

**Exploring Place-Based Education in Geography Teaching and Learning
as a Means to (Re-)engage Students in Malawi**

By

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

The government challenges teachers to expand outcomes from the educational resources it provides for equal access for all citizens. However, there is a growing consensus that universal policies, such as externally mandated curricula are less effective in mitigating contextual challenges. Persistent disengagement of students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, has been reported in various educational systems, including Malawi's, despite the governments' policies to address inequalities. Teachers, unaided, fail to make abstract concepts accessible to their students and to achieve predetermined outcomes within the curricular mandates. For example, Geography requires that students be given the opportunity to explore their classwork in their own local places through field trips. However, teachers complying with curricular stipulations lack the time to familiarise students with their environments geographically. Students realise that their needs are not being met, fail to own their education, and hence disengage.

There is, however, a body of literature that advocates place-based education as being instrumental in promoting a connection between classroom concepts with the resources from communities that students come from. This study focussed on a sample of Geography teachers in Malawian schools. The investigator sought to explore how Geography teachers could operationalise place-based education to re-engage their students to make Geography contents more accessible to all students in Malawi.

This investigation assumed a qualitative interpretive paradigm that employed a multiple case study design. Three secondary school Geography teachers were interviewed using semi-structured questions and collaboratively analysed the Geography syllabus. A constant comparative method was chosen as a means of analysing the data to come up with holistic findings.

The findings reveal perceived gaps in the stipulated curriculum that could be contributing to students' disengagement. Teachers struggle to keep language simple and straightforward for all students. They have to create different points of departure from what the syllabus mandates. Consequently, teachers fail to complete their assigned workload within a given time. In addition, data reveal that the overload experienced with the syllabus leads to rote learning for the sake of completing the syllabus.

On the other hand, scholars point out that with place-based education it is possible to make the curriculum more meaningful for students within the confines of the stipulated syllabus. Place-based education regards the resources that are available in the students' own community as assets in introducing abstract class content. Drawing on this, an exploration of place based education for the teaching of Geography is suggested to support teachers to rethink their roles in re-engaging their students. The need for in-service professional development is also recommended to boost teachers' capacity to liberate their students from unnecessary rote learning or memorisation.

OPSOMMING

Die regering, op verskeie vlakke, daag opvoeders uit om uitkomst van opvoedkundige bronne wat hulle voorsien vir gelyke toegang vir alle burgers, uit te brei. Daar is egter 'n toenemende konsensus dat universele beleide, soos eksterne gemandateerde kurrikula, minder effektief in die versagting van kontekstuele uitdagings is. Aanhoudende ontkoppeling van leerders, spesifiek van benadeelde agtergronde, was in verskeie opvoedkundige sisteme, insluitend Malawi, berig, ten spyte van die regering se beleide om ongelykhede aan te spreek. Opvoeders, sonder hulp, faal daarin om abstrakte konsepte toeganklik te maak aan hul leerders en om voorafbepaalde uitkomst binne die kurrikula mandaat te bereik. Byvoorbeeld, die Geografie dissipline vereis dat leerders die geleentheid gebied word om hulle klaswerk binne hul eie plaaslike plekke deur uitstappies te verken. Opvoeders wat egter moet voldoen aan die kurrikula bepalings, het nie die tyd om die leerders geografies met hulle omgewing te laat sosialiseer nie. Leerders wat besef hul behoeftes word nie aan voldoen nie, faal dan in die eienaarskap van hulle opvoeding, wat ontkoppeling tot gevolg het.

Daar is egter 'n groep literatuur wat aanvoerders is van Plek Gebaseerde Opvoeding (Place Based Education) as instrumenteel om die verband tussen klaskamer konsepte en bronne binne die gemeenskappe waarvandaan die leerders kom, te beïnvloed. Hierdie studie het gefokus op Geografie opvoeders in Malawiese skole. Die navorser het verken hoe Geografie opvoeders Plek Gebaseerde Opvoeding operasionaliseer om hul leerders te herkoppel om die Geografie inhoud aan alle leerders in Malawi meer toeganklik te maak.

Hierdie ondersoek het 'n kwalitatiewe interpretiewe paradigma aangeneem wat 'n veelvuldige gevallestudie-ontwerp gebruik. Onderhoude was gevoer met drie sekondêre skool Geografie opvoeders deur gebruik te maak van semi-gestruktureerde vrae en die gesamentlike analise van die Geografie sillabus. Konstante Vergelykende Metode (Constant Comparative Method) was gekies as 'n manier om die data te analiseer om met holistiese bevindinge vorendag te kom.

Die bevindinge dui op moontlike gapings in die gestipuleerde kurrikulum wat dalk tot die leerders se ontkoppeling kan bydra. Opvoeders het 'n stryd om 'n deelnemende platform vir alle leerders te bewerkstellig. Hulle moet verskillende vertrekpunte vir wat die sillabus vereis, ontwerp. Gevolglik kan opvoeders nie hulle toegeskrewe werkslading binne die

bestekte tydsraam voltooi nie. Verder toon die data dat die oorlading wat binne die sillabus ervaar word, tot papegaai-leer lei ten einde die sillabus te voltooi.

Deur die Plek Gebaseerde Opvoeding lens, het navorsers aangedui dat dit moontlik is om die kurrikulum, binne die beperking van die bepaalde sillabus, meer betekenisvol vir leerders te maak. Plek Gebaseerde Opvoeding ag bronne wat binne die leerders se gemeenskap beskikbaar is, as bates ter inleiding van abstrakte klaskamerinhoud. Hieruit kan ons aflei dat 'n verkenning van Plek Gebaseerde Opvoeding in die onderrig van Geografie voorgestel word om opvoeders te ondersteun om hulle rol te heroorweeg en innerlik te kyk om hulle leerders te herkoppel. Die behoefte vir professionele indiensopleiding word ook aanbeveel om opvoeders se kapasiteit 'n hupstoot te gee om leerders van onnodige papegaai-leer of memorisering te bevry.

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This work is especially dedicated to all teachers who see the big picture of their profession. Teachers who – despite their challenges, poor working conditions, large classes, shortage of teaching and learning materials, low salaries, limited in-service training, among other things – still lift their chins up to look for ways of reaching out to meet the needs of their students. You struggle and sacrifice, but remain unnoticed.

May God Bless You All!

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PCAR Primary school Curriculum and Assessment Reform.....	xiv
NESP National Education Sector Plan.....	xiv
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List of Acronyms used

PBE	Place-Based Education
CPP	Critical Pedagogy of Place
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SSCAR	Secondary School Curriculum and Assessment Review
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NESP	National Education Sector Plan
IK	Indigenous Knowledge
OE	Outdoor Education
FoK	Funds of Knowledge
CMM	Constant Comparative Method

CHAPTER 1

AN ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an overview of my study including its aims, objectives, motivation, background, problem statement, research question and research methodology. Ethical considerations and issues of validity and reliability are also discussed in this chapter.

1.2 AIMS OF THE STUDY

This study aims to:

- i. Investigate possible ways in which the Geography syllabus contributes to students' disengagement from their local surroundings;
- ii. Explore PBE in the Form 1 and 2 Secondary Geography Syllabus as a potential platform to connect students to their schools' local surroundings.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of the study:

- i. To determine how Geography teachers might implement PBE to make the curriculum more relevant and;
- ii. To demonstrate how the Form 1 and 2 Secondary Geography Curriculum offers possibilities for PBE.

1.4 MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

The Malawian Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST) and the Malawi National Commission for UNESCO have identified the challenges experienced at school level that limit access to quality education for all as follows: "high school dropout and repetition rates, poor levels of achievements in basic competences, inability of schools to attract and retain the excluded children and children with special education needs, among others" (MoEST & UNESCO, 2008:34). However, MoEST does not address the underlying reasons behind these obstacles nor suggest ways and approaches for addressing them.

Related to the above challenges are teachers' deep-rooted concerns over increasing students' disengagement, low self-esteem and under-performance particularly among disadvantaged students.¹ This has inspired me as a Geography teacher to identify avenues that may influence students to develop more robust connections with their education and environment.

While there can be several explanations for the school drop-outs, the majority of whom are Form 1 learners (EMIS, 2011)², on the basis of my own experience as a secondary school teacher, I attribute it to a transitional gap that students experience between their primary and secondary education, leading to this disengagement.³ Parents and caregivers, however, blame teachers for their children's poor performance.

On the other hand, drawing from studies conducted by Glasson, Mhango, Phiri and Lanier (2010:38), students' disengagement in Malawi can be linked to externally mandated curricula that are imposed on the learners. These scholars reported that, although "presently, Eurocentric science has power and influence in schools' science curriculum [it] is largely irrelevant to most Malawian villagers." The irrelevance of the curricula to the Malawian learners in particular has also been validated by Michael Usi's findings in a study entitled *Developing strategies to address low youth education attendance in Malawi* (2017:131); for example, one secondary school student said,

"I do not know why we are forced to learn about the solar system ... The teachers do not provide any background to the presentation of the subjects. Many of us just memorise to pass".

As a Geography teacher, I argue that one of the reasons why students disengage in Geography could be because they feel disconnected from their immediate surroundings (including the school and traditional classroom setup). The curriculum content appears to be separated from the students' real community life. As a result, students may feel little or no resonance with the Geography content being taught in secondary schools. The findings of this study (in Chapter 4) show that Geography teachers confirm that they too experience

¹ In this study, 'disadvantaged students' refers to learners from poor families, who have had an inadequate education background, but who could be the first in their families to complete secondary education.

² Education Management Information System (EMIS) falls under the Department of Education Planning within the MoEST with the responsibility for generating data for planning and budgeting purposes.

³ In Malawi primary school consists of 8 classes (Standards 1-8), while secondary education covers 4 classes (Forms 1-4).

curriculum gaps in the syllabus. Teachers also complain that they experience curriculum overload and have to deal with conceptual jumps that consume much of their time.

1.5 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In Malawi, the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST), through its policy framework, the National Education Sector Plan (NESP), considers education as “a catalyst for socio-economic development, industrial growth and instrument for empowering the poor, the weak and voiceless” (NESP, 2008). It is clear that those who succeed in their education have made an investment that improves their efficiency, expands their chances of getting a better paying job, have the cognitive capability of making independent and viable decisions, earn themselves the respect of their community, have the ability to support other members to break out of the vicious cycle of poverty, and gives them the potential to become better leaders.

In the light of MoEST’s point, it is evident that education should offer capabilities and dispositions to allow individuals to exploit, liberate and expand all their life chances to enable them to take their rightful place in a changing society. MoEST also recognizes “secondary [school] education as critical since it provides additional knowledge, skills and attitudes crucial for enabling Malawians to cope with the complex and sophisticated socio-economic and political environment of the global village to which Malawi belongs” (MoEST, 2013:v). To facilitate its vision of offering secondary education, MoEST enacted specific policies (ESIP, 2009- 2013:16)⁴ aimed at addressing issues of access and equity in education, so that resources and opportunities are available to all citizens.

Nevertheless, the majority of disadvantaged students in the country opt out of schooling before acquiring a basic qualification.⁵ Empirical evidence from a recently conducted census indicates there is no remarkable improvement from the 2010 report by the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) reflecting 32.5% as a junior secondary school completion rate in Malawi. The 2018 census by the National Statistical Office⁶ reveals that out of 15 million persons between 5 years and older, only 5.3 million (representing 35.4%) were currently

⁴ Education Sector Implementation Plan (ESIP) offers an operational framework for the articulation of the broad developmental objectives of the National Education Sector Plan (NESP).

⁵ In Malawi children are supposed to be in school for at least 12 years. This allows for 8 years of primary school education and 4 years of secondary school education (NSO, 2019:24).

⁶ The National Statistical Office (NSO) of Malawi is the main government agency for the collection and dissemination of the country’s official statistics.

attending school (NSO, 2019:23). Further to the report, out of 1,670,144 secondary school age students, only 297,339 were in school, while 1,375,806 were reported to have been out of school (NSO, 2019:25). The NSO, however, documented that the secondary school net attendance ratio rises from 4% to 42% for children from the poorest and the richest household populations respectively (NSO, 2015: 167). The NSO argued that excluding the disadvantaged from an equitable share of the benefits associated with successful schooling implies that Malawi's education spending does not target the poorest of the poor (Education Sector Implementation Plan, ESIP, 2009-13). For Usi (2017:234), this aggravates the poverty levels of the poor, because it deprives them an equitable share of the benefits associated with successful schooling that would help them support their children in pursuit of education.

In a bid to identify a curriculum that meets the aspirations of the people (NESP, 2008:19), MoEST engaged in curricula reviews, which saw the rolling out of an outcomes-based education (OBE) model. This extended from primary to secondary schools in 2015 in a phased process known as the Secondary School Curriculum and Assessment Review (SSCAR). The new secondary school curriculum was dispensed to align it with the primary curriculum to improve its quality and relevance, and to incorporate contemporary issues such as democracy, governance, human rights, environmental degradation and climate change (MoEST, 2013:v).

However, OBE, which focuses on learning achievements (Spady, 1994:2; MoEST, 2013: vii), appears to be incompatible with Malawi's goals. Recently, the Ministry of Education was compelled to identify factors that should promote the engagement of young people in schools throughout the academic cycles (MoEST, 2017:43). Some recent findings from a study in the OBE era confirm that the curriculum is irrelevant, because it does not take into account the local context of the students (Usi, 2017:131). The need to address people's aspirations through education has yet to be realised. The findings indicate that OBE curriculum representation does not acknowledge the specific places where students come from and hence it forces them to learn concepts that they cannot localise and make sense of.

While the EMIS does not explain reasons behind the low enrolment, the Malawi Institute of Education attributes persistent students' disengagement in education to the failure of previous policies to address the challenge of low education attainment (MIE, 2014-19). The policies appear to be concentrating on outcomes of low attendance at the expense of their underlying

causes. They mainly highlight the effects of infrastructural shortages on young people (NESP, 2008-17) without offering any reflection on what actually leads to the disengagement of the students.

However, the literature dates low education attendance in Malawi back to the colonial times. Scholars associate the educational challenge to a “possible resentment” about unfair and biased policies and regulations according to which the colonial education system operated. For example, a limit on class size, sparsely located schools, the need to purchase a school uniform and a Christian background to access education are identified as disabling factors that led to the exclusion of many Malawians (Banda, 2008; Phiri, 2010; Ng’ambi, 2011); Katenga-Kaunda, 2015; Usi, 2017).

Besides MoEST and UNESCO (2008) acknowledging that addressing the deeply-rooted educational challenge is work in progress that may not be completed in the near future because of repeatedly ineffective policies, a closer look at the government’s action plans, the Education Sector Implementation Plan (ESIP, 2009-18) and the NESP (2008-17) does not reveal meaningful strategies that would address the challenge.

While Usi (2017:255) recommends the need to improve teaching and learning conditions in order to improve class participation and retention of learners, Glasson et al. (2006, 2010) suggest place-based learning as a suitable platform for integrating places that are familiar to the student community into the curriculum, instead of places that they have never heard of.

A subject which highlights ‘place’ is Geography. Geography is about studying the interdependence of people and the earth (Kidman, 2017:2). Places on the earth are embedded in unique physical, social, political and economic contexts, all of which enrich geographical theory (Kagoda, 2009:119). At the same time, places are habitats for living things, including people (Bradbeer et al., 2004; Kirkby, 2014). Suffice it to say that acknowledging the meaningful affiliations that people have with their places requires both formal and informal forms of education; therefore, teaching and learning should not be confined within regular classroom walls. Teaching and learning processes also have to engage the immediate places beyond traditional classrooms to help students understand new concepts.

Importantly, the teaching of Geography differs from many other educational disciplines. Unlike other disciplines that encourage students to create new knowledge through library research

and laboratory experiments, the tradition of Geography recognises fieldwork as a crucial component of teaching and learning (Gerber & Chuan, 2000). Fieldwork offers authentic learning experiences which help simplify abstract geographical concepts. Furthermore, it provides students with the opportunity to develop observation skills, data collection and reporting skills, which not only keep them engaged with content, but are also useful for life-long learning.

The MoEST realises the inability of many students to further their education beyond secondary school level, but expects them to be able to transfer what they have learned to their lives beyond the school (2013:vii). Applying school knowledge to community lives, however, cannot be realized if school content does not relate to what is available or happening in the students' community.

This study argues that students might feel disengaged from Geography content and pedagogy because of the 'placeless education' that dominates formal education in Malawi. 'Placelessness' here refers to the separation from the lives of other community members and lack of participation in the community's socio-political life (Gruenewald & Smith, 2010:xvi). The OBE model is blamed for ignoring the powerful ties students have with their places (Usi, 2017:131). Consequently, local students can feel excluded like outsiders, and so disengage or drop out of school, hence affecting the effective utilisation of educational resources.

This investigation suggests place-based education (PBE) as one of the emerging platforms for "*re-engaging* participants who feel *disengaged* from their physical context to their immediate worlds" (Knapp, 2005:278, emphasis added). PBE refers to treating the school's local environment as a primary resource for teaching abstract and/or complex concepts (Sobel, 2004:7). PBE may help Geography students to become reconnected to their roots or places where they had grown up.

PBE reinforces the focus of traditional Geography education's use of fieldwork as a teaching and learning element. While geographical fieldwork concentrates on "going and finding out" about places visited (Marshall-Cornwall, & Wooldridge, 1955:194), PBE utilises the multi-functionality of places (Sun; Chan & Chen, 2016:575) to incorporate students' field-based learning experiences.

This study therefore argues for the expanded notion of 'place' to enable students to become active participants in new knowledge creation using their five senses. By learning from local,

social and environmental issues, it is assumed that PBE in Geography would enhance the relevance of curriculum content to render learning worthwhile. Many authors concur that PBE and Geography education support each other (Preston, 2015:41; Israel, 2012:76).

1.6 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem is that the externally mandated curriculum (Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2007:197) in Malawi continues to force rote learning of non-contextual issues. This renders education irrelevant to the communities it should serve (Kabwila, 1995; Kamwendo, 2013; Glasson et al., 2010; Usi, 2017).

With the stringent requirements to cover the syllabus, and meet curriculum mandates and performance outcomes of teaching, teachers are forced to impose learning for the sake of assessment using predominantly teacher-centred methods. This compromises the need to connect class content with students' community lives. The result is that these disadvantaged students experience a lack of support in Geography education due to content that is disconnected from their locality. As learners are unable to figure out how to survive in the schooling system, the quality of the education they receive is compromised. Consequently, they lose confidence and disengage from the system to the detriment of their potential achievement and choice of Geography for further studies.

On the other hand, contemporary Geography themes such as environmental degradation, resource depletion, global warming, pollution, urbanisation, population growth and tourism require people's detailed consciousness of the places they inhabit. PBE in Geography can be a starting point in overcoming such placelessness in the curriculum. The colonial legacy that excluded students' contexts in education needs to be addressed in self-governing states, including Malawi, because it led to significant inequalities that are enduring. PBE could promote ownership of the young people's education when the resources in their communities are acknowledged in teaching and learning. This would arouse greater awareness among future leaders (students) to re-own and live holistically in their places. Gruenewald elaborates that:

PBE reawakens people's connections with "the land", "the natural environment" and "the non-human world" which would otherwise be forgotten with narrow conceptualizations of 'place' in Geography classrooms. (Gruenewald in Gruenewald & Smith, 2010:143)

By recognising students' connectedness with places they inhabit, PBE offers authentic learning experiences that legitimise education (Ontong & Le Grange 2015:46) in Geography. This study explored PBE in Geography teaching as a means to (re)engage learners in schools in Malawi.

1.7 RESEARCH QUESTION

This study was guided by this main research question:

How can PBE serve as a potential platform in Geography teaching for re-engaging students with their local environment?

The following were sub-questions of this study:

- How does the Republic of Malawi syllabus for Geography Forms 1 and 2 open up space for PBE?
- How do Form 1 and 2 Geography teachers implement PBE after being introduced to the concept?

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was guided by an interpretive paradigm. The ontological position of interpretivism is relativism (Scotland, 2012). This paradigm holds that reality is personally owned and therefore differs from one person to another, depending on the individual's consciousness. Since consciousness can be reflected in words, texts, actions and how one relates with one's situation, this study was framed within an interpretivist paradigm and employed qualitative methods to gather rich data in three case studies.

1.8.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research methodologies were employed to understand complex textual descriptions of what individual Geography teachers perceive as possible interventions for re-engaging students with their school surroundings, and how they could teach Geography themes in relation to that specific place. Unlike quantitative methodologies, where responses are quantified to generate numerical data for evidence regardless of context (Connole, 1993:22), qualitative methodologies uncover underlying reasons, opinions and motivations to gain insights into the problems/issues (Wyse, 2011) of a particular place.

1.8.2 Case Study

A case study is explained as an “in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, program or system in a real-life context” (Simons, 2009:21). As an aspect of qualitative research, case studies allowed me to employ multiple methods of data production. I collected data from three teachers from three different schools/cases to intensively acquire an in-depth understanding of how the teaching of Geography may be enriched with the PBE approaches.

This research design enabled me to employ multiple methods of data collection, such as semi-structured interviews and observation (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). With each school presenting a distinctive case, I was able to investigate the specific contextual circumstances at each school and evaluate data to see how the cases respond and correlate with one another. A case study is the best design for this kind of evaluation because of the opportunity for adequate and in-depth descriptions it offers (Guba & Lincoln, 1981:375).

1.8.3 Sampling

This qualitative study sought to empathise and understand what teachers, operating in different contexts, perceive as possible PBE interventions that would render education meaningful for their students. However, it was impossible to reach every Geography teacher in Malawi for data collection. This investigation therefore used a purposive non-probability sampling. Sampling refers to identifying a population that would inform units of the study findings. In purposive sampling technique, researchers use their knowledge to identify agents who could represent the entire population (Fogelman, 2002:101). Intentionally, three distinctive schools were chosen for this study in order to obtain a variety of answers to my research questions.

This study is a small-scale investigation involving three different types of public secondary schools within one education zone in Blantyre (Malawi), from which three Form 2 Geography teachers were interviewed. Form 2 teachers were most suitable because they are usually the ones who had taught the same students in the previous year. This implies that the respondents had the same continuous lived experience in Geography teaching with the current curriculum. Thus this purposive sampling technique allowed the possibility of

conclusions that could be compared to those of Geography teachers from other public schools in other education zones⁷.

Furthermore, convenience sampling was also applied, since the selected schools were close to where the researcher resides. This allowed the researcher to maximize time spent with the teachers, while minimizing the limitations on the study (Fogelman, 2002: 101,103). Convenience sampling helped me get answers for my research questions within the limited time and resources available for this study.

1.9 RESEARCH METHODS

This refers to the manner of data collection and the tools used (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:74). This could range from asking questions, reading documents to observing particular situations. Two research methods were adopted for this study: documentary analysis and interviews.

1.9.1 Document Analysis

The documents refer to textual records that serve to establish the relevant facts. Strydom & Delport (2011:377) point out that document analysis includes evaluating existing documents, either to understand their practical content or to illuminate deeper meanings behind their style and coverage. This method assisted me in identifying the underlying meanings of the geography syllabus texts and how they are articulated (Cohen; Manion & Morrison, 2011:151). The focus of this study was to explore how geography teachers may operationalise PBE in the Malawi Junior Secondary School Geography Curriculum. Apart from individually analysing the texts in the syllabus as the principal investigator, I could not adequately analyse the syllabus in a vacuum. I found that the inputs from the Geography teachers, as dispensers of the curriculum, were crucial in my interpretive investigation.

However, considering that the PBE concept is unfamiliar to most teachers in Malawi, I considered collaborative analysis of the Geography syllabus. I held a session with my prospective research participants to orient them on the PBE concept. This helped build their capacity to participate better in evaluating the syllabus for Geography Form 1 and 2 learning areas, curriculum guidelines and related reference materials in relation to PBE.

⁷ In Malawi there are six educational regions, each comprising 4-6 education districts divided into zones of six to 10 schools.

In so doing, I was able to analyse the syllabus with my participants collaboratively, drawing on their thick descriptions on how students could better be linked to their environment to maximize the benefits associated with PBE.

1.9.2 Interviews

An interview is a communication between two or more people usually intended to get deeper insights into a topic of common interest. Interviews unlock the experiences, perceptions and opinions of individuals. Interviews can be structured, open-ended, semi-structured or focus group (Le Grange, 2016:5). In this investigation I conducted interviews with my three teacher-participants.

