The researcher observed lesson at School 12 in a standard four class which was conducted under a tree. Learners were placed in one place not even in rows. At the same primary school, the researcher failed to observe a standard six class due to rains which interrupted the lesson. In all the schools visited, the researcher found out that all had high enrolment. Learners were congested in the classrooms where it could not be easy for the learners to have a good seating plan. For example, School 12 had 3800 learners against 30 teachers. This gives out the ratio of 1: 126. That is, one teacher handling a class of 126 learners. Teachers are failing to give conducive environment to learners due to shortage of teachers and in some cases due to shortage of classrooms. One cannot be expected to provide conducive environment when the class has a large number of learners who are taught in a small room or under trees.

In a similar study, Mkweteza (2008) found out that learner-centred education in Malawi is facing a lot of challenges due to large classes and unequal distribution of teachers

which favours urban schools. CBAM looks at change as a process not an event (Hall & Hold, 1987). That is, when site decides to adopt a modern programme, more time is needed to prepare the individuals and the organisations for new roles, responsibilities, and resource allocation. However, resources alone cannot sustain the change. Studies have shown that the use of LCM could not be successful even if teaching and learning resources were in abundant. For example, in Botswana, the government pumped in a lot of financial and material resources toward the use of LCM in schools but still when the programme was evaluated it was found out that the programme's achievements were limited, teachers continued to teach using teacher centred methods (Chiziwa, 2014). The researcher is of opinion that education stakeholders should see to it that schools have enough school blocks so that classrooms accommodate manageable number of learners so that teachers create a conducive learning environment.

4.5.2 Organising learners' activities

The study also found out that 15% of primary school teachers were able to organise learners' activities and 70% of the primary school teachers were partly able to organise learners activities while 15% were not able to organise learners' activities. The researcher observed that during group discussion learners were placed in groups of 15 to 20 members. This does not tally with the procedure for conducting group work. Normal group size is supposed to be 5 to 6 learners. Further, the researcher noted that in 20 lessons observed, learners were not involved in feedback sessions. In most cases, teachers were the ones who were giving answers to the problems. May be teachers were too conscious of time management. They did not want their lessons end after 35 minutes. So,

giving out answers to learners, teachers aimed at saving time. However, Napoli (2004) postulates that teachers must articulate what learners are expected to learn and provide opportunities for their success in achieving those expectations. That is, learners must be given enough and appropriate time to do activities according to their own pace and abilities.

Concerns-Based Adoption Model stresses on paying attention to individuals and their various needs for information, assistance and moral support. That is, for innovation to have fully supported by implementers there is need for them to get support so that they deliver accordingly. So teachers needed support in order to deliver effectively. In a similar study done by Chiziwa (2014) it was revealed that educators were apparently keen to engage students in interactive learning processes, but there appeared to be limited capacity to implement a variety of learner-centred methodologies. For learners to be fully involved in the learning processes there is need for the teachers to have good organising skills. However, the researcher explains that most teachers have the skills but are not displayed due to frustrations which come because of lack of professional support from education officials. It is therefore important that education officials should treat teachers without biasness.

4.5.3 Giving learners more time to talk than him/herself

Further, the study found out that 6% of the primary school teachers were able to give learners more time to talk than themselves and 82% are partly able while 12% of them have no ability to give learners more time to talk than themselves. This was evidenced by the researcher during lesson observation. For example, at School C a teacher had asked

learners to keep quite during discussions. This made the learners share ideas at a whispering voice. Many teachers do not allow learners talk during classroom activities. This action contradicts what Hall et al.(2013) argue that learner-centred environment is an environment that allows learners to take some real control of their educational experiences and encourage them to make important choices about what and how they will learn. If learners are given more time to talk and share ideas freely and the teacher listen to them, they will be motivated to learn.

Similarly, Collins and O'Brien (2003) suggest that properly implemented student learning can lead to increased motivation to learn, greater retention of knowledge, deeper understanding and more positive attitudes towards the subject being taught. In a similar study, Williams and Burden (1997) in Chiziwa (2014) argued that those students' expectations, institutional beliefs, the nature of the task and characteristics of teachers are key factors in understanding classroom practice dynamics. In a learner-centred classroom learners are expected to interact with both teachers as well as fellow learners. In CBAM, Hall and Hold (1997) postulate that we want to focus on student learning before teachers are comfortable with the materials and strategies. This stresses the need for teachers to consider the needs of learners including time to talk and share ideas in the lesson. Children learn best when they are allowed to construct a personal understanding based on experiencing things and reflecting on those things. However, the researcher clarifies that teachers need to control the discussions so that order is maintained in the classroom and each and a very learner is given chance to talk and contribute during the discussions.

4.5.4 Giving a feedback to learners in appropriate manner

Finally, Table 9 above shows that only 18% of the participants were able to give feedback to learners in appropriate manner and 73 % of the participants could partly give feedback to learners while 9% could not give feedback to learners in appropriate manner. Most of lessons ended before time. Feedback was given in a hurry and wrong answers were provided to learners. For example, at School 11 in standard 7, a teacher could not give the correct answer for the area of a rectangle. This indicated that the teacher had little knowledge on that particular topic or did not prepare for the lesson. Further, most of the activities in the lesson were also presented hurriedly and could not give chance to learners to ask questions. Teachers were time conscious and not taking into account of individual differences of the learners. This resulted into half of the class not learn what they were supposed to learn which resulted into getting wrong answers to the problems given.

In CBAM, individuals must be the focus if change is to be facilitated and institutions will not change until their members change. In a learner-centred class, learners influence the content, activities, materials and pace of learning (Froyd & Simpson, 2000). In view of the above, learner-centred teaching in Malawi needed to be looked into seriously. There is more to be done in terms of: number of teachers; infrastructures; and teaching, learning and assessment resources. CBAM is based on the assumptions that when persons responsible for the implementing change are able to provide appropriate and effective support, the innovation will not fail (Loucks, 2003). It is therefore important that learners needed to be given appropriate feedback so that they feel that they are there for learning.

The main finding of the study is that contrary to consultancy reports, teachers are using learner-centred methods in classrooms. This finding contradicts the researcher's initial hypothesis that primary school teachers are not using learner-centred methods. It has been demonstrated by primary school teachers who have embraced learner-centred methods in their every classroom practices. In view of CBAM, the study has revealed that majority of primary school teachers are at upper levels of Levels of Use stratum from routine up to renewal levels. Perhaps the question now should be how well the teachers are applying learner-centred methods and not whether they are using them or not.

4.6 Chapter summary

The chapter has presented a discussion on Levels of Use of primary school teachers on LCM. The eight Levels of Use, the framework of CBAM, generally captured the levels of use of the primary school teachers. The main finding of this study suggests that majority of primary school teachers are at upper levels of LoU stratum from routine up to renewal levels. The findings also suggest that primary school teachers very often use teaching methods: question and answer, demonstration, case study, singing and group work. Finally, the study suggests that many teachers are partially able to: organise learners' activities, give learners more time to talk than themselves, give feedback to learners in appropriate manner due to large enrolment which makes them not perform accordingly. However, for the use of learner-centred methods to progress, there is need for adequate number of teachers and continuous professional development on the use of LCM. The next chapter presents conclusions, implications and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Chapter overview

This study was carried out to investigate the primary school teachers' Levels of Use of learner-centred methods. Levels of Use are one of the three components of Concerns Based Adoption Model. This chapter presents conclusions and implications of the findings. It also provides recommendations for practice and areas for further research.

5.1 Conclusions and implications

In view of the findings of this study, as discussed in chapter four, the following are the main conclusions the study has come up with.