For the sake of this study, semi structured interviews was conducted to provide both the researcher and the participants the opportunity to probe responses and seek further clarification. With a set of approved prepared questions, I interviewed three Geography Form 2 teachers from three secondary schools in Blantyre (Malawi).

1.9.3 Data Analysis

To analyse data in qualitative research, an inductive approach is usually adopted. This entails that the data are not collected to confirm or disconfirm a theory or hypothesis, but are analysed to identify important information which emerges from the data that could possibly lead to the formation of a theory or hypothesis (Maykut & Morehouse, 2001:126-127). Data in this study were analysed through the constant comparative method (CMM) (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This method entails constantly comparing data throughout the research study and then grouping data according to their similarities and differences by the means of coding (labelling). By analysing and comparing the codes, concepts are identified from the data and given codes that describe them. From this coding process, emerging themes were identified and interpreted to answer the research question. This rigorous process of data analysis helped me to provide unbiased findings.

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Approval to conduct this research was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of Stellenbosch University. In addition, I obtained permission to conduct research in Malawian schools from the Ministry of Education division offices, specifically at South West Education Division (where the Blantyre district is situated). Informed consent was obtained from

participants ahead of the interviews. Permission to audio-record interviews was obtained from each participant in order to transcribe the interviews later for data analysis. The names of schools and participants were kept anonymous. Pseudonyms were used. Data were confidential and stored in my password protected laptop. Only my supervisor and I had access to the data.

1.11 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE STUDY

The validity of qualitative research is determined by the extent to which the study measures or provides an accurate understanding of what the study set out to measure or understand (Le Grange & Beets, 2005:115). This study firstly utilised content validity, where I consulted my supervisor and other experts in the field to check whether the questions are fair and unbiased. Secondly, I focused on face validity (the degree to which procedure appears effective in terms of its stated aims). This implied going back to the participants to check with them whether I had interpreted what they had said correctly. The reliability of a qualitative research study, however, refers to the extent to which the research instruments and research methods can produce consistent results, and thus contributes to validity of the study (Le Grange, 2016:7).

To ensure my study findings are valid, reliable, credible and trustworthy, I used appropriate and trustworthy research tools to process the data. I tried as far as possible to control for bias. Using approved interview questions, I sought clarity on the answers from my respondents. I ensured that I accurately documented and systematically analysed my research data. Data were interpreted and conclusions were drawn with the available support and evidence for my claims (Dixon-Woods et, al., 2004).

Whenever required, I confirmed and clarified emerging themes from the collected data through member checking. Member checking refers to going back to respondents for clarification of data that had gaps to ensure that what is being analysed is a true reflection of what the respondent said. In addition to this, triangulating data from interviews and document analysis promoted the reliability and validity of this investigation, because the syllabus is publicly accessible. This study's findings can therefore be confirmed by the participants.

1.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter I introduced the research by highlighting the challenges faced by the Malawian education sector despite good government policies aimed at promoting access, equity and

quality in education. I have identified persistent disengagement from school, particularly among disadvantaged students, frustrated parents and guardians, school drop-outs, low self-esteem and under-performance which should be addressed in the sector. I posit that disengagement from schooling in Malawi undermines the potential of the education resource as an empowerment tool for disadvantaged students. This limits the possibility of equal opportunity to benefit from the education resource. I also described how I proceeded with my investigation in search of answers for my research question. I argue that PBE has potential to address these issues and improve educational achievement in Malawian schools. In the next chapter, I will explore the PBE concept as a means to promote student engagement in schools.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This investigation seeks to explore avenues along which PBE may serve as a potential route towards effective teaching of Geography and for re-engaging Malawian students with their local environment. Chapter 1 outlined the structure of this study. This chapter will review the available literature related to the investigation. A literature review offers a critical overview of published subject content to highlight what is already known or done so as to avoid redundancy (Briggs & Coleman, 2007:62). Reviewing both the national and international literature enabled me to justify my study.

This chapter provides a critical review with the following focal points:

- ❖ The geographical, historical, political and socio-economic context of education reform in Malawi;
- ❖ The disengagement and re-engagement of students in Malawi and other countries;
- ❖ Curriculum content and discussions regarding Geography education;
- ❖ Pedagogies of place and PBE;
- ❖ The need for PBE in Malawian Geography classrooms; and
- ❖ Connections between PBE and other fields of study.

2.2 THE CONTEXT OF MALAWI

2.2.1 Geographical Location

Malawi is a small landlocked country in Southern Africa with Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania on her borders (Fig. 2.1). The country is situated between latitudes 9-17 degrees East and 33-36 degrees South of the equator. The country covers an area of 118,484 km², of which 94,276 km² is land mass (MoEST & UNESCO, 2008:5. The National Statistical Office puts the country's population in 2018 at 17.6 million (NSO, 2019:4).

Figure 2.1: Map of Malawi (adapted from NSO, 2010:xxiv).



2.2.2

Malawi : Historical, Political and Socio-economic Background

This study

found Gadamer's (1975) notion of historical consciousness useful, because it encourages people to enrich their understanding of others by referring to their traditions, backgrounds and history. Indeed, education in Malawi should be understood within its historical context. I contend that the disengagement of students in Malawian schools will continue until such time as its underlying causes are identified and effectively addressed.

My point of departure in this section is the challenge faced by the Malawi education system and its colonial legacy (Banda, 2008) should be decentred by decolonising approaches to education. I maintain that PBE is a responsive platform for promoting ownership of school places that would offer students a justification for proceeding with their education. In the next section, I will give an account of the historical, political and socio-economic circumstances of Malawi during the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial era to substantiate my claim. I begin my exploration with Malawi's pre-colonial era to get an impression of how the Indigenous people approached the education of their children.

2.2.2.1 Pre-colonial Period: Traditional/Indigenous Education

Before the coming of the colonialists, education was purely traditional or Indigenous,⁸ as was evident in many African countries (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2002). Long before their arrival, chieftainship⁹ was predominant on Malawi's customary land as a form of leadership. The physical environment determined the sort of education that the young had to receive for survival. This was crucial in teaching the young to adjust and adapt to their environment for their own sustenance. The interdependence of the parts of the environment the people inhabited was based on the spirit of *uMunthu*,¹⁰ which refers to humanness (Kayira, 2015: 110), which was emphasized with a focus on religious instruction.

By the same token, community-based resources covered the scope and content of what the young had to be taught. As such, the land was held in high esteem. Parents and community elders were at the forefront and chiefly responsible for exposing their children to authentic learning experiences in their own environment. This could be achieved through guided discovery, demonstration, supervision, oral literature and play without necessarily assessing the children with standardized tests (Chirwa & Naidoo, 2016:337)).

⁸ "Indigenous" with capital letter 'I' for respect to the world's colonized people who are reclaiming the term, as opposed to "indigenous" with lower case 'i', which may apply to people living close to the land in isolated places (Le Grange, 2017).

⁹ A form of leadership that is provided by one member of a particular ethnic group.

¹⁰ *Ubuntu* (or *uMunthu* in the local Chewa language of Malawi). A person with *uMunthu* is empathetic, caring and compassionate. For Mbiti (1969:108), *uMunthu* means "I am because we are, and because we are, therefore, I am."

However, there were initiation ceremonies which were normally associated with physical development matched with mastery of relevant skills in a particular community. Thus, education for the young was based on survival skills in their own environment at the learners' own pace and regardless of contextual circumstances (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2002:233). For example, children in my home area, which is close to Lake Malawi, could not only be prepared for adulthood to become fisherman but also to make and repair fishnets and canoes, as well as preserve and sell fish of any type.

The young people could be actively engaged by completing assigned tasks which they had to master under the guidance of the elders of the land. They were made active participants by observing, listening, imitating, practising, discovering and doing on a daily basis (Chirwa & Naidoo, 2016:337).

Learning within the four walls of conventional classrooms, which has been framed as the "banking teaching model" (Freire, 1995), lacks this authenticity. Renowned educational philosophers and theorists, such as Dewey (1938), Piaget (1953) and Vygotsky (1978), agree that for authentic learning to take place, students should be offered wider exposure to richer environments from which they should construct their learning. The classroom emphasis on conventional education that frames students as passive recipients of knowledge that has been created elsewhere renders classroom concepts too abstract for students. Learners struggle to make sense of content that is far removed from the realities of their lives.

I argue that it is cultivating this attachment to the students' environment that would add value to the young people's education and re-engage Geography students in Malawian schools. This investigation intends to look for spaces that would make the Geography curriculum more meaningful, exciting, teachable and comprehensive by utilizing the resources available in students' own places as starting points in teaching abstract concepts. However, current externally mandated education reforms divorce content from its context, as they come with guidelines that must be adhered to (Chirwa & Naidoo, 2016:6). Congested abstract content covered within the traditional classrooms undermines the need for students to participate in new knowledge creation. It is my contention that Geography field excursions that are place-based could offer the meaningful learning experiences that would motivate learners to remain engaged with their class work.

Before reviewing the role of Geography education and PBE in transforming Malawi's education, a comparison of its approach to education in its pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial era is necessary to appreciate underlying differences. Next, I will present an account of the history of education in Malawi during the colonial era.

2.2.2.2 Colonial Period

As happened in many other African countries, the political boundaries of present-day Malawi began to be formulated in 1884 at the Berlin Conference in Germany. The conference aimed at framing the colonization of Africa and was attended mainly by European nations. Malawi was a British protectorate from 1891, followed by the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, which translates to the present-day Zimbabwe (the former Southern Rhodesia), Zambia (the former Northern Rhodesia), and Malawi (formerly Nyasaland) from 1953 to 1963.

Formal education in Malawi was introduced by pioneer Christian missionaries to enable the local people to read the Bible and get them "Christianized", since they were perceived as uncivilized, primitive and pagans (Galimoto, 2008; Katenga-Kaunda, 2015). According to Laws (1929:347), the Europeans' view was that the native should be "kept in his place" and "exploited for the benefit of the Europeans". It was believed that native education should not be such that it would elevate the Indigenous people to be equal with the Europeans, but just to be enough to enable them to follow their masters' orders better. This colonial legacy is still alive in the Republic of Malawi, where the aims and objectives of its education system are based on Western ideologies (Glasson et al., 2010; 2006; Kayira, 2015; Phiri, 2008; Chirwa & Naidoo, 2016; Usi, 2017).

According to Laws's (1929:350), this had repressive and reactionary tendencies. He remarked, "Reading and writing in own vernacular is easier for the African child than for the European child learning English. I have known a teacher [who opened] a school in a village where not a letter was known, and in less than six months, thirty of his pupils could read the New Testament fluently in their own tongue. In these schools, the four Rs are taught". This reflects the perceived potential to learn among the natives that could have lifted them up to the level of the Europeans, if access to quality education had been available to all regardless of racial differences.

However, the rote teaching that was emphasised in these schools is believed to have laid a foundation for rote learning, which is an enduring challenge affecting the quality of present-day education (Banda, 1982). Mizrachi, Padilla & Susuwele-Banda, 2010) confirm this:

... it is very difficult for parents to see [student-centred pedagogies] as positive because they are tied to the traditional methods used when they were learners.

Usi (2017:4) explains that education during the missionary period was exclusive, since access was available only for those who had embraced Christianity and could access the mission schools. This had a bearing on how different ethnic groups embraced Western education. For example, the Yao tribe (one of Malawi's ethnic group, who are predominantly Muslim) felt that the education was not meant for them and so delayed sending their children to school. Although this perception was later reduced, the mindset that Yaos do not advance with education still prevails among Malawians (Kamwendo 2013:111-112).

Despite the coming of colonial government to Malawi in 1891, the coloniser set the educational agenda only in 1926 by instituting the Department of Education. This confirms the observation that evangelism was merely a camouflage, since the missionaries' and settlers'¹¹ agenda was to monopolize the resources in the colonies (Curtin, 2005; Anaya, 2011). The majority of colonial education graduates, who were convinced that primary education was enough, did not proceed on to secondary education.

While the missionary's programme was apparently about evangelism, the aim of colonial schooling was to create a submissive society that would meet the demands of the colonial masters (Laws, 1929; Kayira, 2015). When the colonial masters took over the governance of the country, they insisted education should still be run with the blessing of the missionaries in order to achieve their aim of cultivating a 'desirable' disposition among the natives (Laws, 1929:350) that would facilitate their colonisation agenda.

Though schooling has been explained as "the intentional, packaged instruction delivered in a particular place for the purpose of teaching information, and values" (Littlejohn, 2006:63), the question remains: whose values? For Malawi, the answer is clear and it was for the colonial powers. To this day, the Malawi curricula force students to memorize abstract concepts that are based on Western ideologies. Breidlid (2013) concurs with Mulenga (2001) in their

¹¹ "'Settler' is a way to describe colonizers that highlights their desires to be emplaced (or to resolve the experiences of dis-location implicit in living) on [stolen]Indigenous land" (Morgensen, 2009:157).

observation that to advance their agenda, the colonialists made the Indigenous people believe that they were inferior, and hence should seek the West's kind of advancement. Le Grange (2016b:456) observes that

Colonisation did not only involve the colonisation of the land owned by the Indigenous peoples, but also colonisation of the minds of the indigenous peoples.

For this “intentionally pre-packaged instruction”, the Indigenous communities started sending their children to colonial schools, which had the effect of alienating them from their environments to become “civilised”.

As such, some traditional leaders and others with political aspirations were manipulated and allied with the colonial government, that looked down on the Indigenous ways of living (Divala 2005:2) in their own places. Laws (1929: 359) gives the following account: “every European is a teacher, and the more socialization with the European in his business or his home, the deeper is the impression his character makes upon the native [...] unconsciously, the natives were framed to imitate the European character, good and bad habits inclusive”.

From another view, the colonial masters introduced a *Thangata* system (Ross, 1996:15), which suggests ‘helping out without expecting anything in return’. The local people were expected to work for their colonial masters without any payment, but in the name of developing their nation. After all, they had been prepared to become good citizens espousing the value of serving and helping others.

Furthermore, the colonial masters introduced cash crops, which diverted the Indigenous' people's attention from self-reliance based on subsistence farming to commercial farming. They claimed vast pieces of land for extensive tea plantations in Mulanje and Thyolo districts of Malawi. These estates are still privately owned to this day. Tuck, McKenzie and McCoy (2014:3) describe this as settler colonialism. The authors explain settler colonialism “as a form of colonization in which outsiders come to land inhabited by Indigenous people and claim it as their own new home”(Tuck et al., 2014:6). Colonialism and its legacies in terms of education, knowledge and the classroom set-up are not unfamiliar in a Malawian context.

Many authors point out that settler colonialism violently disrupted Indigenous life and cruelly degraded the environment (Robinson & Tout, 2012:156), because settlers do not learn how to take care of the local land naturally. There is live evidence of this in Malawi today. The quality

of the vast tracts of land, which the settlers claimed for tea estates in Mulanje and Thyolo districts, has not only been degraded by deforestation, monocropping and erosion, but its occupation also deprived the growing population's agency over their land for settlements, natural life and better farming practices that would have encouraged sustainability of their places.

This experience is sufficient to explain why Malawian elders rejected further domination over their land. Findings in a study by Glasson et al. (2010), *Sustainability, science education in Africa: Negotiating indigenous ways of living with nature in the third space*, indicated that Malawian elders were sceptical of Eurocentric science, preferring to continue applying their own traditional methods of sustaining their land. The elders claimed they find their own ways of managing the land more economical and environmentally friendly.

This study links the elders' rejection to the disengagement of students from the externally sourced curriculum that does not acknowledge how their places can contribute to their learning. Mizrachi and his team (2010:12) confirm that, if parents do not see the relevance of what is taught to their children, they would not encourage their children to work hard and concentrate in school. Low education achievement in postcolonial Malawi could indeed be a reflection of "possible resentment" about Eurocentric forms of dominance over Malawi.

The colonial education curriculum, which was examination-oriented, covered personal hygiene, care of environment, home life, use of leisure time, literacy, numeracy, moral and religious life, which mostly conflicted with traditional life settings since its content and learning materials were based on the British experience (Chirwa, 2014:338). This further alienated the Indigenous people from their natural ways of life.

In this section I have presented the nature of education in Malawi during the colonial era to illustrate the perceived disconnections from the traditional Indigenous ways of life, which could explain the sense of disengagement of students in contemporary democratic Malawi. I maintain that the PBE framework can help 're-member' the Indigenous people who had been 'dismembered' from their environment. Next, the situation in independent Malawi will now be presented.

2.2.2.3 Post-Colonial Period, One-Party Rule

Malawi became independent as a sovereign state in 1964 under the leadership of Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda and the Malawi Congress Party (MCP). In 1971 Dr Banda was

made Life President of the nation and the MCP became the only legal party in the nation. His leadership was characterized by a reign of terror, violation of human rights and prejudice against political opposition (Kamwendo, 2013:104.). In education circles Banda may still be remembered for his courage in influencing the first curriculum review in the independent Malawian history of education. Despite these positive efforts, various colonial legacies persist in the nation's education system.

The independent government instituted a commission known as the Johnson-Survey Team in 1964 to review the country's education system. It reported that the system was 'imported, excessively academic, deadly passive and addicted to rote learning' (Kabwila, 1995 In Chirwa & Naidoo, 2014). It therefore became imperative for the independent government to come up with a curriculum that responded to the needs and challenges of the nation. New subjects including Creative Arts, Agriculture, Social Studies, Needlework, Civics, Home Economics were introduced in addition to the former disciplines. This made the curriculum somewhat congested and there was no integration of content.

There was no remarkable change in the 1982 curriculum, since it was controlled by British examinations. This further disconnected education from responding to the aspirations of the Indigenous people for whom it was intended. A new review known as Curriculum 1991 was undertaken, but it also failed to resolve the problems with the curriculum of 1982. Dissatisfied with one-party rule, Malawians chose a multiparty system of governance in a referendum and embraced democracy in 1994. Unfortunately, these historical curricular attributes still repeat themselves even in present-day democratic Malawi (see Chapter 4).

2.2.2.4 Education in Democratic Malawi

Democracy promised *change* to Malawians, including educational transformation. A first remarkable change was the introduction of free primary education. However, this was marred with a number of instructional challenges that compromised quality. As the enrolment rates at the primary schools rose came the challenges such as deterioration of teacher/pupil ratios, lack of effective teaching and learning skills; insufficient teaching and learning materials; poor school infrastructure; shortages of teachers; and inadequate qualifications (Chimombo, Meke, Zeitlyn & Lewin, 2013:121).

As noted earlier, the Malawi government education policy documents stipulate the goals and aspirations of the Republic's commitment to education that can only be realized with support

from service providers and effective curriculum policies. The mission of education in Malawi is “to provide quality and relevant education to the Malawian nation” (NESP, 2008:1). This study proposes PBE as a framework that offers authentic learning experiences that render learning worthwhile.

To sustain this quality and relevance, the secondary school curriculum, which was last reviewed in 1995, had to be reviewed again and rolled out in 2014. The revision also helped to align it with the Primary School Curriculum and Assessment Reform (PCAR). PCAR was rolled out in 2007 starting with Standard 1 before it was adopted in secondary schools in 2015 in a phased process to be covered over four years. The recent curriculum review, described as Secondary School Curriculum and Assessment Review (SSCAR) was then expected to address contemporary issues such as democracy, governance, human rights, environmental degradation and climate change (Kamwendo 2013:113).

Although sovereign states like Malawi have embarked on the integration of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) into their curricular reforms in the postcolonial era, it appears that the imposition of Western ideologies on the present government of Malawi is perpetuated in the name of globalization. It should be noted that in the present-day context of globalization,¹² the former colonies are referred to as ‘developing’ nations (Curtin, 2005; Kim, 2010; Osai, 2010; Pashby, 2012), which have to follow their former colonial masters’ directives for them to develop.

This suggests that the present-day schools are being controlled in all dimensions, including the expected outcomes of prescribed lessons in the curriculum. To date, Malawi’s official language of instruction and communication remains English. However, it is reported that some students fail to express themselves clearly in English, and as a result they perform poorly and disengage (Kamwendo, 2013: 117). These remain colonial legacies even after the departure of the colonial masters.

My point of departure in this study is that, by failing to reconnect education to the people’s environment, the postcolonial curricula of educational systems such as that of Malawi have failed to make education meaningful for the populations of the independent – but still colonized – nations. This inquiry explored how PBE can serve as a potential platform for

¹²The Levin Institute (2011) explains globalization as a ‘process of interaction and integration among the people, companies and governments of different nations, a process driven by international trade and investment and aided by information technology’.

Geography teaching to reconnect and re-engage students with their places. I argue that this is fundamental for countries wishing to move beyond rhetoric and towards substance in coming up with a responsive (decolonised) curriculum. In the next section, I will give an account of the literature on disengagement and from school and (re-)engaging students.

2.3. SCHOOLING DISENGAGEMENT AND (RE) ENGAGING STUDENTS

Nations across the globe are increasingly looking for diverse ways of maximizing the outcomes of the social services they provide. In the same way, education systems are looking for ways to expand access to education provision through improving both retention and performance rates. However, identifying avenues that may stimulate intrinsic motivation among uninterested students to successfully (re-)engage with their curriculum remains a challenge for teachers and policy makers (McFadden & Munns, 2002:358).

The notion of student engagement can be explained as “finding ways of enabling and encouraging learners to enter into communities of practice, discourse and inquiry [...] to become an ‘insider’ in the culture of a classroom” (Durrant & Green, 2000:103). To seek ways to (re-)engage students, I reviewed the literature to identify reasons for disengagement from school and ways of promoting re-engagement; I investigated the sources of disengagement with reference to the Malawi Junior Secondary Geography curriculum, and the way other countries are managing school disengagement.

While the literature describes several types of engagement including academic, cognitive, behavioural, social and psychological, authors agree that the lack of student engagement is the result of an intersection of factors (Taylor, 2009; Smyth & Hattam, 2005; White & Wyn 2008). Furthermore, scholars caution about the devastating consequences if students disengage (Gilbert 2007; Willms, 2003). Given that, teachers are urged to do whatever they can to anchor their students’ potential to learn (Hargreaves, 2004:27) despite the resistance they may experience in engaging today’s young people. My argument is that it is teachers’ classroom practices coupled with placeless education that contribute to students feeling disconnected from their environments, including their classrooms.

2.3.1. Reasons for Mainstream School Disengagement and Re-engagement

While some students disengage from school out of frustration and desperation, others are excluded [or disengaged] from mainstream schools as a disciplinary measure for having behaved contrary to teachers’ expectations of a compliant student. Drawing on the work by

Mills and McGregor (2010) titled *Re-engaging Students in Education: Success Factors in Alternative Schools*, the following elements identified at successful 'alternative schools' have helped to re-engage previously disengaged students. I therefore argue that these elements can offer practicable mechanisms for the mainstream schools whereby they may improve or promote inclusion amongst their students. These elements are:

- a user-friendly school environment;
- a flexible curriculum that accommodates experiences of local places;
- a pedagogy that 'celebrates' and does not simply accept young people;
- real-life, hands-on, connected and conversational teaching strategies.

In the light of these findings, I appreciated how dynamic the world is, and also understood that there is a generation gap between teachers' and young people's lived worlds. Similarly, educational affordances in the digital age are quite different from what was required in school three decades ago. Today's young people wish to be active participants in affairs affecting their lives, including knowledge creation, and not being merely passive recipients of externally created knowledge. I contend that this changed world deserves new ways of doing things that suit the requirements of the contemporary times, but not at the expense of place (local context).

Ivan Illich observes that contemporary school reforms isolate young people from their contexts because the corporatized curriculum agenda is to "manipulate people into the consumer-oriented capitalist world of work" (1971:18). Johnson (2012:831) adds that Eurocentric knowledge leads to the disengagement of people from their places, since it separates nature from culture. This, according to the authors, does not engage the developmental needs of learners.

In the Malawian context these points can be linked to observations that Malawi's curricula have been excessively imported, thereby forcing students to memorize contents that they do not make sense of and hence making education rapidly become irrelevant to their environments (Usi, 2017; Kamwendo, 2013; Glasson et al., 2010). The education becomes useless, because such curricula fail to engage students, since it does not take into account of where they come from. This study's observations resonate with these findings (see Chapter 4).