5.1.1 Teachers' Levels of Use of learner-centred methods

The study has established that some primary school teachers in Dedza are at routine level of use of learner-centred methods. Teachers made few or no changes on the use of learner-centred methods. The study has revealed that some teachers use the same usual LCM. They do not think of exploring the use of other LCM. This was revealed by the data analysis of questionnaire (refer to Table 8). Routine level scored highest (27%) among all the levels. Also, some teachers were teaching without lesson plans which indicated that they were teaching without getting prepared for the lessons. Though many

teachers are at routine level, the questionnaire responses have revealed that 92% of the primary school teachers use LCM (refer to Figure 2). In view of the above, the study has suggested that there is need for revisiting the current mode of training especially on the skills used when teaching LCM to ensure that newly trained teachers are conversant with the LCM before graduating. However, time is not the only factor of mastering the use of LCM but also the ability of the student teachers on grasping concepts. In addition, the dedication and commitment of those who will be teaching the student teachers will also matter. It is therefore important that the recruiting system of the student teachers should change. The researcher suggests that student teachers who are selected for the course should be those who have credits in all the subjects unlike the present system where it demands a credit in English only.

5.1.2 Methods which were very often used by primary school teachers

The study concludes that the methods which are used vey often by teachers in the primary schools in Dedza district are question and answer, demonstration, group work and singing. This was revealed during the lesson observation phase done by the researcher. The questionnaire responses showed that question and answer, discussion, demonstration, singing and group work were the methods which were very often used by primary school teachers. In addition, during observation, in every lesson, the three methods: question and answer, demonstration and group work appeared most in terms of being used. The study has come up with ideas for improving the situation: the office of the District Education Manager is to initiate the continuous professional development (CPD) and/or Primary Education Advisors to remind teachers on the use of learner-

centred methods as they supervise teachers in the primary schools within the zones. CPD at school level can also be organised on the same. It is unfortunate that many teachers demand allowance for any CPD they do. However, CPDs can be taking place for few hours per day to avoid teachers claiming for lunch allowances of which they are entitled to.

Lastly, the researcher suggests that the district office can find the CPD facilitators from nearby institutions who may only need little amount of money just for transport and lunch for any innovation needs money for the facilitators and participants for travel expenses and meals.

5.1.3Teachers' role in the classroom situation

The study on the teachers' role in the classroom situation has established that some primary school teachers in Dedza district were: not able to organise learners' activities, not able to give learners more time to talk than themselves, not able to give feedback to learners in appropriate manner. This was revealed in the lesson observation checklist analysis which indicated that less than half of the primary school teachers were able to give conducive environment to the learners (refer to Table 9). In addition, during the observation, the researcher observed that in some schools learners were congested in the classrooms, and sat without any proper seating plan. Some teachers were not friendly to learners, most of the time learners were shouted at.

The researcher feels that large classes were making teachers not be at ease with learners for most of time was spent on classroom management due to noise made. The lesson observation checklist responses also revealed that few teachers were not able to organise learners' activities due to lack of competence in handling large classes.

Further, questionnaire responses showed that very few teachers were able to give more time to talk than themselves, most of the lessons ended before time and some teachers failed to give correct answers to the activities done by learners. In view of the statements above, teachers could not perform accordingly due to large classes for the time allocated to activities is spent on classroom management. Therefore, the researcher suggests that more school blocks should be built to easy the congestion made by learners in classrooms. Also, government should employ more teachers in order to decrease the teacher-pupil ratio which is currently still high.

The study concludes that primary school teachers are at different levels of use of LCM ranging from non-use to renewal level. In addition, teachers very often use methods such as question and answer, demonstration, group work, storytelling and singing. Finally, some teachers do not follow learner-centred classroom practices.

5.2 Recommendations

The study has laid down some recommendations to various education stakeholders in order to improve on the use of learner-centred methods. Some of the recommendations directed to the Ministry of Education officials and teachers are as follows:

5.2.1 Department of Teacher Education and Development

As the findings of the study indicated that some primary school teachers were not conversant with most of the LCM which were introduced to them during college based phase or during workshops, MoEST through DTED should increase the number of years on college based phase to enable student-teachers have ample time to master the learner-centred methods while in college.

As the study has found out that 49% of primary school teachers were not able to create conducive learning environment to learners, the Government of Malawi should allocate more funds to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology for construction of school blocks mainly in urban areas where the number of learners was high. LCM needs spacious rooms for learners to interact to one another freely.