The literature reviewed reiterated two circumstances in school settings that lead to students' disengagement. On the one hand, the blame was placed on the 'deficit model' mindset that singles out disadvantaged students and their families as solely to blame for academic underperformance. According to Smit (2012:371), the term 'disadvantaged students' was used in the 1980s to challenge the "deficit thinking inherent in the description of disadvantaged students". For Smit, disadvantaged students should not be negatively perceived as lacking in literacy, numeracy or having a problem, because it is only risk factors such as poverty and poor schooling or limited proficiency in English that renders them disadvantaged.

This 'deficit perception' legitimizes the status quo in educational settings. While Hogg (2011:666) attributes conventional education's disregard for students' contexts to the deficit theorizing which reproduces educational inequalities, in this study I link deficit theorizing to the narrow conceptualizations of place that contribute to students' disengagement.

The young people are categorized as 'problematic' and often recommended for corrective measures that include punishment, rustication, suspension and expulsion. Realizing mainstream classrooms have become disabling environments for meeting their educational aspirations, marginalized youths lose confidence and disengage gradually or immediately. When this occurs, it reinforces the notion that 'problems lie within the disengaged', but such notions should be regarded as a form of social injustice, because they stifle the justifiable need for attempts to explore avenues that could keep students engaged with their environments to promote inclusion. An expanded notion of place could open viable learning opportunities based on students' local contexts.

However, the positivist philosophical idea that singles out students whose performance does not comply with what the curriculum dictates as having problems within themselves and their families (Swart & Pettipher, 2016:6) still prevails in the Malawian context. These students lack support in their learning. Despite such generalizations being sources of exclusion, Mittler (2000:3) cautions that they are so deeply embedded into the mindsets of the majority of teachers, families, professionals and legislators that it will be difficult to eliminate them.

Fataar (2015) indicates that teachers contribute to student disengagement when they assume a one-dimensional teaching approach that does not give students space to react to lesson contents. This approach to teaching suppresses the knowledge that students have

accumulated from their diverse lived spaces with which they could build lasting connections with new classroom concepts. One-dimensional teaching, which the literature describes as the 'traditional method of teaching', conceptualizes a teacher as a custodian of knowledge that has to be transmitted to 'ignorant' students as passive recipients. McFadden and Munns (2002:362) conclude that students immediately notice when classroom practices are irrelevant to their lives and, coupled with feelings that they are not being acknowledged, most students find the lesson abstract, irrelevant and boring, and eventually disengage.

On the other hand, students' disengagement is correlated to externally-driven curricula that do not take into account learners' contexts. While parents look forward to their children's completion of basic education, students lack support to address their learning difficulties. Teachers fail to recognise their learners' needs because they are pressurized with hierarchical structures to meet externally scripted standards in teaching class content for accountability purposes (Ontong & Le Grange 2015; Jennings et al., 2005; Gruenewald 2003a; 2003b). This leaves limited space for teachers to apply their pedagogical orientations that would build connections between school knowledge and students' tangible resources in their environments. Treated as 'blank slates' [that should fit into the culture of the school], the young people feel unappreciated, lose self-esteem and disengage.

Smyth and McInerney (2012:14) comment on the globalised curricula as follows:

The marketized, corporatized, and managerialised approaches that produce so much unhappiness, distrust and disharmony in other aspects of our lives, have been embraced around the world by education authorities and unleashed on schools and young people with devastating consequences.

The market model imposed on education does not only de-professionalise teachers, but also exerts unnecessary pressure on students to memorize abstract concepts for the sake of passing examinations. This sort of education is contrary to Malawi's goal which expects secondary education to equip students with knowledge and skills that are transferable from school to their communities (MoEST, 2013:vii).

In the light of the literature reviewed, the disengagement of students in Malawian schools can be understood as consequences of the prevailing circumstances under which mainstream schooling is operating. Teachers are forced to implement curricula that did not meaningfully include the perspectives of teachers, parents and students. Thus school classrooms have

been formed like containers (Leander et al., 2010:329) that are sealed off from the communities they should serve.

Finding school concepts abstract, disadvantaged learners fail to navigate through them and hence disengage. In this case, disengagement can be likened to a personalized defence, a counter-reaction, a survival tool and/or a shield against suppression and authoritarianism, particularly among minority groups, in an attempt to retain their identities (Griffin, 2002 in (Bodkin- Andrews, Vo'Rourke, Dillon, Craven and Yeung, 2012:182). Expressing a similar view, Ranson (2004:5-6) states that:

Children are cultural beings from the first, active agents striving to develop a way of being in the world... recognizing who we are, our identity, the source of self-esteem and confidence which provide the condition for developing autonomy... learners' lived experiences [and/or] identity need to be recognized and valued within the school.

Based on the research findings of Glasson et al. (2010) (See Section 2.8), I found Griffin's description applicable to the Malawian context. Human beings cannot indeed be taken for granted, as they quickly come to recognise such unfair treatment and find ways of consciously rejecting further exploitation. I liken the rejection described in the findings of Glasson and others to the disengagement of students from the curriculum that does not acknowledge their context as their cultural matrix.

Realizing that all forms of knowledge are beneficial and supportive, the government of Malawi expects all secondary school graduates to be able to "apply the Indigenous and non-indigenous knowledge and skills necessary for lifelong learning/personal advancement, employment and the development of society" (MoEST, 2013:viii). Scholars have however indicated that the incorporation of such knowledge into the curricula has been done superficially, both qualitatively and quantitatively (Chirwa & Naidoo, 2016; Phiri, 2008; Kayira, 2015). Meanwhile, Indigenizing post-colonial curricula is an opportunity to re-awaken the formerly colonized people's identity that should not be subjugated. There is no point reproducing the same colonial social ills in democratically elected nations such as Malawi.

Although Smyth et al. (2014:2) appealed to educators to go beyond stigmatization and do what they can to "advance the interests and life chances for all students", they did not throw any light on how the educators could promote students' engagement in knowledge creation.

The work of Cowie Jones and Otrell-Cass (2011), however, puts forward some insights into re-engaging students in New Zealand which that could be applicable elsewhere. These authors' suggestions include the need for teachers to integrate the funds of knowledge (FOK) that students come to school with from their lived spaces into the curriculum. The notion of FOK affirms that knowledge from an individual's life-world experiences is highly influential and adaptable (2011:358) in securing new knowledge than isolated classroom content can be. However, Maitra (2017:99) observes that research related to FOK's capacity to enrich the school curriculum has focused only on North America. I therefore propose PBE as an avenue in which FOK could be utilized as a starting point in teaching abstract concepts in Geography.

In addition, Cowie and others echo the view that finding ways of extending learning beyond the classroom walls offers students direct exposure which expands the access points for their learning and aspirations (2011:361). These measures, according to the authors, have the potential to send messages to students that what they learn in school is part of their lives and beyond. Realizing schooling is meant for them would hook students to remain engaged with class work. I argue that PBE with geography fieldwork would provide the students with the necessary exposure to encourage them to remain engaged with their environment and the curriculum.

2.3.2 Sources of Student Disengagement in Malawi's Geography Curriculum

In the Malawi primary school curriculum, Geography themes are integrated into environmental and social science as one learning area. Secondary school teachers of Geography therefore have the task of securing an engaging platform for students approaching Geography as a discrete learning area for the first time. However, this has to be supported by a curriculum that recognizes the context of the learner. Teachers could then be able to connect limited primary school geographical knowledge with new and broader secondary school concepts.

Although this is not the case in secondary school education, where subject teachers are diplomats and degree holders in their respective disciplines, they also require curriculum guidance to support the Form 1 Geography students to navigate the 'transition'. Meanwhile, the prescribed guidelines, as discussed below and in Chapter 4, do not stipulate how this could be done. PBE in Geography would productively supplement limited primary school knowledge as well as knowledge beyond the everyday (Martin, 2013:26).

The Geography syllabus for Forms 1 and 2 (refer to Appendix I) has also been identified as another source of students' disengagement from the teaching of Geography. Whilst collaborating with my teacher respondents for a joint analysis of the syllabus, it emerged that the abstractness of the topics and the curriculum requirements in terms of prescribed teaching and learning activities and methods, do not offer opportunities for the majority of the teachers to gain the students' confidence in the subject.

Similarly, employing traditional sequencing that puts 'Map work' as an introductory core element to be covered in Geography sets up the 'disengagement agenda' among students, because it is overloaded with abstract concepts. Suggested teaching and learning activities such brainstorming do not address the abstractness. Teachers struggle on a daily basis to make the concepts accessible to the learners within the specified time and methodologies. Teachers proposed starting with 'Environment' as a first core element, which would have moved students from what they know to the rest of the more unfamiliar core elements (as illustrated in Chapter 4).

With pressure resulting from the recent concentration on the acquisition of prescribed skills and competences amidst the prescribed terms of OBE, teachers lack time and space to apply their pedagogical judgment to make the curriculum meaningful to the learners. Teachers' attention has been shifted from *what to teach* to *how to teach* (Morgan, 2011:113). Reducing the role of teachers to dispensers of congested externally-driven curriculum stipulations that do not take into account local students' needs appears to be incompatible with the context of the Malawian education system. Malawian students, particularly the disadvantaged learners, require extensive teachers' support to make their learning explicit. Otherwise, students develop only a thin connectedness with their schooling, which consequently results in their disengagement from classwork.

In another view, the disaggregation of each topic so that only part of the knowledge in each theme is conveyed in each class alongside the acquisition of prescribed skills also contributes to students' disengagement. Teachers in Chapter 4 indicated that it is mainly key concepts that are covered. This means that there are a number of conceptual jumps that result from breaking up of topics, leaving some sections hanging when other parts of a topic have been shifted to other terms.

Leaving out content that would build the relationship between students' lived spaces and abstract classroom concepts leaves the students confused and eventually disengaged (Rawding, 2013:286). For example, Form 1 topics: *the positioning and movements of the earth in relation to the sun* (MoEST, 2013:13-14) would provide a direct link to the role of 'Latitudes and Longitudes' prescribed under 'Map work' in Form 2 to teach about time and climatic and seasonal differences (MoEST, 2013:35-37).

Furthermore, Junior Secondary Geography is implicated in encouraging rote learning and disengagement as it prescribes the teaching of abstract concepts before engaging learners with what is familiar to them. For example, topics that begin with *world level perspectives such as seasons, formation of lakes and the East and Central African Rift Valley* become less engaging, since teachers talk about things which not only their students but also they themselves have never experienced.

Starting with what is available in Malawi would offer a justification for the need to study the same phenomena in other parts of the world. For instance, challenges and ways of caring for the Shire River (local rivers) would offer an approach to understanding rivers and lakes in general. Moving students from the unknown to the known as in the stipulated syllabus escalates disengagement. The PBE approach to teaching Geography would reverse the trend with a logical and authentic place-based arrangement of learning experiences.

With reference to the literature, I argue that sovereign states should come up with culturally responsive educational frameworks such as PBE to promote their people's identity and ownership of their education. This would alleviate the need for rote learning as well as saving a lot of time and resources spent on efforts to curb and manage students' disengagement.

2.3.3 Managing Students Disengagement

Education systems differ in policies and practice in their approaches to marginalized, out-of-school young people to improve the provision of education. Examples are No Child Left Behind in the US, Every Child Matters in the UK, 'Alternative' schools in Australia and Complementary Basic Education in Malawi (NESP, 2008:39).

However, Malawi's programme specifically confines its aims to passing on life skills and increasing literacy and numeracy levels. In addition, the basic education offered is simply primary knowledge confined to districts registering high school-dropout rates (MoEST, 2017:38). Yet students' disengagement is still rampant even among school-going secondary

students throughout public Malawian classrooms. The 2018 Malawi Census Report (NSO, 2019) reflected in the Background to this study in Chapter 1 confirms the persistent disengaged of students.

Without meaningful intervention to mitigate the challenge in the Malawian context, dropping out of secondary schooling implies a missed educational opportunity for most children. It is therefore imperative for the Malawi education system to come up with feasible pathways that enable students remain engaged with schoolwork in mainstream education. This study explored PBE as a means to re-engage students in the teaching of Geography in Malawian schools.

I contend there is a dire need for Geography teachers to connect their learners' life-world lived experiences with new curriculum knowledge in order to motivate them to remain engaged with their education. I further posit that it is this connectedness that is required to transform education in Malawi. The following discussion will unpack the notion of connectedness so as to demonstrate how it may become a transformational platform for Malawi education.

2.3.4 Connectedness

The term 'connectedness' can simply mean a tie, a link, a bond, a relationship, a union and/or an attachment. In the field of education, attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) helps us to understand the natural need for connectedness among humans for their continued existence and new knowledge production. The theory informs us that human beings possess an inherent attachment to their natural environment for survival. The theory claims that children with secure attachments from their childhood thrive and develop trust, which in turn motivates them to explore and make sense of their surroundings (Kennedy & Kennedy, 2004). On the other hand, this opportunity to grow is limited among children in insecure environments.

An implication of this theory is that it is important for educational systems to put in place humane structures that acknowledge students' need for connectedness with their natural world. Sovereign states such as Malawi should ensure that the knowledge and skills they are imparting in their young people promote the inclusion of students who experience, or have experienced, exclusion or have dropped out of school because of an education system that did not meet their learning needs. Students in Malawian schools could be disengaging from

their studies as a response to the detached content that does not acknowledge their natural world.

Connectedness, in broader terms, refers to classroom practices that acknowledge and recognize learners' existing background knowledge and make a '*deliberate*' effort to connect them with the new classroom world and beyond (Reddy, Le Grange, Beets & Lundie, 2015:6, my emphasis). The authors indicate that connectedness, which is a narrow term in the Geography curriculum, is an ultimate requirement for understanding and sustaining the meaning of what is learnt.

In other words, it is important for teachers to support their students' learning by making deliberate connections between classwork and students' background experiences. Gruenewald (2003:7) concludes that a "curriculum [that is] geared towards exploring places, can deepen empathetic connections and expand opportunity for learning." It is therefore important to explore the notion of 'connectedness' in more detail.

Killen (2005:18) made three suggestions for enhancing connectedness:

- Grounding learning on learners' personal experiences;
- Basing learning on real-world social problems that interest learners;
- Offering learners a chance to share their work with audiences beyond the classroom.

I argue that these elements of connectedness resonate with traditional ways of teaching geography that could be reinforced within a PBE framework to secure a re-engaging environment that would help Malawian students realize the purpose of their education. The need for creating a link between students' FOK and curriculum knowledge therefore should not be ignored, particularly when teaching is aimed at securing students' engagement so that they may acquire an empowering education.

Some scholars regret that context-based knowledge is a neglected opportunity for enriching curricula (Maitra, 2017; Kayira, 2015; Chirwa & Naidoo, 2016). Put differently, Firth (2013:71) calls upon teachers to create space that allows a *connection* to form between what students know and knowledge provided in the curriculum to enhance a relationship between curriculum–knowledge/learners–learning and society. For Firth, thinking creatively about this relationship would enhance the reconceptualization of learning, while at the same time reconceptualising the curriculum and knowledge.

Significantly, the PBE framework recognizes the role of students' cultural knowledge as a primary resource for education when it is *connected* to new curriculum concepts (Sobel, 2004:7). Similarly, with fieldwork, Geography students are *connected* to their natural environment. By promoting such blendedness and connectedness, the PBE framework and Geography education could anchor this desirable relationship that could secure school knowledge as part of students' community lives and beyond. Figure 2.2 provides the visual framework that I have developed to guide me in search of answers for my research question: How can PBE serve as potential platform for re-engaging students to their local environment?

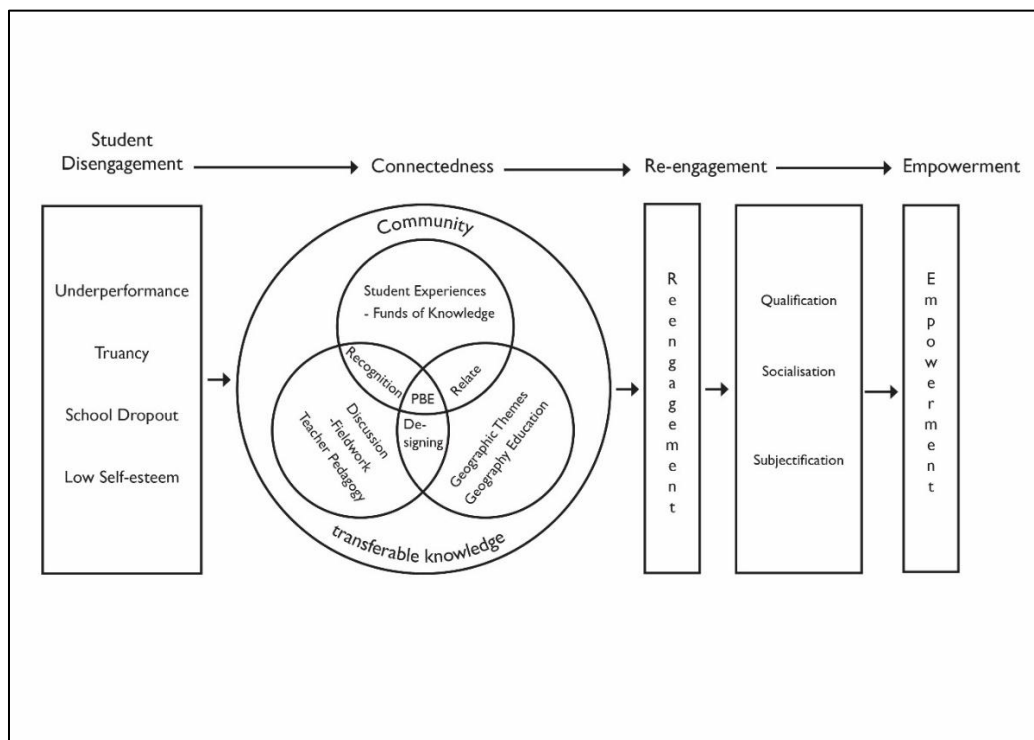


Figure 2.1: Re-engaging Students Framework

In Figure 2.2, connectedness, students' experiences and teacher pedagogy have been identified as crucial in securing students' attachment and/or re-engagement with class work. In my mind map students' disengagement, which is characterised by underperformance, truancy, school drop-out and low self-esteem, can be mitigated by relating students' prior experiences to new Geography concepts. To facilitate this, there should be deliberate attempt to design such teaching and learning in a way that acknowledges the students' own context. I posit the PBE framework as a suitable platform for achieving this.

This study finds PBE tenets to be potentially transformational tools in enabling students to reconnect students with their environment. Connecting class content to knowledge that students have previously acquired from their local environments has also been identified as crucial in enhancing a sense of belonging and security. This, according to scholars, promotes mental health (Bird, 2007; Lehrer, 2009; Wright & Tolan, 2009), which would in turn develop students' self esteem. The effect would be to stimulate their motivation and understanding of new concepts to acquire an empowering education.

PBE tenets that challenge teachers to utilize their students' primary knowledge when teaching new knowledge are vital mechanisms for enhancing the required connections. Teachers, when planning their Geography lessons, could relate students' knowledge (that is, knowledge acquired from the home area) to curriculum content, so that they are able to connect to new Geography concepts. Eventually, students would be equipped with community-relevant knowledge and skills.

For example, a Form 1 lesson about the hydrological cycle could require fieldwork in the school surroundings enabling learners to see for themselves factors that disturb the cycle. PBE would complement field experience so that class work becomes applicable to their community lives, and also link the knowledge to global warming (MoEST, 2013:15-16). Realizing they have a school-acquired positive contribution to make to their environment, students could develop confidence and high self-esteem that would motivate them to remain engaged with class work.

Realising that education is for the benefit of their own community, students would be motivated to acquire a good education in the form of qualification, socialisation and subjectification (as discussed in section 2.5.1). I contend it is a sound education that would liberate learners from rote learning to acquire empowering knowledge.

But Lilliedahl (2015:41) argue that knowledge in the curriculum should not be taken as unproblematic, because it can also be a means for exclusion as much as inclusion. Given this, it is important to consider the sources of knowledge that teachers draw on to relate to the context of their learners. Next, I will discuss where knowledge in the curriculum come from.

2.4 WHERE DOES KNOWLEDGE IN THE CURRICULUM COME FROM?

It is important to understand the sources of knowledge in the curriculum, because each piece of knowledge has its own origin and purpose. The sources influence the way knowledge is

understood and consequently impact on what and how the knowledge is taught (Rata, 2012:107). Teachers also do not start their profession empty-headed; they also have their own epistemological stance with which they make sense of the syllabus content, understand their students and the textbooks which support their teaching preparations. Firth (2013:59) introduces three epistemologies that dominate curriculum knowledge as *absolutism*, *relativism* and *realism*, each having an influence on educational policy, theory and practice. I will also discuss these sources of knowledge to illustrate implications associated with each source of knowledge on an educational system.

2.4.1 Absolutism

This conception is often linked with positivism. It maintains the objectivity of knowledge if it has to be accepted as truth. Reliable knowledge in this approach is that which is rigid, universal and independent of its social and historical contexts. According to Firth, (2013), an educational system based on this conceptualization aims at inducing learners into dominant traditions that are characterized by capitalism, social inequalities, divisions and conflict. Since teachers and students have to comply with curriculum content, the future scenario of absolutism is one where education and society are split entities (Firth, 2013:65).

Reflecting on the context of Malawi, I contend the main tenets of absolutism are clearly in Malawian schools. Findings of this study presented in Chapter 4 confirm this. Thus, I argue that it is this conceptualization of knowledge that is contributing to the proliferation of disengaged students, the majority of whom are the disadvantaged, who need to be supported by a pedagogy that acknowledges their context.

Malawi's curriculum is externally sourced. An externally sourced curriculum refers to a curriculum that is simply imposed on teachers, disregarding any meaningful input they could make in designing it. Such a borrowed curriculum policy does not take into account the specific needs of the local learners. Teachers consequently have to struggle to make external abstract concepts in the curriculum accessible to the learners. The supply of teaching and learning materials is controlled by outside printing agencies and their budget is donor driven (Wamba & Mgonezulo, 2014:328). With an overreliance on donor aid for developing its educational sector, Malawi is prone to external manipulation as the aid comes with terms and conditions attached. Both multilateral and bilateral donor communities identify and define the

country's educational needs and impose solutions with no or minimum consultation with stakeholders, regardless of whether these solutions fit or not.

Externally proposed educational reforms have to be implemented before the aid is dispensed (Wamba & Mgomezulu, 2014:328). Indeed Malawian teachers have to stick to the externally mandated terms in order to keep their jobs (Chirwa & Naidoo, 2016:6). The imposed curriculum leads imposed teaching styles, leaving students with no choice but either to memorize the abstract knowledge to pass examinations or to disengage.

In other situations, Malawi's donors such as Britain, the USA, and Japan, among others, have often sent volunteer teachers from their richly resourced countries to teach in poorly resourced secondary schools of Malawi. It is difficult to appreciate the significance of these visiting teachers, some of whom struggle with English (Malawi's medium of instruction). However, the government does not turn their offers down for fear of budget cuts, stagnation and sanctions (Wamba & Mgomezulu, 2014:329).

In my own experience as a secondary school student, I remember our Mathematics teacher and English teachers were North Americans, while our Physical Science teacher was from England. The Mathematics teacher could award students marks of, say, 140 out of 100 for outstanding achievements in assessments. Though this could create excitement among the students, but it was confusing as to why her marking could go beyond 100%, which was a baseline for the other teachers.

To some extent, this could also be contributing to students' alienation from their environment as these teachers cannot immediately incorporate their learners' contexts into their teaching. Certainly, an absolutist approach has created conflicts in Malawi, where local well-motivated plans for the poor citizens envisage education as a vehicle "through which every citizen can realize his or her potential and contribute to national development" (MoEST, 2013:v). No wonder Firth (2013: 65) argues that absolutism sows the seeds that disconnect schools from their communities (Firth, 2013:65).

It is in hopeless situations such as found in Malawi that teachers are challenged not simply to accept the status quo, but to become critical of the power structures that have shaped their conditions (Gruenewald, 2003; Freire, 1970). This is linked to a critical pedagogy of place (CPP), which will be discussed in Section 2.10. This study intends to create spaces within the externally mandated curriculum to re-engage students in the teaching of Geography. It does

not regard knowledge in the syllabus as absolute or universal. Knowledge has to be actively constructed between teachers and learners using community resources to promote social inclusion. It is hence crucial to consider another source of knowledge.

Relativism is discussed next.