5.2.2 District Education Manager

The results of the study have shown that many primary school teachers were at routine level, where they were not ready to improve on the use of learner-centred methods. Despite being oriented on several learner-centred methods, most of them use the usual teaching methods: question and answer demonstration and group work. District Education Manager (Dedza) should initiate continuous professional development to primary school teachers on the use of learner-centred methods and its importance so that teachers become conversant with various learner-centred methods.

5.2.3Teachers

As some teachers were at routine level in their use of LCM, zonal Primary Education Advisors should encourage primary school teachers to use learner-centred methods in the teaching and learning process. Teachers needed some kind of reinforcements in order to go to higher levels of use such as Integration and Renewal.

As the study has found out that some primary school teachers were teaching without lesson plans or were found teaching with sketchy lesson plans, teachers should seriously be fully engaged in their profession so that they have ample time for preparation for their work.

As the study has found out that 49% of teachers were able to create conducive learning environment, primary school teachers should take initiative to learn on how best they do the classroom behaviours in order to assist learners benefit from the use of learner-centred teaching.

5.3 Areas for further research

The study gives a catalyst for other research opportunities in the area of teaching and learning in primary schools. In view of the fact that the study was a survey of two zones in one district, it is recommended that other researchers could carry out survey on:

- Primary school teachers 'levels of use' of learner-centred methods to be carried out in more schools so that the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology should have a real picture on how primary school

teachers are using the LCM in the primary schools and find strategies of improving the situation.

- Primary school teachers' beliefs on the use of learner-centred methods to see whether primary school teachers have positive or negative attitude toward learner-centred methods. If they have negative attitudes then sensitisation meetings on the importance of LCM can be done.

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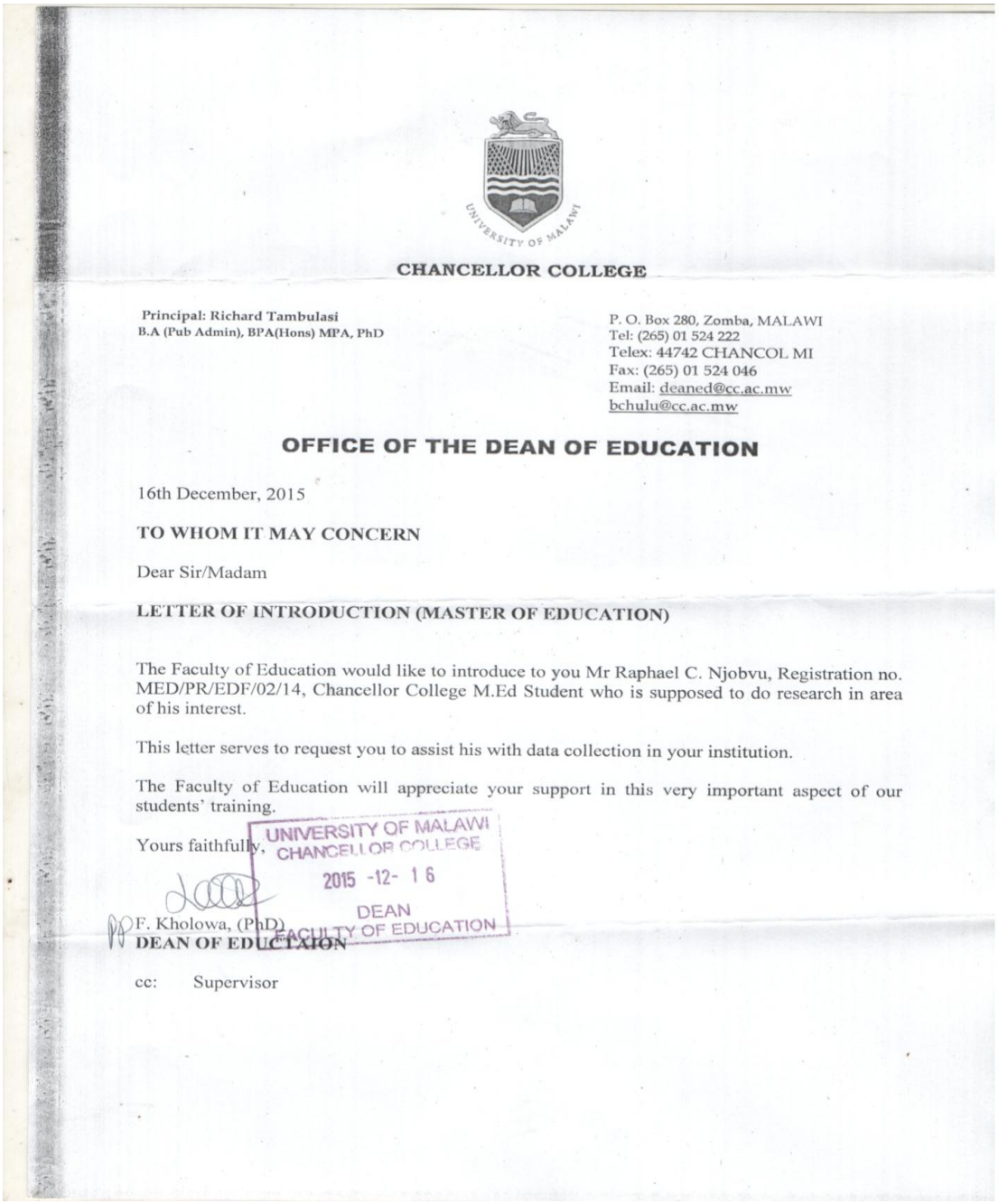
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letter of Introduction (Masters of Education)



CHANCELLOR COLLEGE

Principal: Richard Tambulasi
B.A (Pub Admin), BPA(Hons) MPA, PhD

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OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF EDUCATION

16th December, 2015

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION (MASTER OF EDUCATION)

The Faculty of Education would like to introduce to you Mr Raphael C. Njobvu, Registration no. MED/PR/EDF/02/14, Chancellor College M.Ed Student who is supposed to do research in area of his interest.

This letter serves to request you to assist his with data collection in your institution.

The Faculty of Education will appreciate your support in this very important aspect of our students' training.

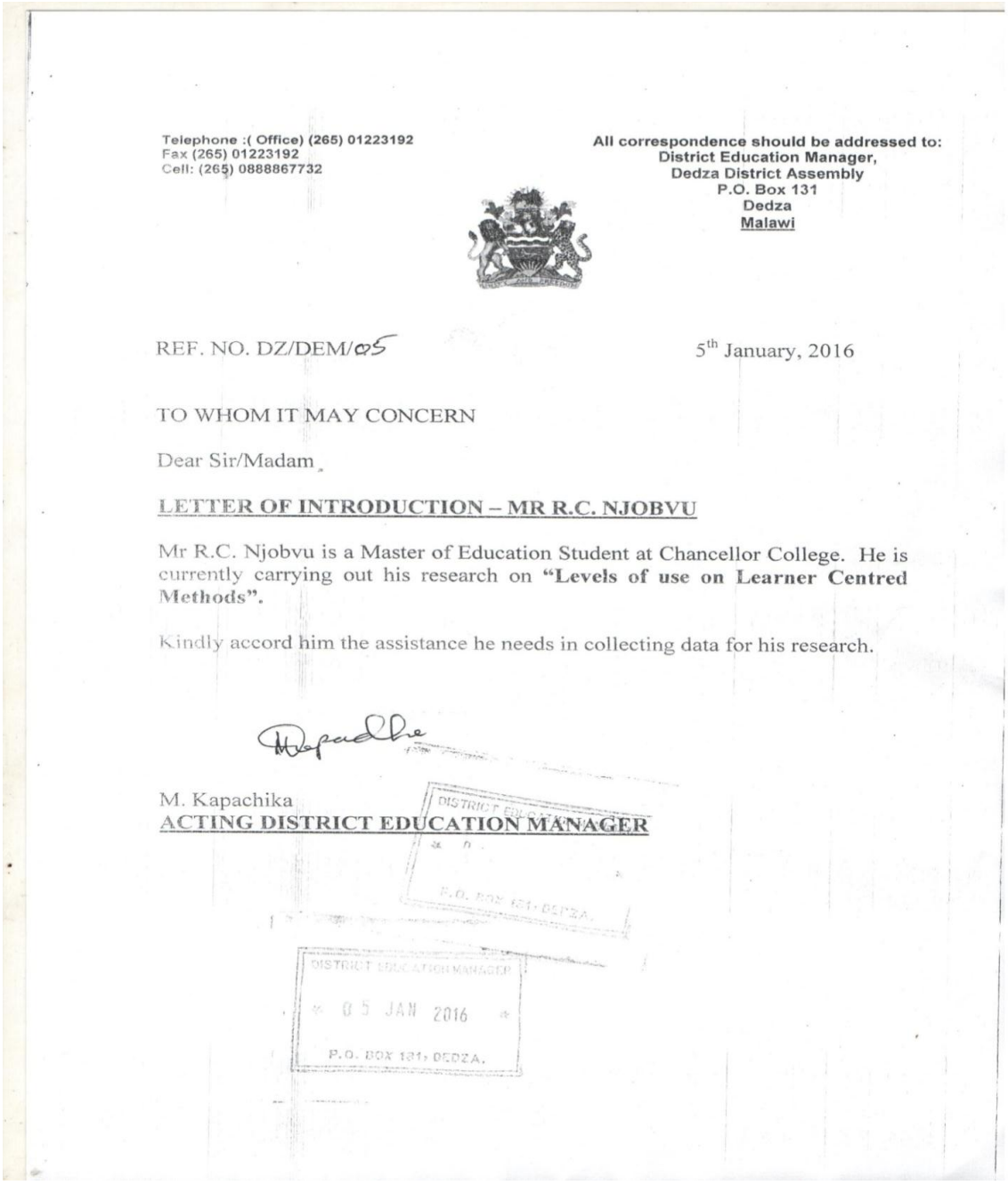
Yours faithfully,

UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI
CHANCELLOR COLLEGE
2015 -12- 16
DEAN
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

F. Kholowa, (PhD)
DEAN OF EDUCTAION

cc: Supervisor

Appendix 2: Letter of Introduction from Dedza DEM's office.



Telephone :(Office) (265) 01223192
Fax (265) 01223192
Cell: (265) 0888867732

All correspondence should be addressed to:
District Education Manager,
Dedza District Assembly
P.O. Box 131
Dedza
Malawi

REF. NO. DZ/DEM/05

5th January, 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION – MR R.C. NJOBVU

Mr R.C. Njobvu is a Master of Education Student at Chancellor College. He is currently carrying out his research on **"Levels of use on Learner Centred Methods".**

Kindly accord him the assistance he needs in collecting data for his research.

M. Kapachika
ACTING DISTRICT EDUCATION MANAGER

DISTRICT EDUCATION MANAGER
05 JAN 2016