2.4.2 Relativism (Social Constructivism)

Social constructivists claim that knowledge is socially produced and therefore has diverse meanings that reflect the context and time of the subjects (Firth, 2013:64). According to Young (2011:268), a social constructivist curriculum is “based on the learners’ experience and interests and that somehow these can be equated with interests of society”. However, in the case of Malawi, where the curriculum knowledge is externally sourced (Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2007:197), the curriculum does not reflect the interests and experiences of the local learners. This suggests that students are being treated as outsiders, therefore reinforcing their disengagement. A curriculum based on a relativist conception stipulates generic skills, learning outcomes and the integration of school subjects aimed at teaching learners to become labourers in the world of work.

Firth (2013) thinks that the future implications of this conception are associated with a dilution of knowledge, because it lacks boundaries unlike the case with absolutism. On the other hand, with much more curriculum space offered to labour skills than knowledge acquisition, relativism is problematized for compromising the acquisition of knowledge in the knowledge society. Young (2010:21) argues that:

If we are to give the importance to education in the knowledge society any serious meaning, we need to make the question of knowledge our central concern and this involves developing a knowledge-led and subject-led and not, as much current orthodoxy assumes, a learner-led approach to the curriculum.

Moreover, this learner-centred approach has led to the deskilling of teachers, which limits teachers’ potential to enhance their students’ learning needs. Teachers’ tasks now are to help students acquire the qualifications with which they should compete on the world labour market (Firth, 2013:64). However, what is required for the majority of graduates at secondary school level (MoEST, 2013:vii) is an empowering knowledge with which they may live a decent life in their communities, not necessarily competing on the world labour market.

Schweisfurth (2011:425) likens learner-centred education to the outcome-based model which Malawi is implementing (MoEST, 2013: vii), and thus describes it as a ‘travelling policy’ because it is being imposed even in countries with different contexts. According to Schweisfurth, this is the reason why it continues to fail in developing countries. After all, a paradigm shift from teacher-centred to student-centred teaching seems to be taking long to disappear in Malawi (Mizrachi et al., 2010:12) because of vested interests, lack of resources and institutional structures.

However, by taking students’ situatedness into account, as this approach claims, this conception could encourage inclusive education that could cater for the needs of the majority of students. Still, pressurizing teachers to prepare their students for work elsewhere leaves teachers with no time to support their (struggling) learners to realize their potential before they lose confidence and give up. Therefore, Lambert and Morgan (2010:2) conclude that expecting teachers to operate like compliant technocrats in secondary schools undermines the core values of a teacher. The teachers (see Chapter 4) confirm it is unfair to blame them for inadequacies in the implementation of a curriculum that was simply imposed on them.

Below I will discuss *Realism* as another philosophy of curriculum knowledge.

2.4.3 Realism (Social Realism)

This approach to knowledge appears to be addressing the shortcomings of the other two forms of learning, that is: *relativism* and *absolutism*. Social realism, while accepting that knowledge is external to learners as with the absolutism, also recognizes that this externality has a social and historical origin (Young, 2010:22). According to Firth (2013:64), a realist curriculum is an engaging one that provides a *connection* between knowledge and structure, form and concepts as well as curriculum organization (Firth, 2013:64, my emphasis). The aim of education in this approach is acquisition of powerful knowledge that should be open to competing theories to enrich one’s explanatory power (Yates & Young, 2010:8).

This could be desirable indeed, because it would open dialogue to new knowledge sharing between teachers and students, rather than restricting themselves to what the syllabus stipulates. Young (2009:15) posits that allowing teachers to critically assess the strength of knowledge in the curriculum would promote social justice and equality. This flexible conception could relieve and engage teachers and students who have to comply with curriculum dictates whose content are far-fetched and incompatible in their context.

However, politicians are intrinsically motivated to pick and choose knowledge forms in which they have vested interest, so as to be seen by their electorate that they are doing something, despite the consequences. Lambert and Morgan (2010:2) argue that, in a market-driven model, it is not easy, even in self-governing states, to tell which policy choices are as good as they appear. Although the authors challenge teachers in such circumstances not to simply 'obey orders', but to do their work with a moral purpose, policies are rarely contested (Beck, 2012). This would defeat the sole purpose of realism, where dominant knowledge (in policies) has to be open to critique.

Next, it is necessary to consider discussions on the discipline of Geography to assess its compatibility with the PBE framework in search of avenues for re-engaging students in the subject.

2.5 DISCUSSIONS OVER GEOGRAPHY EDUCATION

2.5.1 What knowledge constitutes a good education for the Geography curriculum?

'Curriculum' is a highly contested concept (Biddulph, 2013:129), because what is taught is expected to enable us to realize the purpose of education. Lambert (2003:159) poses important questions when defining the purpose of education:

Is education primarily to serve the needs of society and the economy (providing skills and employable people for the world of work in the global market place), or is it mainly to provide worthwhile experiences and knowledge to help individuals 'live sanely in the world'... or has education got to serve both these purposes and more besides?

For Malawi as a nation, the answer is both. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Malawi recognizes that most students do not study further after their secondary school education. This implies that a good secondary education has to equip students with knowledge and skills which they can transfer from school to life beyond school (MoEST, 2013: vi). With this in my mind, it is important for me to consider what constitutes a good education that would address students' disengagement and promote educational achievement for the majority of Malawian school-leavers to realize the purpose of their education. Biesta (2009:3) indicates three intertwined domains for a good education: *qualification, socialization and subjectification*.

Qualification entails providing learners with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to empower them to be able to perform a task or a job. *Socialization* refers to processes in which learners are initiated to become members of a discipline so that they start thinking geographically or mathematically. On the other hand, *subjectification* is explained as a process of preparing a learner to become an independent and critical thinker (Reddy et al., 2015:1-2). The authors argue that to determine “quality education”, an educational system should ensure that the curriculum knowledge meets the requirements of the three domains. Good education should “ascertain *what is* and not *what ought to be* desirable” (2015:2, emphasis in original).

This asserts the need for a curriculum to have an enabling and not a disabling framework of knowledge and skills that empowers students not only to qualify for certification, but also to become independent thinkers who can take their rightful places in their communities (MoEST, 2013:v). However, Malawians, despite high levels of unemployed school graduates, also have to comply with the requirements of their donor community to set their education agenda for the world of work. Thus, it could be said that measuring educational performance in terms of externally prescribed outcomes at national examinations does not serve the purpose of education. It becomes a breeding ground for rampant rote learning and leaks of examination papers¹³ in Malawian schools as teachers struggle to cover their syllabi for examinations, yet without tangible benefits.

I argue that it is in this struggle for qualifications at the expense of the rest of the other domains that students becomes pressurized and disconnected from their natural places. Realizing this is not sustainable, they consequently disengage from their schooling out of frustrations. This study therefore proposes the PBE *connectedness* lens for the teaching of externally mandated curriculum (Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2007:197) as a transformational tool for good geography education. Reddy et al. (2015:7) point out that “a supportive classroom environment” is the ultimate foundation for the three aspects of good education. Teachers need ample time to support their learner’s learning needs for good education to take place.

¹³ This refers to malpractices whereby examination questions and/or papers are sold by vendors on the streets, resulting in a loss of the credibility of and trust in Malawi’s Examination Board (MANEB) (Kamwendo, 2013:114).

2.5.2. The Place of Skills in the Junior Secondary Geography Curriculum

As the international community is seeking ways to improve economic competitiveness and investment in the global markets, the education sector is regarded as a vehicle for the development of skilled labour (Wood, 2013:169). For instance, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2005:4) argues that to face the complexity of the contemporary world, a wide range of competencies is required, and not just knowledge. However, the market place and schools pursue different agendas and success in one does not directly translate into success in the other. Schooling for the labour market entails a narrow conceptualization of education that has led to a shift in the education agenda from knowledge production to the acquisition of technological and economically oriented skills to meet the demand for labour on international markets.

In the case of Malawi, secondary school graduates are expected to have acquired both generic and specific skills, including citizenship skills ethical and socio-cultural skills, economic development and environmental management skills, occupational and entrepreneurship skills, practical skills, creativity and resourcefulness, and scientific and technological skills (MoEST, 2013:viii).

Common skills and techniques expected in Geography include map-reading, interpretation, sketching and diagrams, fieldwork, describing, illustrating, and thinking. However, these skills, including the use of coordinates and reading of symbols, can also be applied in other disciplines (Wood, 2013:171). Bennetts (2002:90) therefore cautions that the acquisition of skills in Geography should specifically occur in *connection* with geographical content to acquire knowledge and understanding on the part of the pupils.

This implies that even in situations where a skill appears generic, it should not be understood in isolation, but in *connection* with particular knowledge and understanding in order to achieve a holistic education. For example, basic skills that are applicable to all knowledge disciplines should be contextualized with each discipline's knowledge, so as to be understood geographically, mathematically, biologically and so on.

Contextualization would help learners acquire the appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in order to understand and appreciate the world and manage its resources sustainably (MoEST, 2013:xi). Meanwhile, with so much focus on skills acquisition and less focus on 'core knowledge', subjectification and socialization have been compromised. The curriculum

has to be supported to make it more knowledge responsive if teachers are to be serious enablers of quality education. In addition, place-based field trips promote holistic learning by rendering abstract concepts accessible to students using their five senses (Herrick, 2010:109).

2.5.3. The Role of Fieldwork in Geography Education

The MoEST (2013:v) regards Geography as:

a natural and social science involving the study of the physical environment and the interaction of people with the environment. It also makes them appreciate the interdependence of societies in various areas at local, national, regional and global level.

Similarly, Alastair Bonnett identifies the two main contemporary themes for Geography as the environment and international knowledge (2008:95) For Bonnett, for good geography education, children should be given chance to “explore, connect, map and engage’ with their world, environment”. Herrick (2010:109), while validating the mutual relationships between man-made and natural environments, emphasizes the need to expose students to actively learning from the ‘field’ by referring to tangible examples when exploring the basic geographical concepts of space, time and place. In Geography this is achieved in fieldwork activities.

Fieldwork is a defining component of the discipline of geography as it offers the students varied opportunities to overcome traditional classroom constraints and to acquire authentic experiences that motivate them to remain engaged with the curriculum (Kinder, 2013; Boyle, Maguire, Martin, Milsom, Nash, Rawlison, Turner, Wurthmann & Conchie, 2007). To Alan Kinder, fieldwork is capable of enabling teachers and learners to discover, recover and explore, which enriches geographical learning (2013:180).Teresa Ploszajska (quoted in (Bonnet, 2008:82) narrated that:

Fieldwork, whether in familiar local surroundings or distant unknown areas, [is] widely considered to be a means of encouraging children to recognize Geography as this body of knowledge pre-eminently concerned with the real world.

Some scholars (e.g. Hope, 2009) concur with MoEST’s vision of equipping learners with skills that are transferable from school to community. It was found in their submission that, through

fieldwork, students develop problem-solving, leadership, teamwork, organization and communications skills. These are desirable skills for citizens of any nation. However, fieldwork is conceptualized narrowly, as its prescription in the syllabus is not only limited but also constrains teachers from utilizing it effectively as they struggle to find the time and to convince the authorities (such as administrators and parents) about its role (Kinder, 2013:190). This has been validated by the findings of this study (as indicated in Chapter 4).

2.5.3.1 Types of Fieldwork

Teachers' control and choice of fieldwork the teacher is pursuing can render field work a passive or an active experience for students. (Job, 1996 as cited in Kinder, 2013:183) brought to light five choices (types) that are available to teachers on how they may develop their learners' fieldwork learning experiences.

- The traditional field excursion

In this type of fieldwork, activities are dominated by teachers who explain what they know on the subject to the students. The students have to be physically present in the field to observe, take notes, and/or make sketches on what they may have understood on the topic from their teacher.

- Hypothesis testing

This approach is mostly associated with collection and analysis of scientific data and is employed in geography to collect data and to expose students to fieldwork tools.

However, in these two approaches, students' participation is limited because they lack critical reflection of places or fields at which they are being exposed to. In other words, they are not assisted to own the knowledge that has been isolated from their own lived experiences. Lack of critical reflection, associated with these choices, promotes rote-learning. This could be contributing not only to students' disengagement, but also disinterest in furthering up their studies in geography. Next are the remaining three classifications of fieldwork.

- Geographical inquiry

Posing and investigating questions underpins this type of fieldwork. The questions may include:

1. What is this place like?

2. What distinguishes it from other places that I know?
3. What does it mean to me? What does it mean to other people who live here?
4. How is it related to other places?
5. How did it used to be? How might it change? Can it go on like this?

These questions arouse students' curiosity to stay engaged in search of possible answers for them.

- Discovery fieldwork

In this approach, teachers encourage their learners to explore and discover new information that should motivate learners to explore and discover new information that should motivate learners to seek further discovery.

- Sensory fieldwork

This type is also referred to as Earth education because it is aimed at “re-establishing the somewhat fractured connections between people and nature” (Job, Day & Smyth, 1999:16). Using their own five sense organs, students participate in knowledge creation that connects what is available in their own community to what they learn in class. This would encourage students to take their rightful positions in their community. However, to promote the transferability of these skills requires a socially engaging pedagogy.

The three approaches resonate with the concept of PBE which if exploited, may liberate students from rote-memorization. However, teachers may require support to implement such pedagogical practices. It is, on one hand, crucial for refresher or in-service training programs to orient or guide teachers in the effective implementation of fieldwork. On the other hand, teachers (as eluded to in Chapter 4) lack time to divert from what the congested geography syllabus mandates to give their learners room for critical reflection of what is taught alongside completing tasks assigned to them, and for assessment purposes. PBE sensory field visits would offer students an opportunity to participate in creating new knowledge using their own senses. Applying expanded notions of place with their senses to syllabus content would reinforce the required socialization in Geography. The discussion below focuses on pedagogies of place.

2.6 THE PEDAGOGIES OF PLACE

Place has been conceptualized differently over the years in education circles, rendering it a highly contested notion. Place could refer to a geometric space, a location, a site, distance measured in degrees, grid references, an area defined by political borders, imaginary lines or cardinal points. These attributes could leave one wondering if there could be distinctions between place, community and space, or whether the terms could be used interchangeably.

Furthermore, one could still wonder why is it that students in one school and one class could have a range of different feelings for their place. Perceiving the same place differently implies different people have different kinds of ties to that place. The attributes of place as advanced by Gruenewald in his work, “Critical Pedagogy of Place” (2003b) include perceptual, historical, ecological, sociological, political, ideological dimensions. Gruenewald (2005b) further maintains that the attributes can critically explain how individuals or a group of people relate their lived experiences with a place in question. It is this individualized perception that affects people’s connection with the places they inhabit. This study draws on Johnson’s (2012:833) views of place as “not just a noun but a verb and verb of action” to argue for the multi-functionality of place in the teaching of Geography.

To Shimeld (2012:41), place is “the ability to recognize the connections between different scales and different perspectives”. Lambert (2009:4) introduces three key concepts for school Geography which are often underrated with narrow conceptualizations:

Place, space and scale are arguably the three really big ideas that underpin school Geography; opening up these ideas a little ... shows their scope and potential. We can see the relevance of being able to ‘think geographically’ to anyone living in the world and wanting to understand and respond to the challenges facing them during the 21st century.

Henderson & Potter (2001:84) explained “space” as “unstoried place” and hence I argue that students in Malawi disengage because the curriculum side-lines their places and instead forces them to learn about “unstoried places”. This investigation maintains further that students disengage because the Geography curriculum lacks the capacity to open up relevant content for students to connect with their lived experiences, their “storied places”. For failing to take students’ context into account, such an education system could be described as ‘placeless’ (as explained in Chapter 1). It closes up the different perspectives that could win

students' confidence. Feeling unacknowledged and unsecured, students develop a thin connectedness with the placeless curriculum and eventually disengage from it. Internationally, PBE is gaining prominence in enhancing the connection between school knowledge and community knowledge.

2.6.1 Pedagogies of Place that Lay the Foundation for PBE

The pedagogies of place within which PBE is rooted include outdoor education (OE); place consciousness; environmental education; community-based education; ecological education; community-oriented schooling; service learning; bioregional education; civic education; and project-based learning (Smith, 2007).

In the next section I will discuss the claims of PBE that I identified from the literature review.

2.7 CLAIMS OF PBE

Insights gathered from PBE scholars (Smith, 2002, 2005; Woodhouse & Knapp, 2000; Theobald & Curtiss, 2000; Semken, 2012; Sobel, 2006) helped me to identify characteristics of PBE, and I accordingly posit some connections of PBE with other educational theories and practices (as outlined in the next section):

1. Learners as active participants relates to issues of citizenship, student-centred teaching and learning;
2. Teacher as a facilitator and co-learner engages cooperative learning; life-long learning;
3. Permeability of classroom and community walls accords with school-community partnerships; decolonizing education;
4. Authentic, real learning experiences compares with experiential education/learning;
5. Learning based on the natural world matches with environmental education/learning;
6. Investigating nature corresponds with outdoor education;
7. Incorporation of local culture is also advocated for in multiculturalism; inclusive education;
8. Studies based on local community and environment confirm Dewey's notion of progressive education; community-based education; sustainable education for self-reliance;
9. Hands-on problem solving corresponds with inquiry-based learning; learning by doing;

10. Intersection of place with self and community in the curriculum implies place-based learning;
11. New knowledge creation through interaction with knowledgeable others matches with constructivism;
12. Multi-discipline nature entails knowledge integration;
13. Grounding knowledge in what is familiar can be aligned with scaffolding learning; zone of proximal development; funds of knowledge.

These PBE principles are not final for the emerging field, as there is room for more tenets and critique. However, it is with this list that I contend the PBE connectedness with other areas of study.

Many PBE scholars agree that successful PBE emphasizes sustained community and school partnership (Lewicki, 2010; Theobald, 1997; Sobel, 2005; Powers, 2004; Smith, 2002). It is certainly this collaboration that can transform Malawi's education. If students are to be empowered with skills that are transferable from their school to their community, then classrooms should not operate like containers (Leander et al., 2010:329) in their communities. School content should acknowledge the role of communities as curricular resources. Theobald and Curtiss (2000:107) conclude that "Efforts to prepare and empower students for the real world [as the Ministry of Education claims] should not ignore the learning environment that lies beyond the school-house gate".

While the explicit aim of contemporary education is to prepare students to become labourers for wealthy individuals who may have become rich in a corrupt way (Theobald, 1997:121), PBE educators believe education should offer students -frameworks that help them discover the potential of resources available in the places they inhabit. Furthermore, PBE recognizes the role of both human and non-human community resources in education (Smith & Sobel, 2010:23). This suggests that the idea of bringing community resources into the classroom indicates that education has a role to play in the communities it serves. This would intrinsically persuade students to remain engaged with their class work, which eventually would improve their educational achievement.

Smith (2002:9-10), describes the role of students and teachers in PBE curriculum implementation as outlined below:

- A critical characteristic of PBE is its emphasis on learning experience that allows students to become creators of knowledge rather than the consumers of knowledge created by others.
- Student ownership and engagement are much more likely to emerge when students have had the chance to participate in the creation of their own learning agendas.
- Teachers in such settings act like experienced guides, co-learners, brokers of community resources and learning possibilities. Their expertise lies not so much in their stored knowledge, [but] in their capacity to help students acquire the skills and dispositions of effective learners.
- Teachers must become the creators of the curriculum rather than the dispensers of a curriculum developed by others.

Importantly, these PBE tenets define the kind of education reform that is required in the Malawian context. With an imposed curriculum, teachers fail to make class content meaningful for their learners, because they become absorbed in complying with the curriculum dictates. As a result, disadvantaged students lack support to augment their learning, and so lose confidence and eventually disengage. This study posits that greater efforts should be made to empower students to become owners of class content. When class content intersects with community knowledge, students would quickly realize that education has their community welfare at heart, and hence they would become willing participants. This study will explore opportunities in which the Malawi Junior Secondary Geography curriculum can become viable by adopting a PBE framework.

The literature indicates that the idea of centring learning within the child's context, which the PBE concept advocates, is linked to John Dewey's progressive education (e.g. experiential education, case-based learning, service learning and outdoor education). The common characteristics include an emphasis on the need to ground knowledge in what is local, on the interdisciplinary nature of learning, and on defining the core education agenda as the need to empower students to appreciate their community and environment (Woodhouse & Knapp, 2000; Semken, 2012). I posit these are the essential elements for post-independence education reforms, if political leaders are to keep their promise with which they secured their political seats.

2.7.1. Connection Between PBE and Other Fields of Study

The multifaceted nature of PBE does not only offer connections across disciplines (such as Geography, Mathematics, Science), but also across contemporary education themes such as citizenship, critical thinking, inclusiveness, school-community partnering and sustainability. I found all these falling under the umbrella of social justice, because they encourage the active participation of citizens in owning their contributions to their communities.

Citizenship requires that “citizens [learners] engage actively with others in shaping the future of their society through educational deliberations” (Miller, 2000:82). Issues of education quality, equity and access require the active participation of all students regardless of their status. Similarly, PBE offers students experiences and exposure aimed at empowering both advantaged and disadvantaged students to reflect and develop agency in sustaining resources in their places.

Just as in other social settings, social injustice is expressed in various ways in education cycles as well, the principal among them being the underlying assumptions that success only comes to those who work hard and that children who fail should sort themselves out to succeed. As a matter of necessity, PBE requires that teachers apply pedagogical justice to recognize their learners’ context before commencing a lesson. As such, PBE diffuses by offers students authentic learning experiences that make abstract concepts more accessible to all. This further promotes inclusive education, which is a social justice approach to education (Swart & Pettipher, 2016; Fataar, 2015).

School and community partnership is another intrinsic part of PBE, and scholars concur in the sense that the most successful PBE is that which emphasizes sustained community and school partnership (Lewick, 2010; Theobald, 1997; Sobel, 2005; Powers, 2004; Smith, 2002). It is indeed this collaboration that is required in Malawian schools to curb souring school-community relations. In my own experience as a teacher, it is not uncommon to witness a low turn-out of parents when schools call for Parent-Teacher Association meetings. The communities would develop positive attitudes towards their children’s education and their schools when they realise that what their children are learning is for the benefit of their communities. Recognizing parents’ role in their children’s education would diffuse the tendency to ‘blame’ the tension between teachers and parents that arises over their children’s disengagement.

By the same token, social justice involves principles of fairness and equity. To address these qualities in education, critical thinking on all assumptions that inform successful education is required. PBE is enriched with critical thinking through a critical pedagogy (discussed in Section 2.10). This critical pedagogy is explained as being in place when “schooling becomes a project of helping students to see injustices and assisting them to locate themselves in relation to such issues and to see how society is structured in ways that both sustain and maintain these inequalities” (Smyth, 2011:51). PBE is thereby capable of empowering colonized peoples to question and to be liberated from the injustices that have been buried silently in placeless education. Gruenewald and Smith (2014:345) conclude that:

PBE in our minds is something more than a curricula reform, but is another means to address the issues of equity and excellence that dominate discourses about American schooling.

The next section discusses the challenges that may hinder possible implementation of PBE.

2.7.2. PBE Challenges

Despite the overwhelming PBE success stories in the literature (Sobel, 2005; Long, 2009; Lewick, 2010; Promise of Place, 2015), the pedagogy faces some criticisms. Implementation of this framework is faced with resistance at the local, institutional, national as well as global level. Given the significant benefits of PBE, it is worthwhile considering PBE as a transformational tool in the education system.

However, there is a body of literature on dominant discourses of accountability and global economic competitiveness that compromises the potential of context-based learning globally (Ontong & Le Grange 2015; Gruenewald, 2003a; 2003b; Sobel, 2005; 2013; Theobald, 1997). Nevertheless, the findings from survey conducted by Jennings et al. (2005) suggest that PBE is still possible in the ‘standardized era’. In another view, Ontong and Le Grange (2015) challenge teachers to find their way within the most stringent curriculum to plan for context-based lessons.

Furthermore, the rationalization of education in terms of homogenized curricular, standardized testing, curriculum guidelines and national standards does not acknowledge students’ contexts. These hierarchical structures pressurize teachers to teach and complete the syllabus mainly for the sake of examinations. This results in missing opportunities for connecting class content to tangible resources in their community. On the other hand, other

scholars regard PBE as an effective movement that counters this hegemonic prevailing orientation of classroom practices (Smith, 2007:204; Sobel, 2005:6).