P.O. BOX 131, DEDZA.

Appendix 3: Introduction and informed consent

Dear respondents,

I am Raphael Chikanda Njobvu, a student at Chancellor College, a University of Malawi studying Masters of education (Primary) specializing in Education Foundations Studies. I am collecting data for research study whose topic is "Primary school teachers' "levels of use" of learner-centred methods".

I would be thankful if you could spend some time with me to answer some questions by responding to questionnaire. This is an independent study and whatever is revealed in the study will be confidential and no names are written anywhere for the same reasons. For your information, you are not obliged to take part and you may withdraw from the study at any time.

If you have questions before the start of the activity you may ask.

Thank you.

Cell: 0999 336 473

Email: raphaelnjobvu@yahoo.com

Appendix 4: Stages of "Levels of Use" Questionnaire.

Name of the primary school ---------- Date ----------

Gender of respondent**:** Male ☐ Female ☐

Highest qualification of the respondent ----------

The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine the levels of use of teachers who are using learner-centred methods in the teaching and learning process.

Please respond to the items in terms of **your present levels of use** with **these learner-centred methods**. Phrases such as "this approach" and "the new system" all refer to **learner-centred methods**. Remember to respond to each item in terms of your present level of use of learner-centred methods. Please mark with a **tick** one category that best indicates your overall level of use of learner-centred methods.