Tuck et al. (2014:4) observe that “settlers [...] continue to cover their tracks [...] in the name of development to justify their presence”. There is sound evidence of this in present-day Malawi where vast lands in the Thyolo and Mulanje districts of Southern Malawi occupied by tea plantations are still privately owned by foreigners. With the Indigenous land taken away by the settlers, it becomes a missed opportunity for PBE to influence students’ reconnection to their natural environment.

Another challenge is the Malawi government’s overreliance on foreign aid to finance its education reforms (as discussed in Section 2.3.1). It becomes challenging to divert donor-mandated strategies to pave the way for practices locally perceived as important in facilitating meaningful education for citizens (Mizrachi et al., 2010:6) in the absence of local funding. McLaren argues that the modern education system is designed to produce “compliant, productive and patriotic workers”. On the other hand, PBE offers avenues that could help students become productive citizens both in their communities and beyond. This further means that PBE has the potential to make a difference in the formerly colonized people’s education. Section 2.9 offers insights into how PBE may transform Malawi education’s challenges.

2.8 CRITICISMS OF PBE

Academic circles allow room for critiquing a practice to create the opportunity for evaluation that could map a better way forward. Although a review of the literature on PBE has indicated some limited criticism, there is still room for critical analysis and re-evaluation of its assumptions.

PBE is faulted for glorifying rural and wild places, while clinging to past history. The critique assumes that it is too short-sightedness to ground knowledge to what is local when the world is in an era of economic globalization as well as growing multiculturalism (McInerney et al., 2011:10). This, according to Longhorst and Perea Warniment (2012), can have negative repercussions on Indigenous students who may risk alienation and marginalization.

Yet it is also worth noting that serious environmental challenges – including depletion of resources, global warming and pollution – have emerged in an era when the world is too busy pursuing the agenda of economic globalization in one way or the other. There is also

economic exploitation alongside economic globalization, which again disregards the local communities. On the other hand, Gruenewald (2008:143) asserts that by grounding knowledge within what is local, PBE helps people “to learn how to live well together in a place without doing damage to others, human and non-humans”.

Additionally, economic globalization and multiculturalism have failed to address the environmental crisis; instead, there is a growing need for the local people to support initiatives intended to curtail the deterioration. In fact, the North is depending on the South to control the damage as one connected body rather than as separate parts of the world. To address these challenges, the need to reconsider human actions and their impact on the environment or places cannot be overemphasized. We need to mobilize our young people to identify existing challenges so that they may be empowered to take their rightful positions in making their world a safer place to live. PBE is a suitable platform for raising environmental awareness and highlighting the stewardship of the young people.

Furthermore, it is the globalized placeless education that ignores the ties Indigenous students have with their places which has disconnected them from their environments. This study argues that the disadvantaged students are marginalized because they fail to grasp abstract school concepts that do not take their context into account. These students require authentic learning experiences that could help them relate what is tangible locally to what goes beyond the local. (Green, 2012:380) affirms that: “Children read and act the world through local geographies and diverse literacies and in the process, become invested in the places where learning occurs”.

The diverse literacies in this case refer to all knowledge accumulated from the child’s lived places and across disciplines. It is these diverse literacies [including preliminary knowledge] that have an influence on the quality of the new knowledge a child is acquiring. Students’ alienation occurs when schools fail to acknowledge these literacies, which mark an entry point for grasping more advanced school concepts. Likewise, teaching a multicultural class requires concrete teaching and learning aids to support diverse students’ learning needs. Casey (1996:18) affirms that “to live is to live locally, and to know is first of all to know the place one is in”. This echoes the view that primary knowledge from one’s lived place is vital to understand more complex ideas from elsewhere.

PBE trips engage learners in direct experiences which add variety, reducing teacher-pupil tension to allow students participate and develop agency in knowledge creation. This is limited in traditional classrooms. In addition to that, Woodhouse and Knapp (2000:1) observe that Dewey was not after actually abandoning the classroom, but instead argued that if classrooms could use examples available in the students' environment, they would offer students the lens for appreciating the outside world. Dewey reiterates that:

Experience [outside the classroom] has its geographical aspect, its artistic and its literacy, its scientific and its historical sides. All [classroom] studies arise from aspects of one earth and the one life lived upon it (1915:91).

The concept of PBE is further criticized for not having a specific definition and having originated from multiple educational practices such as EE (Sobel, 2006); OE (Knapp, 1996) and community-based education (Smith, 2002; 2005). The reviewed literature has not adequately addressed the concern. However, PBE advocates contend the practice is extensively accepted and adopted (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Powers, 2004). The need for PBE in Malawian schools is the basis of the next discussion.

2.9 THE CONTEXT AND NEED FOR PBE IN MALAWIAN SCHOOLS

Malawi government policy documents emphasize the government's commitment to promoting the quality and relevance of its education system (NESP, 2008). The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) acknowledges the role of secondary school education in empowering Malawians to fit into the global village of which Malawi is a member. The Ministry realizes that for whatever students learn at school to be basically beneficial, it should be transferable to their after-school lives. To achieve this, the Geography Syllabus (MoEST, 2013:vii) stipulates that:

Students must be introduced to new knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in the context of their existing knowledge, skills, attitudes and values so that they may develop a deeper understanding as they learn and apply the knowledge.

Thus, in an effort to improve students' educational attainments in their class work, the government of Malawi advocates for a shift from traditional teacher-centred teaching to use of active-learning pedagogies, which Mizrachi et al. (2010:1) describe as participatory approaches or student-centred methodologies. Learner-centred methods put the students at

the centre of the learning process. In the case of Malawi, an outcomes-based approach has been prescribed.

The Ministry of Education (2013:xi) has described Geography as both a natural and a social science that “involves the study of the physical environment and the interaction of people within the environment”. Furthermore, the Ministry reaffirms the contributions of Geography in addressing contemporary and environmental issues such as overpopulation, natural resources depletion, global warming, competitive world markets, and the need to develop global partnerships.

As mentioned earlier, this investigation explores possibilities in which the Form 1 and 2 Geography syllabus could open up spaces for PBE to re-engage students with their environment. PBE is geared to action which benefits the community. Connecting the youths to their community reinforces ecological awareness and stewardship, both of which are required to foster commitment to solving environmental issues (Smith, 2007:192).

Although the policy statement mentioned by MoEST (2013) advocates a learner-centred pedagogy with some similarities to PBE tenets, there appears to be a big policy gap. The challenges associated with a ‘curriculum that teaches to test’ appear to be deep-rooted and continue to be gaining ground in the Malawian context. Kamwendo (2013:114) notes that, while veteran teachers lack the skills and expertise needed for the implementation of learner-centred pedagogies, recent graduate teachers fail to cope with the pedagogical demands as well as the expectation of covering examination syllabus. As a result, they end up adopting a one-dimensional pedagogy which follows a narrow set of expectations and is associated with a number of problems, including disengagement of students (Fataar, 2015:113).

In addition, the policy statement has not specified the source of the students’ existing knowledge on which new knowledge has to be built. Basing new secondary school knowledge on memorized abstract primary school concepts continues to render education meaningless to the communities it should serve. Students fail to apply what they learn in their communities because school content seems to be removed from the reality of their lives. A pedagogy that engages learners’ context could help promote effective learner-centred methodologies and transform Malawi’s education system. Smith (2007:204) describes PBE as follows:

PBE does not look like conventional education. Students do not sit quietly at their desks listening to teachers or completing worksheets. They instead work and converse in teams and frequently leave the school itself, to engage in activities in the field or community. And teachers do not concentrate on drilling students for high-stakes test, relying instead on forms of understanding and knowledge that arise organically through real-life investigations and problem solving.

While this study concurs with the Ministry of Education in promoting student-centred pedagogy, it argues specifically that PBE is an effective avenue for implementing such a curriculum (Smith & Sobel, 2010), and therefore has potential for transforming Malawian education. Although the post-colonial Malawi educational system has embarked on contextualizing the curriculum by encouraging the use of Indigenous knowledge in its learning areas (MIE, 2008), studies on the curricula indicate that local knowledge is subordinated and therefore irrelevant to the community (Phiri, 2008; Glasson et al., 2006; 2010). Apparently, it is time to decentre the dominant approach to make way for Indigenous ways of knowing (Dei 2000:113).

It is apparent that ignoring community consciousness when dealing with human beings creates a lot of challenges, including wasting of time and resources. Scholars agree that connecting class content to the knowledge of our ancestors enhances a sense of belonging, identity and security which promotes mental health (Bird, 2007; Wright & Tolan, 2009).

Indeed, it is this place-consciousness that has been 'dismembered' in the Geography curriculum of Malawi. It is such an education system which rejects knowledge from local places that fails to gain the confidence of Malawian Elders, and in return it is rejected. It is this rejection which their children confirm when they find school concepts grounded in Western ideologies unduly abstract. The young people struggling with their education come to disapprove of the conditions their community consider essential for a successful future life.

Children come to school with the expectation that it is only good school grades that could offer them a ticket out of poverty and acquire a good life and better job opportunities. Realizing they are failing to make progress on the basis of abstract classroom concepts, they come to perceive that the education system is not meant for them. Worse still, with plenty examples of people in their community who have obtained their certificates but cannot get

jobs, they perceive education is full of empty promises but continues to fail them. Consequently, after losing interest in schooling, the students disengage.

On the other hand, place-conscious pedagogies improve the ties students have with their local environment, which in turn renders education relevant in the students' context. Though it is obvious that the environmental challenges the world is facing are the results of people's actions, current geographical pedagogies are not explicit enough for the students to critically appreciate their challenges (Morgan, 2011). PBE field trips could orient students by encouraging them to play active roles in what is familiar in their own environments.

There is compelling evidence that justifies PBE's potential for curtailing embedded social and environmental challenges, while improving educational achievements and self-esteem even in the most disadvantaged schools (Smith, 2002; 2007; 2013; Lewick, 2010; Powers, 2004; Long, 2009; Promise of Place, 2015; Smith & Sobel 2010; Sobel, 2005).

In an evaluative study conducted by Stephen Truman Sugg (2015), '*Place-based Education in a rural Appalachian Elementary School. A program evaluation*', it was reported that the PBE tenets that were adopted gradually by teachers at Crellin School, became a success story over conventional classroom learning that had been failing teachers at the school (2015:107). From the findings at Crellin, Sugg (2015:114) asserted that, education attainments at the school "offer evidence that higher test scores among other measures of education achievement, are attainable when schools adopt PBE tenets.

In another investigation carried out in Taiwan by Huei Lee and Chia-Ling Chiang, '*Sense of place and science achievement in Place-based science curriculum*', it was revealed that a Place-based science teaching did not only enhance science learning achievements, but also assisted in achieving a basic aim of science, which is a combination of science and life (Lee & Chiang, 2016:703).

Related to the need to connect students' lives with classroom instruction, Alice Merab Kagoda (2009) conducted a study, '*Integrating appropriate indigenous knowledge in Geography lessons in secondary schools of Uganda*'. Observing that schooling is becoming a disabling environment for students particularly those with disadvantaged backgrounds because it "disconfirms with their historic experiences and dreams" (Kagoda, 2009:117), Kagoda proposes integration of IK to actively involve students through social interaction to enrich geographic content. In this study, I posit a suitable platform for sustainable integration of

school instruction and students' local experiences is through PBE framework. I reemphasise that it is this community-conscious education that is required to transform Malawi's education by re-engaging massively disengaged students in Malawian communities, which previous and existing policy frameworks have yet to address.

It is in circumstances like these ones that teachers are challenged to become more conscious of their own place and role in education (Gruenewald, 2003b:620). This study investigates ways in which PBE can become a practical proposition in Geography classrooms to re-awaken the consciousness of disengaging students. The focus of my next discussion is on how the critical pedagogy of place may influence the transformation of education in Malawi.

2.10 GEOGRAPHY EDUCATION, PBE AND CRITICAL PEDAGOGY OF PLACE (CPP)

The roots of critical pedagogies lie within critical theory. The home of critical theory is Frankfurt and prominent figures include Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, Benjamin and Habermas (Rush, 2004). The theory posits that each society is shaped by the power relations within it. It claims that the existing situation of a particular society is further shaped by how its inhabitant interact with circumstances they find themselves in. Suffice it to say that, if societal challenges are left unaddressed, they become part and parcel of the society until such a time they are confronted. According to the theory, confrontation brings opportunities for change and emancipation. The 'oppressed' are challenged to scrutinise their situation and question unjust ideologies in order to be liberated (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:34).

Crucial to this study is the situation Malawi's education finds itself in. Tolerating educational challenges, such as low retention rates, as if they were nobody's business legitimises the condition. There is no point in replicating policies that continue offering false colonial era policies to people in a self-governing state like Malawi. It is time for teachers to evaluate their efforts and realise that they are labouring in vain when the majority of their students drop out or fail examinations in the name of complying with externally mandated curricula. Gruenewald (2003b:620) calls upon teachers to become more conscious of expanding their pedagogy and accountability outwards towards addressing questions of place.

It is apparent that Geography education is in a situation in which it is being marginalised. The marginalisation will continue if the status quo in schools is left unchallenged. There is a need for action that puts Geography education in its rightful place. It is noted that Geography educational practices are always side-lined within the constraints teachers operate in

(Roberts, 2010:9). Despite that, it has been observed that there is silence over the marginalised status of the geography that is being taught to the students in schools (Morgan, 2011:125). If this situation is left uninterrogated, according to the critical pedagogy of place, it would justify the circumstances under which Geography education is currently being presented.

While Rawding (2013:288) considers the series of paradigms that continue to frame the Geography we teach in schools as a welcome move in a dynamic world, he laments “the centralized control of [the] subject specification”, has a strong impact on the Geography that is being taught in schools. In addition, he regrets pressures within the academy that have resulted in the detachment of school Geography content. The content of Geography that is still being taught in schools does not reflect the new knowledge that is produced in universities through research (Rawding, 2013:285).

However, through collaborations between universities and schools aimed at facilitating good education, out-dated geography knowledge could be replaced to reflect the dynamic nature of Geography. Ranson (2004:4) points it out that, “Schools and colleges should not become islands of socialization that are detached from their families and communities they are supposed to serve”. Also, the International Geography Union Commission on Geography Education cautions that both teachers and researchers need to be supported in order to come up with a valid and effective curriculum (IGU CGE, 2015:3-4).

According to Gruenewald (2003a:9), CPP has two purposes:

- i. Reinhabitation: he described this as having to identify, recover and create material spaces and places that teach us how to live well in our local environments;
- ii. Decolonization: this refers to identifying and changing ways of thinking that injure and exploit other [Indigenous] people and places.

Decolonization and reinhabitation in Gruenewald’s view, are potential tools in recovering and reawakening social and ecological justice. Gruenewald (2003a) challenges teachers not to accept the status quo of their school set-up, but to create a space within the dominant discourses to make their lessons more meaningful to their learners, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Despite Geography teachers being challenged to maintain their identities as geographers when planning their teaching in a way that complies with the discipline of Geography (Le Grange & Beets, 2005), teachers still adhere to hierarchical structures for the sake of earning a living. Policy specifications frame the way that teaching should be carried out. Furthermore, Lambert and Jones (2010:2) challenge teachers trapped in policy not to simply “obey orders but to do their work with a moral purpose”. But teachers’ voices are muted and therefore they need explicit support on how they can emerge from the confines of policy without losing their jobs.

Nevertheless, Hayes (2004:3) observes that there is a growing “culture of compliance” within which academic freedom of expression is being suppressed. This according to Burgess (2004:217) needs to be reversed to allow a renewed habit of debate in schools and particularly in teachers’ training colleges. Debate would help in influencing teachers to participate in deliberations that help them to rethink their roles, get clarification on controversial issues affecting their professionalism as well as mobilize action towards common good. However, teachers are still probably going to face a stumbling block when their hierarchical structures, including their government departments, are hooked to the donors’ trap (as discussed earlier in this chapter).

Similarly, Lambert and Morgan (2010) argue for a “curriculum making” approach in which Geography teachers are not simply dispensers of an inflexible curriculum, but enactors of a locally-oriented curriculum. In this approach teachers are able to decide what and how to teach based on their contexts. While the literature recommends school Geography as a good example for exploring curriculum-making due to the open nature of its content that offers a variety of perspectives (Morgan 2011; 2012), I argue that Malawian teachers still need some guidelines, and not absolute freedom, on what to teach. This has to be reviewed and validated by academics in the discipline of geography. Given the discipline’s dynamic nature and the rare opportunities for professional development in the country, teachers need to be supported on what content to teach. I therefore contend that PBE is an appropriate avenue for the Malawian context, because it can still be possible for teachers to connect approved content to their students’ life-world notwithstanding the rigid curricular prescriptions.

To Bowers (2001:33), critical pedagogy is a solution to existing ecological problems which conventional education is reproducing, with narrow conceptions of place, by disassociating

itself from IK. While CPP promotes the questioning of the social injustice that reproduces social inequalities in order to come up with a better world, PBE offers a lens on how place can be incorporated into education to promote educational attainments for people on an equal basis. It is “concerned with the contextual, geographical conditions that shape people and the actions they take to shape these conditions” (Gruenewald, 2003:4). With these factors in mind, this study sought to explore and answer this question: How can PBE serve as a potential platform within geography teaching for re-engaging students with their environment?

Ontong and Le Grange caution teachers not to waste time waiting for other curriculum reforms, but to do the best they can within the existing curricular framework, because most reforms do not come with readymade modifications that suit teachers’ and learners’ contexts (2015:53). The authors challenge teachers to look for those spaces within the prescribed curricula within which they could operationalized PBE. In support of that, the authors suggest the need for in-service training for teachers to expand their conception of place. With an expanded notion of place, teachers would be empowered to look at the same curriculum with PBE as a frame.

Accepting the status quo in education leaves no space for voices and stories different from grand narratives to be heard. Framing teaching and learning with a PBE lens would create spaces that accommodate and reflect on what actually happens in the students’ life-world, which would stimulate a search for more new knowledge. This investigation found the CPP necessary in scrutinizing what needs to be done in the Malawi Geography curriculum for teachers and students to decolonize and reinhabit the school places.

Analysing the Geography curriculum, it is apparent that topics are immersed in the concept of place. However, it is observed that the mandated pedagogical options offer teachers limited space for grounding learning in what is familiar. This is the gap that PBE would fill to enhance a thick connectedness between geography education and geography students. In a similar manner to PBE, the MoEST realizes the need to connect students by moving from what they already know to new curriculum knowledge. MoEST (2013:xi) stipulates that:

To achieve [good educational] outcomes, students must be introduced to new knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in the context of their existing knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, so that they develop a deeper understanding as they learn and apply the knowledge... The achievements made at school, however, are only truly

beneficial when the students transfer them to life beyond the school and view learning as a lifelong process. This is essential to keep pace with the changing social environment of home and work.

Furthermore, although one purpose of secondary school education in Malawi is to help students acquire critical and creative minds for resolving contemporary challenges, including environmental challenges, I argue that the current state of the Geography syllabus is too detached from its surroundings to mobilize the students to realize and take informed actions on and responsibility for their environment. Regular curriculum guidelines for fieldwork could facilitate the cultivation of a deep emotional response to their environments (Kinder, 2013:188).

Allowing teachers and learners to go beyond their classrooms to cultivate and produce new knowledge by utilising all five of their senses will help them discover, recover and explore the world around them, and lead to a point where holistic education is nurtured (Herrick, 2010:109). Though the above seem achievable, the Geography curriculum has undermined the potential of fieldwork. For example, for the whole of the first year of secondary school Geography education, the curriculum has prescribed fieldwork only five times.

On the other hand, Sobel (1996:10) states that the role of PBE is to “offer children an opportunity to bond with the natural world, to learn to love it, before being asked to heal its wounds”. With PBE as a frame for Geography teachers, they would always be aware of the need to utilize their school surroundings as the starting point for teaching new geographical concepts. This would intensify the awareness of place among the students.

2.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this literature review I have given an account of the context of the need for education reforms in Malawi. I also summarized how some countries are re-engaging their disengaged students by presenting a case for Geography education and highlighted how it has been featured in the Form 1 and 2 Secondary school syllabus. The chapter further discussed the potential of PBE to transform Malawi's education system, and also presented a case for the role of the critical pedagogy of place. This chapter argued that policy documents in Malawi, including the Junior Secondary Geography syllabus, have spaces that can be utilised for the implementation of PBE. The documents indicate the need for a student-centred pedagogy,

knowledge and skills transferable from school to community, as well as building new knowledge on the basis of students' prior experience. Although these are not holistic PBE tenets, this investigation argues that they are fundamental to begin any PBE exploration in the Geography teaching syllabus. In the next chapter I will give an account of a design I followed in my quest to operationalise PBE in Geography classrooms.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This investigation offers an overview of the work of three Geography teachers from three secondary schools in the Zingwangwa (educational) zone in the Blantyre district of Malawi. More specifically, I recorded how the teacher participants perceive the concept of PBE in the teaching of junior secondary school Geography as a means of re-engaging students with their environment in Malawi. To anchor my exploration, the analysis of the Geography syllabus was done collaboratively with the three participants in order to explore how PBE tenets may be operationalized in teaching Geography.

This chapter describes and justifies the decisions made in proceeding with this research. These include the selection of the participants, the sampling methods, data production or collection methods and analysis. Carefully justifying and implementing those choices helped me to arrive at trustworthy answers for my research questions. To achieve this, I also kept in mind the ethical considerations highlighted in Chapter 1.

3.2 TENETS OF RESEARCH DESIGN

Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999:33-35) highlighted four research components that investigators should bear in mind to ensure the validity of their findings:

- (1) The purpose of the study;
- (2) The theoretical paradigm informing the research;
- (3) Context or situation within which the research is carried out; and
- (4) The research techniques employed to collect and analyse the data.

Although these dimensions have already been outlined in Chapter 1, this chapter sheds more light on each component.

3.2.1. Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study derives from my own curiosity as a Geography teacher. It is intended to answer the research question: How can PBE serve as a potential platform in Geography teaching for re-engaging students with their local environment?

To answer this question, it was necessary to generate answers for the following sub-questions:

- How does the Republic of Malawi syllabus for Geography Forms 1 and 2 open up space for implementing PBE?
- How do Form 1 and 2 Geography teachers plan to operationalise PBE after being introduced to the concept?

3.2.2. Theoretical Paradigm

After clarifying the purpose of this study, it is important to describe the specific situation and rationale within which my investigation proceeded to understand and interpret its findings. Bryman (2012:20) refers to this rationale as the theory guiding the research. In this section I described my plan with regards to the routes I followed (theoretical framework) in seeking answers to my research problem. Realising that there are several routes that researchers can follow to find the answers, as a social researcher, it was my responsibility to select a theory I perceived as having the greatest potential to answer my research questions.

While Harding (1987:2) explains a theory or lens for proceeding with a particular research project as methodology, Van Wyk (2004:25) relates the methodology to a paradigm. This study therefore uses the terms theory, methodology and paradigm interchangeably.

A number of scholars have defined the term paradigm in several ways, but central to this study was the one offered by Le Grange (2016:2), who describes paradigms as frameworks that serve as guides for scientific/research communities, and help in identifying important problems and issues for their members to address and thereby determine the acceptable theories and methods to resolve those identified problems and issues. Maree (2010:55) describes a 'framework' as a set of closely linked ontological (theories of reality), epistemological (theories of knowledge) and methodological (theories informing methods) assumptions. It is these assumptions that distinguish one paradigm from another (Maxwell, 2004:34-37). In other words, paradigms are based on the following fundamental questions (Punch & Oancea, 2014:17):

The ontological question:

- What is the form and nature of reality and therefore what is there that can be known about it?

The epistemological question:

- What is the relationship between the knower (or the researcher) and what can be known (the researched)?

The methodological question:

- How can the inquirer go about finding out what can be known? What methods can be used for studying reality?

Hence, Punch and Oancea (2014) note that a way for proceeding with research can be established in two ways:

- i. the paradigm-driven approach: This suggests that an investigator can in the first place, identify a paradigm, understand and articulate it, then develop research questions and methods suit it.

This view has been put forward by Prowse (2010:212) and aligns with Blanche's (2006:2) observation that "background knowledge tells us what exists, how to understand it and most concretely, how to study it".

- ii. the question-driven approach: This approach begins with research questions that need answers and then methods to answer them are selected.