NO	STATEMENT
1	I've heard about learner-centred methods but, honestly, I have too many other things to do right now.
2	I'm looking at materials pertaining to the learner-centred methods and considering using it sometime in the future.
3	I've attended the workshops and I've set aside time every week for using the learner-centred methods.
4	Most of my time is spent organizing teaching and learning resources and keeping things going as smoothly as possible every day.
5	This year it has worked out beautifully. I'm sure there will be a few changes next year, but basically I will use learner-centred methods the same way I did this year.
6	I recently developed a more detailed assessment instrument to gain more specific information from students to see where I need to change my use of the learner-centred methods."
7	Not everyone has all the skills needed to use learner-centred methods so that it has the greatest impact on student learning. I've been working with another teacher for 2 years, and recently a third teacher began working with me on learner-centred methods.
8	I am still interested in the program and using it with modifications. Frankly, I'm reading, talking, and even doing a little research to see whether some other approach might be better for the students.

Please complete the following by writing a **tick** on the spaces provided.

1. How long have you been involved with the learner-centred methods, not counting this year?

Never ___ 1 year ___ 2 years ___ 3 years ___ 4 years ___ 5 or more ____

2. In your use of the learner-centred methods, do you consider yourself to be a:

Non-user ___ novice ___ intermediate ___ old hand ___ past user ____

3. Have you received formal training regarding the learner-centred methods (workshops, courses)?

Yes ____ No ____

4. Are you currently in the first or second year of use of some major teaching program other than this one?

Yes ____ No ____

If yes, please describe briefly:

----------**Thank you for your help!**

Source: SEDL, (2006)

Appendix 5: Learner-Centred Methods.

Name of the primary school ---------- Date ----------

Gender of respondent**:** Male ☐ Female ☐

Highest qualification of the respondent ----------

Methods used in a learner-centred lesson. How often do you use the method?

Circle **one** number for each item. **Key: 3=Very often 2=Often 1=Not used**

No	Methods	How often do you use these methods in the teaching and learning process?		
1	Demonstration	3	2	1
2	Discussion	3	2	1
3	Story telling	3	2	1
4	Ball bearing	3	2	1
5	Games	3	2	1
6	Gallery walk	3	2	1
7	Project	3	2	1
8	Think- pair- share	3	2	1
9	Futures' wheel	3	2	1
10	Case study	3	2	1
11	Onion ring	3	2	1
12	Field visit	3	2	1

13	Fish bowl	3	2	1
14	Work station	3	2	1
15	Market place	3	2	1
16	Jig-saw puzzle	3	2	1
17	Question and answer	3	2	1
18	Silent participant	3	2	1
19	Singing	3	2	1
20	Group work	3	2	1

Source: Self-made

Appendix 6: LCE Lesson Observation Form

Learning Area: _____ Class: _____

Topic: _____ Number of learners: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