Considering that the type of answers to a question the technique of one paradigm offers cannot be precisely the same as those I can get from other paradigms (Donmoyer, 2006:14), the question-driven approach is appropriate for this study. Hence the nature of my research question acted as a guiding principle in mapping my research journey

In a nutshell, the specific assumptions of a paradigm offer investigators a guide to deciding what method to use when collecting data, and how to investigate, analyse and interpret these data (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002; Le Grange, 2016). I had to consider what type of study design should I adopt in order to provide "acceptable answers to my research problem?" (Mouton, 2011:49).

This study sought to determine how Geography teachers could implement PBE after being introduced to the concept of making the curriculum-as-lived more relevant and engaging for students in Malawi. As such, it is also social research that sought to understand teachers' lived experiences. This study was not aimed at getting answers that can be used generalisations or predictions; instead, it intended to explore PBE in the Form 1 and 2 Geography curriculum as a potential platform for connecting students to their school surroundings.

As it is the duty of a social researcher to determine which paradigm has the appropriate, effective and justifiable procedures that could help the researcher to arrive at acceptable results/answers to all research questions. Again, it is important to justify my specific paradigm choice to determine its suitability for generating acceptable answers. Lather (1991:8) describes four paradigms used in social research. These are the positivist, post-structuralist, interpretivist and critical paradigms. The one selected as most suitable for this study is the interpretivist paradigm.

3.2.2.1 *The Interpretivist Paradigm*

The main function of interpretivist research is to “understand, explain and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participants” (Cohen et al., 2007:19). Thus, interpretivism suggests that the human beings who are stakeholders should be given a chance to explain themselves regarding the meanings they attribute to their actions and experiences (Cannole, 1993; Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This paradigm holds that reality is personally owned and may therefore differ from one person to another, depending on the individual's consciousness (Scotland, 2012).

With the interpretive paradigm as my selected framework, I acknowledge multiple realities and I received various possible answers for my research questions from each participant. Rather than collecting statistics that represent information on Geography teachers and using generalizable laws which could apply to all contexts (Connole, 1993:22), as it would have been appropriate in positivist research, the interpretive paradigm allowed the creation of spaces that accommodated the teachers' voices, which had been silenced for a long time.

This study found the voice of the Geography teachers, as the curriculum enactors, to be crucial in gathering possible answers to the question: How can PBE serve as a potential platform in Geography teaching for (re)engaging students with their local environment? While

positivism disregards individual differences by setting measurable standards to be achieved by all, Le Grange, 2016:2) further asserts that interpretivism offers investigators the opportunity to understand the situation and make sense of the phenomenon within its social and cultural context. This enabled me to collect data based on the participants' specific contexts.

By the same token, implementing a curriculum that does not take into account learner's contexts is incompatible with Malawi's educational goals because it fails to secure platforms for engagement in Malawian schools (MoEST, 2017; Usi, 2017). Oslon (2008:252) argues that members of an organization need to stand a chance of being heard or accorded a voice in decisions affecting their lives. Imposing externally regulated curriculum guidelines misrecognizes teachers' capacity to make a difference in schools.

Keddie (2012:274) regards overlooking stakeholders' perspectives as a form of deficit thinking that cripples efforts geared towards achieving a common good. In education, for example, political justice is undermined when teachers are excluded during curriculum design, yet they are expected to stick to its terms at all costs. This does not only violate the principles of social justice, but also further perpetuates educational inequalities as it undermines the roles teachers play in making a difference in the lives of disadvantaged students. Quantitative measurements of school performance (in terms of school enrolment rates, retention rates, pass rates and school dropout rates) are narrow conceptualizations of school places that cannot explain the underperformance and disengagement of students in Malawi.

Oslon (2008:252) asserts that political representation is on the decline in the globalized economy in which the voices to be included or excluded are framed by power structures that limit minority groups' entitlements. Gruenewald (2003:10) cautions:

It is not easy to re-inhabit and decolonize school places. There is a need to go beyond positivist methodologies to facilitate reconnection of humanness with the others [teachers with students], and the natural world.

To Krauss (2005:762), knowledge derivation process is a result of human conditioning . This aligns with constructivism as a learning theory which suggests that humans develop knowledge and meaning from their experiences. As such, knowledge cannot be constructed exclusive of social contextual factors. For learners to be able to benefit from what they

acquire in schools, as MoEST (2013:vii) claims, class content should guide students on how they may interact with resources that are available in their specific places. A homogenized curriculum lacks this flexibility, so this study sought to understand how teachers could use a PBE lens to incorporate learners' contexts into the teaching of Geography in Malawi. Although incorporating the sampled teachers' voices does not necessarily translate into representation of the interests of all the Geography teachers in Malawi, it is a starting point in addressing the kind of domination (Keddie, 2012:275) that forces teachers to comply with curriculum mandates at the expense of recognising their students' learning needs.

Positivism makes no provision for human interests and feelings, so adopting an interpretive paradigm did not only allow me to encounter and interact with my teacher participants, but also to imagine myself in their shoes, make sense of their beliefs, and share meanings in the complex situations they find themselves. This helped me to gather data that enabled me to generate acceptable results for my investigation. Hence, the interpretive paradigm was the most suitable approach for proceeding with this study.

In the next section I will describe the case study approach for my study.

3.2.3 The Case Study Approach

Patton (2002:297) explains that a case study is "the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances". This study focussed on three geography teachers operating at different categorisations of secondary schools in Malawi. According to Yin (1994:22), case studies can be done on "decisions, programs, implementation process and organisational change". Case studies offer an opportunity to discover the important and unique details of a case and its underlying situation that could otherwise have been overlooked.

Similarly, Babbie and Mouton (2001:28) describe case study as an in-depth assessment of the subjects of an investigation to understand their natural settings and factors that inform their reactions. For this study, the cases, which Yin (1994) describes as units of analysis, is the collaboration between my teacher participants and myself. To Freebody (2004:18), a case study establishes an "inquiry in which both researchers and educators can reflect upon particular instances of educational practice". The teachers participated as geography educators with a lived experience in geography teaching, while I collected data to explore diverse professional spaces that could highlight similarities and differences that could offer a

variety of perspectives in which the teachers (the cases) may implement PBE in Malawian schools.

I accordingly gathered details from each of the Geography teachers at their unique schools and made sense of their respective contexts (as described in Chapter 4) in relation to what they perceive as crucial should a PBE framework be implemented at their respective schools. By so doing, I was able to describe the particular case of each participating school.

Furthermore, the case study design enabled me to use multiple sources and methods for data production. Punch and Oancea (2014:203) confirm that in case studies documentary data may be produced alongside interviews or observations to triangulate the findings. Denzin (1989) explains triangulation as using more than one method of data collection in one project to validate the findings. This approach allowed me to combine interviews and document analysis as required in this exploration.

Nevertheless, the case study design has been critiqued. It is argued that case studies offer little room for scientific generalization (Yin, 2003; Maree, 2010). As noted earlier, however, this study does not aim at generalizing or predicting a case. Although the findings that I am reporting may not provide generalizable evidence for other schools, they may suggest important starting points for understanding and comparing circumstances of other schools should they wish to engage PBE.

Another concern is the high chance of investigator biasness as a result of disorderly procedures (Vissak, 2010:479). I was aware of the pitfalls of a case study and took the necessary steps from data production to reporting as guided by the literature (Yin, 2003; 2014; Vissak, 2010) to ensure that what I am reporting reflects the teachers' views.

More importantly, using a case study design gave me the opportunity to triangulate my data obtained through face-to-face interviews and the analysis of the Geography syllabus. This increased my chances of coming up with acceptable evidence.

In the next section I will describe the context and sample specification for my study.

3.2.3.1 Context and Sampling

As explained in Chapter 1, In Malawi four years of secondary school education commences after completing eight years of primary education. The first two years of secondary school education are referred to as 'junior' while the next two years are the 'senior secondary' phase.

Malawi secondary schools fall into five categories: Conventional Secondary Schools; Community Day Secondary Schools; Open/Distance Schools; Grant-aided Secondary Schools, and Private Secondary Schools (NESP, 2008:16).

Malawi has six educational divisions, but of particular interest is the South West Education Division (SWED), where this study is situated. Blantyre, one of the districts covered by SWED, is in the southern region of Malawi and it is where the sample for this study was drawn from. Blantyre has a number of educational zones, one of which is Zingwangwa. The Zingwangwa zone lies to the south-western side of Blantyre and covers the neighbouring suburb and rural communities.

This study took place within the Zingwangwa zone, which has seven public secondary schools, from which three were selected for this study. The three secondary schools fall into the categories of Conventional (School A), Community Day School (School B) and Government-aided (School C). The selection was intended to accommodate a variety of teachers' lived experiences in varied contexts. The investigator resorted to these specified schools only because she faced limitations in terms of accessibility, transport costs and time for the study.

Importantly, Geography is taught in almost all public secondary schools in Malawi and in the Zingwangwa zone in particular. Since it would not be practical for every junior secondary Geography teacher to participate in this study, an informed decision had to be made to choose representatives of the group. This is called sampling. Blanche et. al. (2006:44) explain sampling as choosing units (e.g. institutions, people) which may represent entire units when generalizing findings.

The literature also indicates that sample selection is based on the chosen research style. While quantitative research encourages probability or random sampling, qualitative research engages purposive selection of information-rich units. Even though random sampling offers "well defined, rigorous and the best opportunities to generalize the results of the population, it does not collect rich and in-depth data" (Marshall, 1996:522). This silences other potentially information-rich informants with diverse perspectives who may help in acquiring a deep understanding of messy actions and behaviour.

On the other hand, Patton (2002:244) raises points to consider when sampling in qualitative research:

Sample size depends on what one wants to know; the purpose of the inquiry; what is at stake; what will be useful; what will have credibility, and what can be done with the available time and resources.

With this in mind, it is clear that qualitative samples are purposely selected for their capacity to generate “diverse perspectives” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013:215), and for answering the research questions (Maree, 2011:79). The distinct and unique samples provide a variety of relevant answers to the research question (Bryman, 2012:418). Given that, I used purposive non-probability and convenience sampling for this study.

Furthermore, this qualitative study required me to focus on describing and understanding teachers’ contexts rather than explaining and predicting their behaviour. Purposive sampling also allowed me to focus on specific cases (schools), while probability sampling would focus on a large population. I chose purposive sampling because the aims of the study are purely based on my own experience and judgment (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:116).

Convenience sampling implies that the sample is easily accessible while managing limiting factors (Fogelman, 2002:101-103). The schools situated in one educational zone are located in an easily reachable area. This simplified my task as principal investigator. Residing nearby made it convenient for me to complete my tasks as a researcher. The schools located in secure environments and accessible by public transport helped me to minimize travelling costs and maximize the value of my time spent on the research.

Although Creswell (2007) suggest a maximum of 10 participants in a qualitative research project, I limited my sample size to three case studies to maximize in-depth information (Patton, 2002:244) in each case, while maximizing the credibility of the findings.

Thus the unit of analysis in this study was the three junior secondary Geography teachers, who were well conversant with the newly revised curriculum (SSCAR). These teachers have taught Geography to Form 1 and Form 2 students so as to be in a better position to share their experiences in Geography teaching. The respondents in this study were teachers from three sampled secondary schools in the Zingwangwa zone of the Blantyre district of Malawi. The choice of Geography teachers was purposively informed by the focus of the research question, while selecting teachers from different schools was aimed at including a variety and diversity of responses to answer my research questions.

The sampled schools represent one Community Day Secondary School (School A), Conventional Secondary School (School B), and National Government-aided Secondary School (School C). The schools further represent low-performing, medium-performing and high-performing schools in Malawi. This grading of schools is informed by the placement of learners based on their performance in the Primary School Leaving Certificate Examinations (PSLCE). This in turn informs a secondary school's performance in later national examinations. The grading further explains differences in the school's share of the national budgetary allocations, which further favours the advantaged schools.

Using purposive and convenience sampling enabled me to select teachers from different school types with distinct backgrounds. Further distinct features reflecting each teacher's biographical details, qualification and experience are outlined in Chapter 4. More than the above, these factors offered diverse perspectives on how PBE might be operationalized in Malawian schools in various contexts (as indicated in section 4.3 below).

3.2.4. Research Techniques

The selection of a suitable research technique (method) is influenced by the nature of research question (Maree, 2011:56-57). Gathering acceptable answers to my research question – How can PBE serve as a potential platform in Geography teaching for re-engaging students with their local environment? – required me to understand the world through the lens of the Geography teachers' experience and the way they interpreted their experiences (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:33). The most appropriate method selected for this study was the qualitative rather than the quantitative.

3.2.4.1 Qualitative Methodologies

Instead of explaining and predicting people's behaviours as emphasized in the quantitative techniques, qualitative methodologies are aimed at constructing knowledge through understanding and describing. Bogdam and Biklen (2006:80) assert that:

Qualitative studies that report how many people do this and how many people do that, rather than generating concepts and understanding, are not highly regarded by qualitative researchers. More accurately, they are poor use of qualitative resources when such data can be collected more easily and cheaply using other methods.

Creswell (2007:2) describes five distinct approaches to qualitative studies: narrative; phenomenology; grounded theory; ethnography, and case study. The qualitative data-production technique selected for this study was a multiple case study.

Based on participating teachers' unique experiences, this case study design enabled me to acquire a deeper understanding of their descriptions as well as of the PBE concept as having the potential to enrich the junior secondary Geography curriculum to keep students engaged in their school places. Denzin and Lincoln (2005:3) describe qualitative research as a "situated activity that locates the observer in the world [...] in a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self".

Unlike a single case design, multiple case studies enabled me compare and contrast distinct perspectives from different contexts. This allowed me to capture more inclusive data and therefore trustworthy results that could be replicated in other cases (Yin, 2014:57). I interviewed three Geography teachers in their respective schools using semi-structured interview questions.

3.2.4.2 Interviews

Interviews are conducted to understand the experiences, perceptions, opinions, motivation and reactions of individuals (Siedman, 2006). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:349) describe an interview as a form of communication between two or more people based on a topic of common interest for the sake of knowledge production.

While questionnaires are distributed to participants to write down their answers, participants in an interview are asked orally (Le Grange, 2000:192). Unlike what is obtainable in a questionnaire, the chances of getting willing participants are higher in an interview, as the interview takes place while interacting with the interviewer. Furthermore, participants' facial expressions and body language can enrich an understanding of their responses (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Although interviews require the researcher's presence and it is therefore costly to access the schools and to have data transcribed (Seidman, 2006:12), the sampled schools were easily reached since they are within the researcher's residential area. The intense descriptions in the face-to-face interviews offered holistic responses which further validates the use of interviews over questionnaires. In addition to that, tape recording the

responses (De Vos, Strydom, Schulze & Patel, 2011:359) for transcribing ensured that I captured all the responses and clarifications where probing was necessary.

There are four types of face-to-face interviews. These are structured (a predetermined set of questions which is not diverted from); unstructured (an open-ended discussion where there are no pre-arranged questions and much input from the participant is allowed); semi-structured (a framework of questions to be asked, but there is a flexible balance between structured and open-ended questions to be asked); and focus groups (a group of people all interviewed on a specific topic at once (Le Grange, 2016:5).

In this study semi-structured interviews were used. According to De Vos et al. (2011:351), semi-structured interviews can elicit a detailed picture of the participant's beliefs, perceptions and accounts of a particular issue. This is because they allow exploration (Seidman, 2006:83) and clarification of answers from the participants (Maree, 2010:87), which enhanced my understanding of the responses in this case.

PBE as an unfamiliar concept to most teachers in Malawi, so I had two sets of pre-arranged questions to ask each of the participants. The first set of questions (Appendix E) was intended to analyse how teachers interact with the Geography syllabus in engaging their students with their school's surrounding places in the teaching of Geography. It was clear that to some extent (as reported in Chapter 4), teachers subconsciously practice the pedagogy of place.

It was noted that teachers' practice is framed by syllabus stipulations that do not prioritise an expanded notion of place. Responses to the interview questions (supplemented by the analysis of the Geography syllabus as explained in Section 3.2.4.3) gave me insights to answer my first sub-question: How does the Republic of the Malawian Syllabus for Geography Forms 1 and 2 open up spaces for PBE? The findings indicated in Chapter 4 show that the teachers perceive that the flexibility of the syllabus could be utilised for the opening up PBE spaces.

It then became necessary to orient teachers on the concept of PBE to boost their capacity to create more context-based spaces in the Geography syllabus. This was aimed at generating answers for the second set of interview questions that was intended to answer my second research sub-question: How do Form 1 and 2 Geography teachers plan to operationalize PBE after being introduced to the concept? This corresponds with the idea that teachers need to

be prepared to create authentic spaces that allow all youths to participate and own their learning in order to secure meaningful students' engagement (Smyth, Down & McInerney, 2014:34; Taylor, 2012; (Smyth & McInerney, 2012).

Both sets of questions were asked in precisely the same manner and order in separate interviews to finally answer the main question: How can PBE serve as a potential platform in Geography teaching for re-engaging students with their local environment?

3.2.4.4 Document Analysis

McCulloch (2011:249) defines a document as "a record of an event or process". Nearly each and every research project requires analysis of documents. However, the extent at which documents are used in educational research differs from one project to another. While some projects use documents only for the literature review, others focus exclusively on documentary data in their own right (Ozga, 2000; Oancea, 2005; Wellington, 2015). Documents can be grouped into two types: primary and secondary documents (McCulloch, 2004 as cited in Cohen et al., 2011:249). Primary documents include documents that are directly recorded by the observer of an event in question. On the other hand, secondary documents are produced through analysing the meanings in primary documents.

Wellington (2015:208) identifies important secondary documents that can be used in educational research and they include: syllabi, curriculum documents, schemes of work, lesson plans, government papers and policy documents. In this study the Republic of Malawi Syllabus for Geography Form 1 and 2 was analysed. The freely distributed syllabus, which is a legal document in the public domain for implementing the Form 1 and 2 Geography curriculum, was used to study the existing texts, information and facts (Peil, 1995:126) about the learner-centred approach to teaching and learning that SSCAR advocates, and to investigate what could be the sources of students' disengagement.

The observation that documentary sources may have connotations that favour some individuals over disadvantaged citizens, since most of the educational documents adopt policies favoured by politicians and policy makers (McCulloch, 2011:253), is clear evident in Malawi. Mwabungulu (2012:41) argues that whilst meeting international targets (including Education For All (EFA) goals), as well as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Malawi ended up adopting new education policy reforms (MoEST, 2013: v) which are attractive at face value yet do not practically address local Malawians' challenges.

This study analysed the Syllabus for Geography Form 1 and 2 to investigate the extent to which the Geography curriculum may be contributing to (disadvantaged) students' disengagement from their local surroundings. It explored "how different elements of the [syllabus] combine to further consolidate or disrupt [students' disengagement]" (Rapley, 2008;112) in Malawi.

Jupp and Norris (1993, as cited in Cohen et al., 2011:253) suggested that documents are analysed based on the research paradigms adopted, whether positivist, interpretivist or critical paradigm (as discussed in Section 3.2.2). This study analysed the Geography syllabus on the same basis. According to Creswell (2007), an interpretive design argues for collaborative knowledge construction through natural methods such as interviewing, observing and analysing existing texts. As a researcher, I was able to meet my participants, imagine myself in their shoes, and make sense of their places, their beliefs, experiences and actions associated with the teaching of Geography.

Ontong and Le Grange (2015:53) call upon teachers to find a way to allowing room for learner-centred pedagogies such as PBE, considering that most curricula reforms do not stipulate opportunities for pedagogical changes and modifications. This study created an opportunity for collaboration with my Geography teacher participants to assess available/missing spaces in the Geography curriculum that could be enriched by a PBE framework. Mertens (1997:324) suggests that:

The qualitative researcher must turn to documents and records to get the necessary background of the situation and insights into the dynamics of everyday functioning. The researcher cannot be in all places at all times; therefore, documents and records give the researcher access to legal information that would otherwise be unavailable [for analysis]".

Analysing the syllabus with my participants offered a basis for understanding the context within which the teachers of Geography operate. Scott (1990:34) explains that texts and documents (in interpretive research) must be studied and analysed as "socially situated products". As such, interpretation of texts is subject to one's own understanding and not necessarily undertaken to search for or discover or decode hidden meanings (Wellington, 2015:215), as in the case of other data analyses that search for themes. This study analysed the Geography syllabus based on my research participants' understanding of texts associated

with it. Since the documents are subject to a number of interpretations, it was necessary to ascertain a 'frame of reference' to facilitate the analysing process (Scott, 1990: 31).

In support of this, Wellington (2015:215) offers a seven-point framework to be used when exploring and analysing documents in education research:

- context/ frame of reference,
- authorship,
- intended audiences,
- intentions and purposes,
- vested interests,
- genre, style and tone and;
- presentation, appearance and image.

This investigation drew on Wellington's framework to interrogate the Geography syllabus to understand and assess the meanings in the texts that could possibly be promoting students' disengagement from the teaching of Geography.

3.2.4.5 Data Analysis

It is important to select appropriate data-analysis methods for a study in relation to the research design and techniques chosen. Contrary to quantitative research, where data are analysed to confirm or disconfirm a theory or hypothesis, qualitative research assumes an inductive approach in which data are analysed to discover relevant information emerging from the data itself, and could possibly lead to the development of a theory (Maykut & Morehouse, 2001:126-127).

While interpretive and qualitative researches adopt a number of inductive techniques (Coffey & Atkinson (1996:3), thematic analysis was selected for this study to give a detailed account of findings in the collected data. Thematic analysis is a general name for all data-analysis procedures that search for themes in raw data (Braun & Clarke, 2006:79). Wellington (2015:260-1) cautions that since data analysis is a messy and complicated process, it should not be summative. That is, it should not be treated as a final and isolated stage as if the analysis is a linear process. He calls for a formative process so that themes identified are reviewed and revised, compared and contrasted before arriving at conclusions. With this in

mind, the thematic analysis method chosen for this study is the constant comparative method (CCM) (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

3.2.4.5.i The Constant Comparative Method

The term *constant comparative* denotes the main actions that researchers use to analyse their data. Data reflecting participants' feelings, opinions, perceptions, behaviour, reactions and understanding are continuously compared to and grouped according to their similarities and differences by means of coding (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This study compared the transcribed interview datasets that were recorded at the three participating schools to identify similarities and differences in meanings of their responses. Lincoln and Guba (1985), as well as Glaser and Strauss (1967) shed light on how to proceed with transcribed data using the constant comparative method (CCM). This is summarised below.

I photocopied the transcript so that an original copy is reserved for reference where required. I then cut out data on photocopies into units or chunks using scissors to enable the division of data into units or chunks of meaning. To facilitate the process, I coded the units so that each unit reflects its source on the original copy. The units were then classified into provisional categories reflecting a similar sense from the data. Coded units carrying a different sense of the data were put into new categories, where they fitted in meaning. In other words, the coded data were either assimilated or accommodated in a category which reflected a similar sense.

Following this, similar categories were merged into one, or else bulky categories were split into two through continuous comparing and contrasting. The researcher at this stage is cautioned to assess the relationships of the categories to ascertain if they cover all data or are not overlapping. I complied with this by referring the identified categories to the original copy of the transcribed data which I had photocopied and set aside, as stated above.

Finally, I further compared and contrasted the themes emerging from my discoveries in the following three areas: categories, methods and theories, which according to (Wellington, 2015:264) entail asking the following questions:

- How do the categories compare and contrast with others in the literature?
- How do you compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of your data and methods with the strengths and weaknesses in other researchers' methodologies?

- What theories/frameworks/models developed in other inquiries are applicable in my study?

Importantly, the CMM ensures holistic coverage of diverse perspectives that offer alternative answers to the research questions. Through constantly comparing the codes, related codes are allocated to their own group until no code is left unaccounted for. Interpreting the emerging themes developed in the same sequence as the questions that were asked (Maykut & Morehouse, 2006:135) led me to finding systematic answers to my research questions. To ensure the validity and reliability of my analysis, I followed the above-mentioned process step by step as stipulated in the literature (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

3.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter I indicated that the chosen theoretical paradigm for this study is an interpretive multiple case study. I have given an account of the context and sample of the study, and justified my decision to use semi-structured interviews, document analysis and the constant comparative method as the selected approaches for proceeding with my investigation from data production to analysis of findings. In the next chapter, I will report and discuss findings from the analysed data.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

As indicated earlier in Chapter One, the objectives of this study are to:

- determine how Geography teachers might implement place-based education (PBE) to reconnect learners to content and to their environment and;
- demonstrate how the Form 1 and 2 Secondary Geography curriculum offers possibilities for PBE.

Chapter Three offered a framework and justification for achieving these objectives. This chapter aims to present, analyse and discuss the results from the document analysis (Geography syllabus) and the semi-structured interviews. The focus of the interviews was on the experiences of three junior secondary Geography teachers. My unit of analysis was therefore these three Geography teachers teaching in the Zingwangwa educational zone of Blantyre, Malawi.

To achieve my study objectives, the following sub-questions were addressed:

- How does the Republic of the Malawi syllabus for Geography Form 1 and 2 open up spaces for PBE?
- How do Form 1 and 2 Geography teachers implement PBE after being introduced to the concept?

Triangulating findings from the semi-structured interviews and the syllabus analysis provided me with evidence for answering my main research question: How can PBE serve as a potential platform in Geography teaching for re-engaging students with their local environment? The triangulation was aimed at exploring the divergence and intersection between the primary and secondary data-sets so as to confirm trustworthiness of findings that I am reporting. Presentation of data and development of themes in this study were discussed in the same sequence as the interview questions (Appendix E) were asked (Maykut & Morehouse, 2006:135).

All the schools operate under the mandate of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to offer Geography as part of secondary school education. However, these schools operate in different contexts. Sampling was purposefully done to come to an understanding of each school's situation and make sense of what I was investigating within its specific social and cultural context (Le Grange, 2016:2). This allowed me to investigate different teachers' perspectives that in turn gave me wider perspectives for answering the research questions.

4.2 DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

To protect the privacy of the participants and maintain confidentiality, their real names were not used. The pseudonyms Amy, Betty and Clive were used instead. Similarly, participating schools were referred to as School A, B and C. The biographical information of the participants outlined below was summarised in Table 4.1 (in the Appendix). Each participant was asked same questions and in the same order (Appendix E). In addition to that, the participants participated in a joint analysis of the Geography Form 1 and 2 syllabus (Appendix I). The final biographical question in Addendum E was a general one, intended to establish rapport with my respondents. I oriented the teachers on the concept of PBE to enhance their capacity to analyse the syllabus so as to come up with a variety of possible ways in which PBE may be implemented within the confines of the syllabus. The next section will introduce research participants Amy, Betty and Clive.

4.2.1 Biographical Information of Participants

4.2.1. Amy

Amy obtained her Bachelor of Education in Geography and Linguistics as teaching areas at Chancellor College (University of Malawi) in 2008. She has been teaching the new Geography curriculum since it was rolled out in September, 2015. She said, however, that the 3 days earmarked for training on the new curriculum in a workshop were not enough, suggesting that a month would have made a difference. She teaches a Form 2 class with 78 students, three periods in a week. Apart from being School A's Geography teacher, she is also the school's Acting Deputy Head teacher, Chairperson for Discipline, and Chairperson for Internal Procurement and Bursary Committees. Asked if her responsibilities do not affect her role as a Geography teacher, she said yes, but not really, because she always covered

for whatever period she missed. Amy attended a workshop on the new curriculum that took place at School A which lasted for three days.

Amy believes that a good Geography teacher should be resourceful and able to acquire new knowledge. "Knowledge is dynamic so [one] should read more to discover new knowledge that should be imparted to learners. A fine Geography teacher uses teaching and learning resources from the local environment." Amy's ideas of a good Geography teacher can be linked to requirements of the discipline of geography (discussed in Chapter 2) as well as the PBE platform that challenges teachers to utilise locally available resources.

4.2.2. Betty

Betty has a Bachelor of Education obtained from Chancellor College (University of Malawi) in 2010. Geography and Home Economics are her areas of teaching specialization. She has been teaching OBE Geography since its inception in September 2015. This year she has 6 periods a week of Geography with 90 Form 1 students and another 6 periods a week with 83 Form 2 students. Betty also serves as School B's Head of Humanities Department and an Examinations Committee member. Asked if she had received enough training for the new curriculum, she said she had, but needed more time because it was too short. "The one-week orientation workshop was not enough; there were so many things to be learnt yet were compacted in a week [since schools were opening in the following week]" .

To Betty, a good Geography teacher should have full knowledge of what Geography is all about because, apart from knowing the content, you need to relate it to the environment. "So, a good Geography teacher should be somebody with new information, one who is able to search for recent information from the media, all that information should be able to help you teach your students". It was observed that Betty could easily become a PBE educator, because she was already aware about the need to link class content to the learners' environment. However, the link should not be provided as a later point of a lesson. It should be the starting point in teaching, so as to create a bridge that connects what students already know to what is new, if PBE is to take place effectively.

4.2.3. Clive

Clive has a Bachelor of Education (Geography and Theology) from Domasi Teachers College in 2017. He started teaching secondary school Geography with a Primary Teacher Education Certificate at one Community Day Secondary School in 1995. However, he started teaching

the new curriculum in September 2015 with a Diploma in Education while pursuing his BEd. He attended the one-week orientation to the new curriculum. He has been allocated one Form 2 Geography class with 43 students for 3 periods a week. He also serves as Deputy Head Teacher, Chairperson of the Discipline and the Internal Procurement Committees in School C.

Clive's ideas of a good Geography teacher are: "one with keen interest in Geography; one who is not confined but attracted to the environment; one who reads widely within Geography and other related elements; and one who is creative [and] not restricted to what syllabus stipulates, because it is not always the case that we have all prescribed teaching and learning materials". Clive's description of creativity relates to PBE, which requires teachers to find their way within the syllabus confines to link what is familiar to students with new content. Indeed it's not all the time that ready-made resources are available for teachers to use.

4.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

As noted earlier in Chapter 3, Teachers in Malawi operate in different contexts not only because of their schools' geographical location, but also as a result of the government's policy on classification of the schools. Factors that influence the categorization of public secondary schools in Malawi include their historical background, funding, catchment areas and students' performance in national examinations (Namphande et al., 2017:706). These factors explain the existence of secondary schools that are referred to as Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSSs); Conventional (CSS) and Grant-aided (national) Secondary Schools (NSS). As indicated in Chapter 3, this study took into account these distinct groupings when sampling its unit of analysis to obtain a variety of answers for its questions. School A is a CDSS, School B is a CSS, while School C is a NSS. However, access to all of the public schools is based on merit. The three teachers who form the unit of analysis in this study work in the contexts described below.

4.3.1 School A

This school falls into the category of schools that were transformed from Distance-Education Centres into CDSSs in the multi-party democratic era (Lingenfelter et al., 2017:149). CDSSs enrol students who obtained an average mark in their Primary School Leaving Certificate of Education (PSLCE) examination. Without budgetary support from the government, they rely

on school fees¹⁴ to cater for students from their surrounding communities, mostly with limited resources. They offer the cheapest form of public secondary school education, attracting 43% of Malawi secondary school students (Zeitlyn et al., 2015:110). A site visit to School A indicated that it has the least appealing campus compared to the other cases. It is under-resourced and operating on borrowed classrooms of one primary school, yet its teacher/pupil ratio is the highest. Amy teaches at this school, which has only flowers and land in its surroundings. It has a single stream for each class, an improvised library, and limited teaching and learning resources. Although only very few of these students progress to public universities, CDSSs are expected to offer the same quality of secondary education as their counterparts.

4.3.2 School B

School B is among those that were established in the post-colonial era. To be selected for this category of school, candidates should have achieved at least above average mark at their PSLCE examination. Secondly, the candidates should be from their catchment areas. There is a monthly government subvention allocated to School B to supplement the school fees it collects from its students. School B has two streams. Betty teaches Geography in both streams, meaning she has 6 periods of Geography a week. The school has better facilities that support teaching and learning including a library, science and computer laboratories, and a school garden with some rocks, trees and grass. With the government subsidy, School B is able to purchase some teaching and learning resources. Some of the students in this school are selected to attend public universities.

4.3.3 School C

There are two subtypes of national secondary schools (NSS) in Malawi: government NSS which are fully owned by the government, and grant-aided NSS which are owned by religious institutions. School C is an example of the latter. NSS are few in number and have boarding facilities, because they draw their candidates from all over the country. Hence, these schools are more detached from their communities compared to their counterparts mentioned above. They enrol the best performers at PSLCE examinations. Consequently, while students from other secondary schools struggle to qualify for university selection, most students from

¹⁴ However, the government has just announced that with effect from January 2019 paying of school fees in public secondary schools has been abolished. This follows the abolishment of fees in primary schools at the start of multi-party democracy in 1994 as a fulfilment of a campaign promise by the United Democratic Front, which won the elections.

national secondary schools get selected to attend public universities (Namphande et, al., 2017:706). Most grant-aided national secondary schools, like School C, were established during the colonial period. A site visit to School C revealed a geographically friendly environment with a nearby river, cacti trees, a Stevenson screen, rocks, a variety of vegetative covers and beautiful terrain. School C has three streams, but Clive teaches Geography in one class because of his extra responsibilities. It is clear that implementing a curriculum at an institution like this one is desirable for many teachers. However, detaching students from their communities, as in the case of boarding schools, promotes placelessness. PBE educators would be challenged to incorporate the lived experiences of students from diverse backgrounds.

4.4 THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

As indicated in Chapter 3, one data-collection technique for this study was the semi-structured interview. With a letter granting me the opportunity to conduct this study in Malawi obtained from the South West Education Division (Appendix A), I approached the Administration of each of the participating schools. This was to ask for permission to interview one Geography teacher at their school. Formal letters granting me the permission (Appendix B) were issued, and I submitted all of them to the Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee (REC) for clearance. Once my application was approved by REC (Appendix C), I went back to the school's administration, where I was introduced to my prospective interviewees.

I introduced my proposed study that I was requesting them to participate in, and then issued them with consent forms to go through in their own time. We exchanged contact numbers for feedback. Convenient dates, times and places for each interview were agreed upon by phone with each participant. Amy and Betty chose to be interviewed in their free time at their homes. As discussed in Chapter 3, qualitative research has the welfare of the participants at heart. I therefore had to be flexible with my respondents to allow an environment that was conducive to allowing them give detailed explanations to their answers. Clive preferred to be interviewed in his office at School C. Prior to the scheduled interviews, I collected the signed consent forms (see Appendix D for an example).

I used a voice recorder app on my password-secured laptop to record my interview. I applied Koopman's (2013:107) approach on how interviewers should conduct themselves to influence

interviewees give full accounts in their answers. Authors agree that case study investigations must allow room for “how” and “why” questions (Yin, 2014:11; Maree, 2011:75). Throughout the interview processes I remained interested, calm and encouraging to motivate my participants to elaborate on their responses. I incorporated probing questions to allow interviewees give more details on issues I was not clear about. This helped me to answer my own research questions more effectively. In addition to that, I gave each interview response (Appendix E) sufficient time before moving on to the next question to avoid pre-empting answers.

At the end of each interview, I thanked the participants for their time to participate in the study. I assured them their responses would remain confidential and asked them to feel free to add anything they feel like sharing with me as regards to the study. This opened up opportunities for further information that helped me understand their circumstances and experiences as implementers of the Geography curriculum much better.

4.5 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The method selected for analysing data for this study was the constant comparative method (CCM). To achieve this, I employed the step-by-step approach adapted from the works of (Glaser & Strauss (1967; Mykut & Morehouse, 1994; Terre Blanche et al., 2006; and Braun & Clarke, 2006).

4.5.1. Step 1: Preparing Data for Analysis

According to the authors, this is a crucial step in data analysis that offers preliminary ideas on how the researcher may proceed with interpretation of the data. After conducting each of the interviews during which the data were collected with an audio recorder and stored in my personal password-protected laptop, I transcribed the voice-recorded data. I listened actively and repeatedly to each and every part of the sentences, while making notes and produced a word-for-word transcript for each interview. I then typed the three manuscripts in full (see Appendices F, G and H). This was done to ensure that “meanings, patterns and so on [...] across the dataset” (Braun & Clarke, 2006:87) that I was preparing for analysis and interpretation were legible and a true reflection of responses captured within the interview.

Interacting repeatedly with the data in different forms further improved my understanding of its content. Unlike in positivist research where answers are expected to control and make predictions, I became conversant with both expected and unexpected themes that offered a

variety of perspectives on the questions raised. Although this step took too long, it offered a frame that mapped out themes that represented the data. As such, my findings did not only answer my research question, but also reflected other “interesting aspects that may form the basis of repeated patterns across the dataset” (Braun & Clarke, 2006:87).

4.5.2. Step 2: Coding Data Numbers to their Sources

Flick (2014:375) describes the term ‘coding’ as a preparatory step in qualitative data analysis that renders data accessible and ready for interpretation. With datasets produced with my participants, I coded each question response to its source. My coding was based on suggestions put forward by Maykut and Morehouse (1994:127). Letter ‘T’ was assigned to stand for transcript in general. After ‘T’, came a stroke (/) which was followed by a letter and number specifying the source of a particular response. For example, responses to question 3 by Amy, Betty and Clive were coded as T/3A; T/3B and T/3C respectively. I labelled all the codes at the top right-hand corner of each question response (see Table 4.2 in the Appendix for an illustration) for easy tracing of its source in the course of the analysis.

In addition, as a qualitative researcher, I was able to probe my participants’ answers in order to acquire fuller clarification of their responses to the interview question. I coded responses I gathered through probing with a lower case ‘t’ (see Table 4.3 in the Appendix) for easy identification of the supplementary answers. I then got three printouts of the three datasets photocopied, so that I could proceed with the photocopies leaving the originals safe for later reference.

4.5.3 Step 3: Unitizing the Data

This refers to identifying smaller independent units of meaning in the data as a basis for comparison with others for further regrouping. To make each unit independent, I cut out each question answer (data card) from the photocopy. However, as noted in section 4.5.2., the origin of the data cards could still be traced because they retained their codes. The units of meanings of each data card were also labelled in blue across the card. Although it can be argued that unitizing is subjective, Braun and Clarke (2006:87) urge qualitative investigators to “work systematically [...] giving equal attention to each item [...] through the entire data set”. An attempt was made to maintain transparency. Table 4.2 was transformed to Table 4.3 (both in the Appendix) for the readers to follow the researcher’s procedure.

Meanings derived from the data coded in Table 4.3 were summarised to come up with the units of meanings. I compared summaries of the answers (units of meanings) provided by each participant to identify possible similarities and differences in a search for common meanings in the responses (for the full original interview responses, see Appendices F-H). Table 4.4 in the Appendix demonstrates how this was done.

4.5.4 Step 4: Searching and discovering themes from the data sets

According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), CCM entails 'inspecting' and 'comparing' all data fragments that arise in a single case. The CMM allowed me to regroup the fragmented meanings of each data card that reflected related meanings. I searched through my data cards to identify cases that seemed to confirm or invalidate my research question. Cards fitting in more than one category were copied and therefore reappeared in all categories with shared meanings. To facilitate this, I organised a large chart. I then pasted each unit of meaning into a category where its ideas fitted. Through continuous comparing of the rephrased meanings, the data cards were accommodated in the categories they fitted.

Themes that frequently appeared from the data were identified. According to Braun and Clarke (2006:90), a theme is formed when meanings which relay the same message are brought together to form one category. The categories that conveyed the same meaning were referred to as emerging themes such as 'Teachers' conceptions about place' and 'Fieldwork learning experiences'. There were, however, some data cards with ideas reflecting the same meaning. For example, ideas on data card t/4C (in Table 4.4) relate to the above-mentioned emerging themes. They hence appeared in both categorisation of emerging themes. Table 4.5 illustrates how I went through this process.

4.6 DATA INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

In this section I interpret the meanings of the themes that emerged from the data as the findings of this study. CCM theorists explain how to sequence emerging themes when interpreting and discussing findings from data. Maykut and Morehouse (2006:135) point out that the development of themes should follow the order the interview questions asked. I adopted the same approach to discuss my research findings. These themes developed from the data include the teachers' conception of place, their experience with the curriculum, syllabus viability for 'school to community' knowledge transfer, teachers' fieldwork

experiences, teachers' suggestions to curriculum developers, and their view of the sources of students' disengagement with the Geography curriculum.

4.6.1 Teachers' Conceptions of Place

Despite the concept of PBE being new to most of the teachers in Malawi, it is clear from the teachers' explanations of the qualities of a good Geography teacher (refer to their biographical data above and/or Table 4.1) that teachers to some extent unknowingly practise a pedagogy of place. All three teachers acknowledged the role of place in the syllabus and the teaching of Geography. Teachers concur with literature reviewed (Chapter 2) that there is a need to provide a link between what is familiar to students' own community and class content to support them in building up their learning. This finding validates Dewey's work that all studies arise from one lived part of the world (Dewey, 1915). The teachers reaffirmed that place and Geography teaching reinforce each other, and therefore neither of them can be independent of the other. To Clive all Geography themes are attached to place. Betty found the concept of place helped her students to understand geographical concepts because they all relate to place. Similarly, Amy perceives place as a source of teaching and learning materials:

My school is a school with few teaching and learning resources for Geography. As such, we depend much on the environment when teaching Geography. For example, on the topic Climate, we use the environment, we go out with learners in the open space; we find elements of weather in the environment. This becomes easier for students to understand because they are able to see real things in life.

Despite the recognition of the role of place, I contend that teachers do not significantly utilise the role of place in their teaching. It may be that place is used interchangeably with environment. However, while environment can be explained as a school's static surroundings, place is multifunctional and an active process of recognising connections between different perspectives of school concepts and the students' lived experiences. To embody the view that Geography and place are inseparable, Geography teachers should maximize the exposure of Geography students to their places rather than confining them to the classroom (T/4A; T/4B; t/4c) for a significant number of timetable periods allocated to them.

Drawing from Shimeld (2012:41) and Lambert (2009:4) as explained in Chapter 2, students' chances of socializing geographically is limited when teachers underutilise the potential

connections between different scales and different perspectives on place, space and scale. The participants admitted that they rarely take their students out to acquire first-hand information. While one participant could not even remember when she last took her students outside their classroom, Clive says,

'I just use the [classroom] windows for students to see what is outside since we are surrounded by a number of geographical features such as rain gauge, rocks, rivers and there are cacti trees over there'.

On the other hand, Powell (1947:147-8) challenges teachers to maximise the interactions between their students and what is available or happening in their communities. He asserts, "the geography we desire cannot come from within the four walls of the classroom". Correspondingly, Smith (2007:204) points out that

PBE does not look like conventional education. Students do not sit quietly at their desks listening to teachers [drilling them for high-stakes tests] or completing worksheets. They instead work and converse in teams and frequently leave the school itself, to engage in activities in the field or community [to learn through] real-life investigations and problem solving.

There could be reasons that limit the socially engaged teachers from socialising their students geographically. Such reasons could range from poor lesson preparation to something beyond the teachers' control. Further interaction with the data should provide insights for the teachers' limitations in maximising the pedagogy of place.

Therefore, it can be argued that with the limited conceptions of place, teachers could be contributing to disconnections students perceive between geography content and their meaningful community lives. While the syllabus does not restrict teachers (t2C; t5B; t2Aii) to conform to what is stipulated in planning their lessons, I argue that this flexibility is the opportunity teachers could utilize to maximise the connections of Geography content to students' communities (as discussed in Chapter 2).

Perhaps teachers could be taking advantage of the flexibility in the syllabus to go slowly with the externally mandated curriculum (explained in Chapter 2). After all, the new curriculum's orientation was short lived (T/5A; T/5B; T/5C; t/5B1; t/5Ci; t/5Cii). There is also content overload in Form 1 and Form 2 classes (T/2Bii; t/3B; t/4B; t/5Biii; t/5Biv; t5Ai; t/5C; t/5Ci),

which could be consuming too much of the teachers' time considering that they have other roles to play in their schools.

However, to offer students empowering knowledge and skills, teachers need to create room within the given syllabus for connecting students' community lives to what their curriculum stipulates (Ontong & Le Grange, 2015; Reddy et al. 2015; Young, 2010 in Firth, 2013).

4.6.2 Teachers' Experience with Syllabus Themes

According to the German philosopher, Jurgen Habermas, in his *Cognitive Interest Theory*, knowledge is created through interests. This implies that the knowledge offered by each curriculum reflects the interests of its planners. Similarly, according to Katenga-Kaunda (2015:22), although there could be other interests that had an influence on Malawi's curriculum, colonialism stood out as a major influence. This colonial influence on the curriculum could be a contributing factor to the disengagement of students as they experience a gap between their class work and their lived experiences. The way knowledge in the syllabus is structured and constructed could be affecting the way it is understood and taught (Wheelahan, 2010:1). Wheelahan therefore argues that the curriculum knowledge should not be taken at face value or unproblematic. With this at the back of my mind, I found it necessary to include a question that addresses the knowledge in the Geography syllabus.

In search of answers to my research questions, I found it important to learn from my informants about their experience with the themes in the syllabus. Each participant was expected to mention themes they found most interesting and least interesting to teach. This was intended to give me some insights into how the teachers, as curriculum dispensers, perceive teaching the new Geography curriculum in relation to their understanding of the discipline. Each participant was expected to motivate their choices so as to acquire insights on how space for PBE may be incorporated into the Geography syllabus.

4.6.2.1. Most Interesting Themes

Betty and Amy felt 'Weather and Climate' and 'Environment' were their most interesting themes to teach. Besides those, Amy added 'Ecosystem' and 'Population' as her favourite themes. I asked why they found the mentioned themes more interesting than the rest and they remarked that it was because of the direct relationship of these topics with students' lives that simplifies their teaching tasks. They explained that it becomes easy to teach the themes

because learners already have specific examples (relating to the themes) wherever they come from.

To Clive, however, the 'Earth' was his most interesting theme to teach. According to Clive, the Earth is the most interesting theme to teach because

it has other elements that are different from reality. For example, we teach students that the earth is round, yet practically they see it as flat. Geography class becomes very interesting when I brainstorm with new secondary school students to clear out their confusion”.

While Clive's theme choice can have different interpretations, one of them could be linked to the observation that teachers prefer to be regarded as custodians of knowledge. It is necessary to rethink the effectiveness of methodologies such as brainstorming in clearing students' confusion. On the other hand, PBE frames both teachers and students as co-creators of new knowledge.

4.6.2.2. Least Interesting Themes

All teachers mentioned the very first topic in the Form 1 and 2 Syllabus for Geography, 'Map and Map Interpretation' as their least interesting theme to teach. Apart from that, 'Latitudes and Longitudes' and the 'Atmosphere' were also identified as least interesting themes to teach. The following remarks were made as justifications for the choices:

Clive: “Map work and its components is too congested in Form 1”

“[...] previously [on Hydrological cycle] it was basics only covered in the junior section, reserving details for the senior section. But now, all senior section stuff on the topic has been scripted for the junior section. It has even gone deeper and detailed on what factors can disturb it and how to maintain it”.

Betty: “I don't like to teach Map reading; Latitudes and Longitudes [...] because they are more of abstract. You teach students but they fail to relate because *you leave a gap in their minds*. You fail to build an image in their minds. The learners just memorize the topics and [fail to apply another time] yet you taught them thoroughly”.

Amy: “In Maps and map interpretation; Atmosphere, it is like forcing learners, you teach of things they have never heard of [e.g. troposphere as a component of the atmosphere],

it's like you are taking them into a new world. So for them to grasp the concepts, you need to have a different departure point, somewhere very far from what is stipulated in the syllabus so that the learners should be able to acquire knowledge prescribed in the syllabus, of say grid referencing and they should be able to understand what is required of them.

It also becomes very difficult because it [map reading] involves Mathematics, as a result, the majority of Malawian students who do not like Mathematics automatically find Geography difficult, boring and consequently ignore it because it's Mathematics related and not necessarily due to incompetence of teachers. However, a few who are good at Mathematics enjoy the subject".

However, as indicated in Section 2.5.2, acquisition of basic knowledge and skills in Geography Education should be done geographically (Wood, 2013:174). This implies that Geography teachers need to take deliberate steps, for example, to connect the mathematical concepts with the Geography content and not teach them as detached disciplines. Additionally, Geography teachers should not work in isolation; they could work collaboratively with mathematics teachers when handling such topics. The collaboration should bring out common ground between mathematics and Geography's map reading. This would demonstrate that Geography teachers are using Mathematics teachers as resources within the PBE concept. Furthermore, the Geography teachers would acquire confidence in teaching the mathematical concepts geographically. This would have rendered the concepts that lead them to disengage become accessible to Geography students.