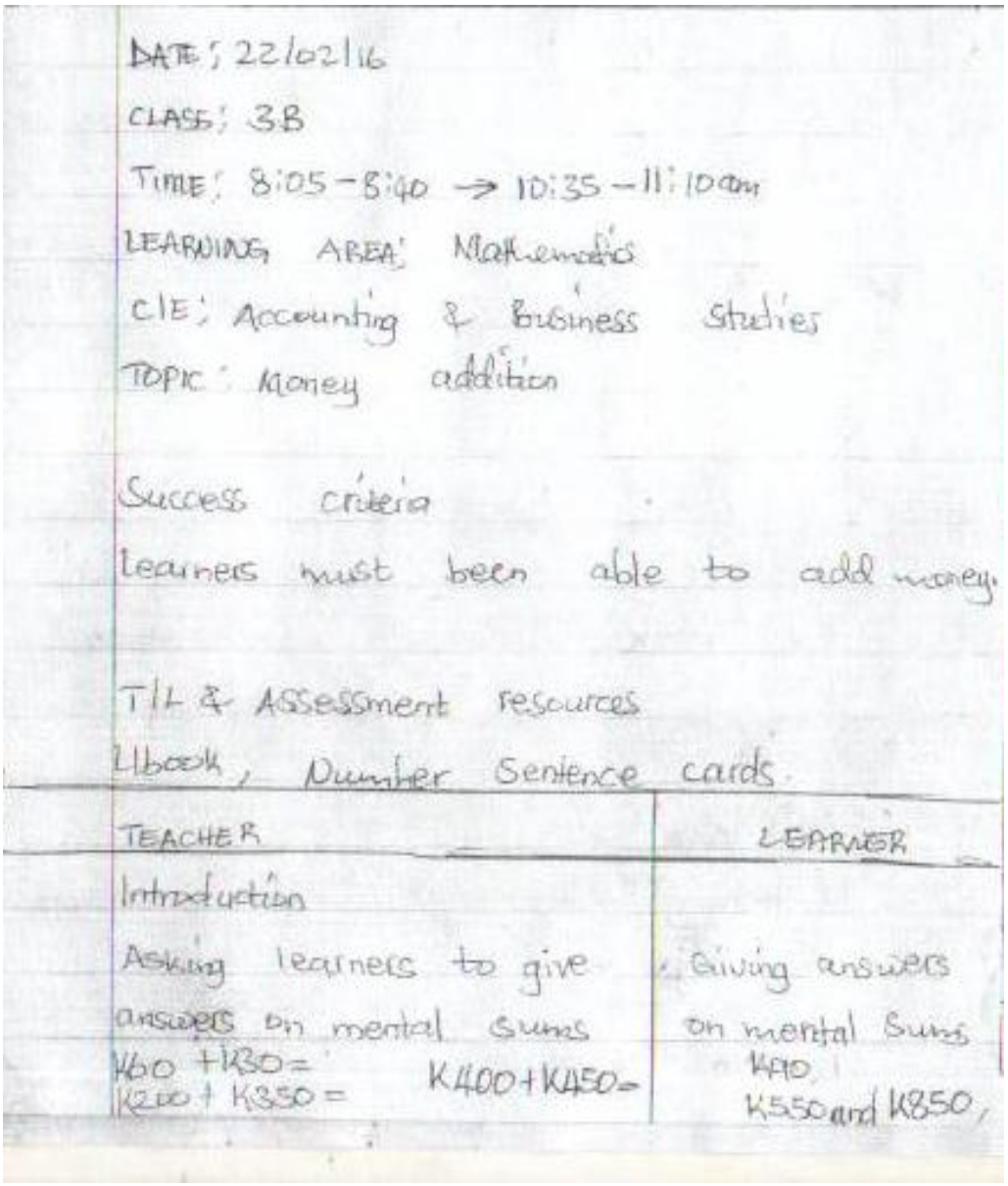
Gender of teacher**:** Male ☐ Female ☐

Role of the teacher

Indicators			
	Yes	**Partly**	**No**
Ability of teacher to create a conducive learning environment, rapport, reinforcement, seating plan.			
Ability of teacher to organise learners' activities.			
Ability of teacher to guide learners on how to do activities.			
Ability of teacher to provide adequate and relevant teaching, learning and assessment resources.			
Ability of teacher to give learners more time to talk than himself/herself.			
Ability of teacher to give information input.			
Ability of teacher to give a feed back to learners in appropriate manner.			

Source: Adapted from Improved Teaching and Learning, page54; November, 2012.

Appendix 7: An example of lesson plans written by research participant.



DATE; 22/02/16

CLASS; 3B

TIME; 8:05 - 8:40 → 10:35 - 11:10am

LEARNING AREA; Mathematics

CIE; Accounting & Business Studies

TOPIC; Money addition

Success criteria

learners must been able to add money.

T/L & Assessment resources

Llbook, Number Sentence cards.

TEACHER	LEARNER
Introduction Asking learners to give answers on mental sums K60 + K30 = K200 + K350 = K400 + K450 =	Giving answers on mental sums K90 K550 and K850,

DEVELOPMENT Step 1 discussing an example on the clboard. K t 250 24 +401 52	discussi answer KES1
Step 2 Telling learners to do the exercise from page 84 nos 1 to 3	writing exerci
Step 3 Supervising & marking of the work.	Showin for assis markin
CONCLUSION correcting the learners difficulties	Making
Lesson Evaluation	