I argue that it is these abstract concepts identified by teachers that disengage students. It shows that there are no meaningful activities which are planned and conducted to help students understand the concepts that appear to be isolated from the physical world, but the teachers can make a difference. However, it might be that the way teachers interact with curriculum knowledge and their classroom places for students to acquire the knowledge is what compromises socialisation and subjectification (as discussed in Chapter 2) and which consequently contributes to students' disengagement from the subject.

The PBE framework in Geography would challenge teachers to create space that builds a connection between class content and students' background experiences as advocated by

the MoEST (as indicated earlier in Chapter 2). This kind of innovation requires continuous professional development, and so a once-off orientation session is grossly inadequate.

MoEST, however appears not to have done enough to boost teacher agency through professional development. Most teachers complained that the duration of the new curriculum orientation was not enough. Lack of professional development alongside marginalising teachers in curriculum design could be responsible for the shortcomings. It is likely that a pedagogical deficit could be restricting teachers from utilising context-based strategies that could engage students.

While MoEST is at the mercy of the donor community (as indicated in Chapter 2) to implement its plans such as teachers' professional development, teachers could engage in their own personal professional development. But this also requires personal, internal and external motivation. Applying CPP (explained in Chapter 2) would open avenues for enhancing the required teacher agency. The following section further validates PBE as an avenue that offers meaningful learning experiences which could stimulate the desirable transformation of in Malawi.

4.6.3. Syllabus Viability for 'School to Community' Knowledge Transfer

The Ministry of Education (MoEST, 2013) advocates acquisition of knowledge that can be transferred from school to students' communities. I included a question on this aspect to find out from my respondents about how they experience the suitability of the Geography themes for after-school application. The teachers I interacted with, to an extent, agreed that the curriculum offers opportunities for knowledge transferable to community. According to Clive, the new curriculum, which he described as representing a shift from emphasis on examinations to the promotion of critical thinking, has a variety of themes that offer an opportunity to reflect on places where students come from. As such, Amy believes that the new curriculum can help learners during and after school. To Betty, themes like 'Weather and Climate', and 'Environment' are more applicable and entail developing transferable skills because students can see with their own eyes the consequences of not taking care of their environments.

This does not only align with the purpose of Geography education, which is to enhance students' awareness of their places so that they are able to respond positively to their environment (Kinder, 2013:188), but also with the aim of place-based education. PBE

scholars assert that education should offer students a lens that empowers them to discover the multi-functionality of resources that are present in the places they inhabit (Smith & Sobel, 2010:23).

In another view, Clive maintained that the syllabus's potential depends on the individual teacher's perspective. Betty (t/5B1) concurred with Clive in her remarks that:

Curriculum grants freedom. When you look at the syllabus, there is a section that indicates suggested methods of teaching and learning activities, so [...] [one] is able to include what you think is more necessary and remove what you think is not relevant.

In this investigation I considered the flexibility of the syllabus as an opportunity that teachers could utilize to acknowledge students' contexts when planning their lessons. Teachers could create meaningful primary activities in the context of their learners to make up for what the curriculum designers could not take into account.

On the other hand, participants claimed that not all themes were relevant to the students' communities. While Betty experiences irrelevance in the application of some themes such as GIS (Geographic Information System) to a developing country such as Malawi, Clive was optimistic that the GIS knowledge could be for future use, since the emphasis is not on the examinations. He observed that:

Too much [content] creates negative attitudes in the students that Geography is too overloaded for them to master the concepts. It just strengthens students' negative attitude to the subject, although teachers still have to demonstrate that they are fine with the content.

This finding validates Kidman's (2017:4) observation that "students are perceiving Geography to be about map reading, knowing where things are, and a tendency to be boring. Geography is not perceived as developing a deeper spatial, social, cultural or economic connection with their lives." It is, on the one hand, indeed understandable for the students as passive recipients of externally produced knowledge to experience this perceived overload, as well as the abstractness and gaps in Geography content.

But on the other hand, in a knowledge society of which Malawi is a part, there is no harm in exposing students to what is happening in other parts of the globe. This was elaborated in Section 2.5.2.; it is not only knowledge that is required, but also a broad variety of

competences that empower learners to become global nationalists. A PBE framework rooted in students' prior experiences from places they inhabit could open up other empowering perspectives that may help students understand and appreciate what is happening in other parts of the globe.

PBE offers authentic learning experiences in which students use their own five senses to connect their prior experiences to new knowledge that has to be acquired. To achieve this, traditionally, Geography teachers have been socializing their students with their places with field trips. In the same manner as the PBE platform, this study saw the need to investigate how teachers are faring with the Geography tradition of field excursions.

4.6.4 Teachers' Fieldwork Experiences

Fieldwork is a crucial component of the teaching of Geography. As earlier (in Chapter 2) explained to, fieldwork, depending on the teachers' knowledge and choice, can render Geography a socially engaging discipline that may overcome the constraints of a traditional classroom. However, this important element of Geography is not being recognized in the syllabus. If not for that, teachers would take advantage of the flexibility of the syllabus to incorporate more fieldwork activities.

Despite all participants acknowledging the importance of field work, the teachers do not give it the required attention. While Betty realized that students remember well what they saw and did during the field work, she stated that she does not often take students out. She remarked: "I cannot remember when I last took them out, perhaps only three times outside their classroom".

Similarly, Clive and Amy admitted that they had one field work outing in a whole school calendar, claiming that not all themes require real objects. Even though Clive claimed fieldwork is an opportunity for students to acquire first-hand information, he rarely takes his students out to benefit from the opportunity:

I just use the [classroom] windows since we are surrounded by a number of geographical features such as rain gauge, rocks, river, and there are cacti trees over there.

On the other hand, Amy regretted the lack of geographical resources in her school surroundings that limited her from taking her students out.

Weathering requires real things like rocks. So taking your students outside [their classroom] where there is almost no rock does not add any value to the lesson.

While appreciating Amy's challenge considering the context of her school, however, it can also be argued that there can still be a way out to connect the topic to what is familiar to the students. Taking advantage of the dimensionality of place not only entails taking students out. Bringing community resources into classroom would send also a message to students and communities that school content is meant for them; this would stimulate thicker connectedness to their lessons. Students, for example, could have been given a homework task to come back to school with at least one rock sample. The school is closer to Soche Hills where most of its students come from, which could offer a variety of rocks to base the Weathering lesson on.

On the other hand, Van Harmelen (1999:85) cautions that if a Geography curriculum is to be implemented in schools as intended, there should be a good supply of appropriate teaching and learning materials. It is really a struggle for teachers to implement a curriculum in a disadvantaged context such as School A.

Furthermore, the participants described the challenges they face besides logistical problems when they engage fieldwork learning experiences. For Betty, there are more problems with class management when students are outside than inside their classrooms. She claimed students make a lot of noise outside their classrooms, which disturbs other students in their classrooms. This view can, however, be challenged in that students get "too excited" about fieldwork because the opportunities to break free of classroom confinements are too rare, and may happen only once in a term or year. Clive's experience confirms this:

"If we don't do any field trip, I get a lot of pressure from students asking why we aren't going out for fieldwork at this place or that; for this or that topic"

While Betty attributed limited field trips to lack of time for relating content to environment, Clive linked this to lack of emphasis on fieldwork in the syllabus:

...after going through a number of some topics, I decide to take students out for first-hand experience of the knowledge acquired. For example this term, all three classes (Forms 1, 2 and 3) went [together] to Chikwawa [district] to experience some

geographical phenomena along the way. This gave them opportunity for first-hand information”.

I find students' positive attitude to fieldwork an asset and a motivating factor. Students confirm the need for hands on experience in knowledge creation as they long for interactions with their own places. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, the positivist approach to curriculum, splits education and society as separate entities (Firth, 2013; Leander et al.2010). Fieldwork, a core element in geography education, has been superficially prescribed in the Syllabus for Geography. Students' motivation to be oriented with their community aligns with the PBE framework that advocates for involvement of students in cultivating their learning in their own places.

Nevertheless, the type of fieldwork that is being pursued is what Job (1996), as discussed in Chapter 2, referred to as “traditional field excursion”, which limits students interaction with their places. Teachers dictate what, when and where to go outside their classrooms mostly to demonstrate what they already talked about to their students. This type of fieldwork continues to frame students as passive recipients of externally produced knowledge limiting their opportunities for active engagement in their knowledge construction.

I contend that PBE in Geography would reinforce the need for alternative types of geographical field trips that would secure students' engagement in Geography class work. If students show an interest in excursions and fieldwork, teaching Geography in this way would promote their interest in a way that would re-engage them with the subject. Hence the observation that “children should be given a chance to explore, connect, map and engage with their world and environments” (Bonnet, 2008:95) is applicable to Malawian students. Kinder concurs with Bonnet in confirming Clive's experience that students get too excited and motivated to discover, recover and explore their world when they are taken out into the field (Kinder, 2013:180). However, Betty and Clive seem not to be doing enough to reinforce the students' natural desire to connect with their environment.

The young people have a natural need to promote their identity which is compromised in education that does not acknowledge their context. Confining students in their classrooms could be an underlying cause of disengagement of students which in turn leads to low educational attainments in Malawi because it could be frustrating students' intrinsic motivation for the subject. As explained in Chapter 2, this disengagement could be linked to the personal

defence (Griffin, 2002) to the “travelling policy” (discussed in Chapter 2) that does not take into account of the resources that are available in communities students come from. As a result, students find the class concepts too abstract to own their education. I argue that if this is left unaddressed, Malawi’s education may continue to be irrelevant to its communities (Usi, 2017; Chirwa & Naidoo, 2015; Glasson et al. 2010).

I posit it is this desire of students’ to expose themselves to their world or place that Geography curriculum designers should take into account in designing a child-centred syllabus. So long as the syllabus takes into account of these child’s interests, we may lay the entire blame on teachers if they choose to work contrary to what interests their learners. However, it is observed that curriculum designers now concentrate on “identifying the interests of those in power to select knowledge for the curriculum” (Young, 2008:81).

One participant disclosed that “[...] teachers still have to demonstrate that they are fine with the content.” I posit that it is not enough to simply comply with the syllabus mandates when the geography discipline is being compromised. I argue that if students have to be beneficiaries of the child-centred curricula, their needs, including physical interaction with their environment, would be a priority in the syllabus. As explained earlier, for the students to acquire empowering knowledge, they need to be engaged in knowledge creation that allows a transfer of what they learn in class to their community. This transfer lacks where the knowledge has been acquired through rote learning of abstract concepts. On the other hand, PBE framework would rescue the learners from unnecessary rote memorisations by allowing students to become “insiders” of classroom concepts.

Literature reviewed challenge teachers to be creative in linking what students already know to new classroom concepts within the externally mandated curricular. Ontong and Le Grange (2015:53) pointed out that “not all curricular reforms come with [desirable] stipulations”. I posit therefore that Geography teachers should take advantage of the flexibility of the syllabus to maximise the application of the pedagogy of place (fieldwork) so as to emphasize context-based lessons for their students.

However, both primary and secondary data collected in this study reveal that the syllabus is too congested with abstract concepts with which teachers struggle to break down for their learners to grasp the content. Teachers lack time to demonstrate their creativity. This could be breeding ground for one dimensional teaching (Fataar, 2015; McFadden & Munns, 2002),

which could explain resistance amongst Malawian teachers over shifting from traditional to child centred teaching methodologies (Mizrachi et al. 2010:12).

In this study, I attribute the one dimensional teaching methodology to “deficit theorising” (discussed in Chapter 2) of roles places lying around the classrooms can play in enriching the classroom concepts. By demonstrating connectedness of the classroom concepts with students’ places, isolated and congested but related content could be merged to become manageable. It is time for teachers to become conscious of their places (as discussed on CPP in Chapter 2 and later in this chapter) in order to improve their situations. Otherwise, teachers as curriculum dispensers will continue experiencing students’ disengagement in Geography lessons.

4.6.5. Teachers’ Suggestions to Curriculum Designers

All teachers reiterated the need for curriculum implementers to be involved in the planning and designing stages. Betty feels new curriculum orientation should be allowed enough time for each concept so as to train teachers effectively. This finding aligns with the work of Mulkeen (2010:174), who reported that it is not uncommon for a new curriculum to be introduced even though teachers have received inadequate training, or else the training does not take into account their classroom needs. Consequently, according to Mulkeen (2010), this creates a gap between what the new curriculum advocates and what actually happens in the classrooms. Betty further comments on the detachment of syllabus content from the students’ lived world, which could also be contributing to students’ disengagement with the curriculum. She asserts,

I would encourage [curriculum designers] to ensure that whenever there are new concepts to be taught, they should give examples about Malawi other than citing elsewhere examples, which neither students nor teachers have ever had a picture of how such places look like [...] For example, there are topics such as Flooding, Climate, which also happen in Malawi but when it comes to giving examples, [local Malawian examples are left out,] we are expected to give examples from America, Europe [as if there are] no examples of flooding in Malawi.

Amy added that it is unrealistic to deliver a new curriculum without teaching and learning materials associated with it. Amy maintained that “Lack of resources disorganized teachers as we struggled looking for new information in old reference books which was not even

there”. Clive added that content should be appropriate and applicable to specific students’ level and their community, because “blaming teachers as inaccurate implementers of externally designed curriculum is unfair” (t/5C).

These findings align with Carl’s (2005:249) who found that by the virtue of their experience in reality of the classroom, how complex learners find the content to be tackled, teachers need to participate at all levels of curriculum development. This would build their capacity to produce desirable results (Carl, 2005:251). In conclusion, Carl points out that blaming teachers for their lack of knowledge or involvement will continue (2005:252). The need for participation and continuous professional development or in-service training for teachers therefore should be given enough attention, if teachers are to become effective implementers of a curriculum.

4.6.6 Sources of Students’ Disengagement

Apart from the syllabus’ (misplaced) emphasis on case studies from outside Malawi, as stated above, teachers further experience curriculum overload, which they claimed ultimately led to the disengagement of students in Geography. Betty described the overload which promotes rote learning of concepts for examination thus:

Too long topics. I can tell you that in this whole academic year, from September to July, I have only covered 6 out of 11 topics because of their wide coverage. And the nature of the content for students to understand you really have to struggle, which delays moving on to next topic [...] Map work and Map reading and interpretation, Solar System, Hydrosphere, Weather and Climate. These are too wide topics.

This [Geography Book 1 and 2] huge reference book is designed only for Form Ones, looking at the syllabus coverage, it’s very big and a similar one in volume is also available for Form Twos. The stuff in the two books of the same size are too detailed, yet you still need to source some information from other books for students to understand the concepts. For example, the topic Weather and Climate starts from page 109 – 176 as one topic. We end up carrying it over to a next class which has its own content that is too detailed as well. Topic one alone covers pages 1-51”.

While Clive concurred with Betty on the overly congested curriculum, he felt the huge load only intensifies students’ negative attitude towards the subject. He mentioned content that he perceives to be irrelevant to students’ lives, including geothermal and nuclear energy, which

are currently not available in the Malawian context. To Amy, such topics become too abstract, as students fail to relate to and apply knowledge of the unseen and unknown world, which teachers fail to convince them about.

Worse still, teachers complain that covering the new added information takes up so much of their time that they are left with no opportunity for relating content to their own environment. Students end up going back home more confused than they were when they first came to school.

Empathizing with teachers' experience with the junior secondary school Geography curriculum, I probed further so as to understand how they apply their pedagogical judgments in order to still make a difference, despite their constraining work environment. Amy, who teaches mainly the least well performing group of students, explained that "it takes a lot of effort". Amy also perceived the syllabus as too advanced for her students. She has to create a different point of departure to get her learners to relate to syllabus concepts. She said every day she takes realia and gives her learners practical tasks relating to what they are involved in. On the other hand, Clive explained he gets "outside [of the syllabus] box to break down too much work load", and illustrates his lessons with teaching and learning aids. Betty does whatever she can to help students build a picture of what her lesson is all about:

... when I need pictures, I ask my husband to print for me in his office so that they can be presentable to students in terms of colour and quality, since we don't have a colour printer in the school. Resources are very scarce. We need to improvise even the map reading stuff".

It is clear that each teacher has their own private way of dealing with challenges they experience with the congested content. While some interventions are a welcome development, they may end up impacting negatively on the students and their overall performance in Geography. For example, the need for a different point of departure may consume a lot of the time allocated to deal with other concepts in a term. No wonder all three teachers admitted they could not complete Form 1 themes which they had to set aside to prepare for Form 2 content. One might also wonder as to where and how teachers who break down "too much work" draw the line regarding which sub-themes to teach or leave out? Moreover, is the Geography curriculum really being implemented as required when teachers have to improvise a 3D map? It seems that teachers need pedagogical support as a matter of

urgency, if Malawian students are to be on a par with their counterparts in the knowledge society. In search of convincing answers to my research questions, I turned to an analysis of the Geography syllabus.

4.7. DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

In this section, I will give an account of how space for PBE can be created in the Geography syllabus in order to re-engage students in Geography classrooms in Malawi to meet my study objectives:

- i. To determine how Geography teachers might implement PBE to make curriculum more relevant;
- ii. To demonstrate how the Junior Secondary Geography Curriculum offers possibilities for PBE.

I could not work in vacuum. The Geography teachers' voice was crucial. I had to consult the teachers in my analysis of the syllabus for Geography, because they know the reality of their students and enactment of the curriculum. However, the concept of PBE is unfamiliar to most teachers in Malawi., Stradling (1984, cited in Lambert & Jones, 2013:232) cautions that "The more contemporary the issue, the greater the problems for the teacher ..."

With this in my mind, I considered the nature of the teachers' professional development through collaboration with my participants. This was intended to enhance teachers' capacity and sense of agency in stimulating students' ownership of Geography lessons within the mandated syllabus. I found the explanation by Scheinfeld, Haigh and Scheinfeld (2008:60) of a "sense of agency" fitted well with CPP as dealt with by Gruenewald (2003), as discussed in Chapter 2, which is crucial to this study. Scheinfeld et al. describe a "sense of agency" as:

Experiencing oneself as an active, self-directed agent who can, individually and in collaboration with others, formulate personal meaningful learning goals, figure out strategies to achieve them, engage the world to pursue them, construct understandings of others. It means: I stand in relation to others with my own motives and ideas and I have the competence to pursue them.

In my view, it is this sense of agency within the "flexible Geography syllabus" that is lacking in most teachers and that can be addressed by applying the PBE and CPP framework in the teaching of geography. With a critical lens and a sense of agency, the Geography teachers

would “identify, recover and create” context-based learning activities so as to change approaches to the syllabus that “disengage” and exploit students and places” (Gruenewald, 2003b:9).

Through collaborative professional development my teacher participants could become agents in implementing action plans on how PBE could be operationalized in the teaching of Geography in Malawi. A week following the semi-structured interviews in which the first set of interview questions was asked, I held a two-hour session with all three research participants at School A to explain the concept of PBE to them. The teachers realised that PBE is a step from field trips with which they were already familiar as Geography teachers. This aroused their curiosity and sense of agency, which facilitated a joint analysis of the Geography syllabus.

To effectively engage with PBE, I relied on the CPP approach by Gruenewald (2003b). CPP challenges teachers to become more conscious of their school places and “go beyond positivist methodologies” (2003b:10) to allow context-based lessons. I applied the method suggested by Chilisa (2012:213) on how to conduct relational interviews. I adopted “talking circles” to give each participant an equal opportunity to share their observations and critiques, before coming to a conclusion on how PBE could be operationalized in their teaching of each theme in the Geography syllabus. (Table 4.6 gives an indication of how the sampled themes have been laid out in the Geography syllabus).

To open up spaces for PBE in the syllabus for Geography Form 1 and 2, after being introduced to the concept, my participants and I focused our analysis on answering the question: “What is it in the Form 1 and 2 Geography syllabus that needs to be remembered, restored, conserved, transformed or created?” (cf. Greenwood, 2009:5) in order to operationalize PBE. Table 4.7 offers the participants’ perspective on how Geography teachers in Malawi may re-engage students with the disciplinary content using the PBE platform.

However, it is not possible within the scope of this study to analyse and present all syllabus themes. Therefore, purposive sampling of themes that could supplement findings from the interview data had to be done. During the semi-structured interviews the teacher participants gave an account of themes they perceived as having conceptual jumps and hence disengaging (the ‘least interesting themes’ presented earlier in this chapter). They mentioned

‘Map work and interpretation of geography information’, and ‘Understanding the earth’. These topics have been purposively chosen as sample themes that teachers may find most challenging when operationalizing PBE.

Table 4.6 below offers a summary of the syllabus that teachers are supposed to implement. For a full view of syllabus contents, refer to Appendix I.

Table 4.6: A Summary of Scope, Sequence and Expected Outcomes For the Sampled Form 1 and 2 Geography Syllabus Topics

CORE ELEMENT	PREDICTED OUTCOMES	FORM 1	FORM 2
Map work and Interpretation of geographical information	To demonstrate the ability to read, transform and interpret maps as well as to analyse and interpret other geographical information in various forms.	Maps and its components (scale; symbols; grid reference; direction and bearing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longitudes and latitudes • Time zones • Contour patterns • Relief • Gradient • Drainage patterns • Cross-section and long profiles • Land use
Understanding the Earth	To demonstrate an understanding of the lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere and biosphere	<p>Earth as a planet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar system • Shape of the earth • Movements of the earth (rotation and revolution) <p>Hydrosphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydrological cycle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main features and processes - Importance - Factors which disturb the cycle (global warming, deforestation) 	<p>Lithosphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal structure • Internal and external processes that shape the landscape • Formation of lakes • Formation of east and central African lakes • Drainage system of east and central Africa • Importance

		<p>and acid rain)</p> <p>Atmosphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Components and structure of atmosphere • Weather and climate - Elements of weather • Biosphere - Composition and structure 	<p>of lakes and rivers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Case study: Shire River • Distribution of seasons in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tropical regions - Temperate regions - Seasons of Malawi
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The following Table 4.7 offers a suggestion on how teachers may re-engage Geography students with their surroundings in the content of these syllabus themes.

Table 4.7: Negotiating Teaching Spaces for Re-engaging Form 1 and 2 Geography Students

Form / Theme	General Teacher's Observations	Suggested Space for PBE
<p>1.</p> <p>Map work and interpretation of geography information</p>	<p>Teachers concurred that extreme abstractness of this element makes it unsuitable for a first lesson/topic because they perceive students' disengaging right from the first topic of Geography.</p> <p>The teachers observed that there appear to be too many assumptions that learners have and can utilize their primary knowledge to understand the topics.</p> <p>However, the teachers struggle to drive home the abstract concepts such as grid references, bearings, and ways of expressing scale, among others, which are difficult to explain. Teachers complained that the given list of teaching resources does not indicate instrumental resources that can help them relate students to understand the terms.</p> <p>Further, some symbols on the maps are perceived to having brought further disconnections from what students know or see in real life. For</p>	<p>There should be at least two activities before asking students to brainstorm what a map is. Students can be asked to move around their school to identify available features and locate them in a diagram. This could simplify teacher's tasks of moving with them from the diagram to a map and introducing map components.</p> <p>Students' engagement could be enhanced in teaching bearing and ways of expressing scale by building on previously acquired mathematical concepts such as angles of circle and converting centimetres to kilometres respectively. The mathematical skills also</p>

	<p>example, the shift from OBH to BH for borehole creates another disconnection from what teachers teach and/or what students get on a map to what a borehole looks like in real life. Consequently, lacking enough support, students disengage as teachers have to go fast to move to the next concepts for the sake of keeping up with the school calendar.</p>	<p>need to be applied to Geography content geographically (as explained earlier in this chapter). Collaborating with Mathematics teachers may make a difference.</p>
<p>2 Map work and interpretation of Geographical information (pages 35-43)</p>	<p>Themes under this first Form 2 element include: Longitudes and latitudes; time zone; relief; drainage patterns; cross-section and long profile; and land use. The abstractness of most of these topics further disconnects students and makes it difficult for them to remain engaged with class work.</p> <p>Talking about latitudes and longitudes as imaginary lines poses a challenge to convince students to apply the imagined to something that is a reality. For example, explaining the imaginary International Date Line to describe how a day is lost or gained (under time zones), without having experienced it locally or physically, appears to be far removed from their reality. It is easier to teach local time than standard time because the former is directly linked to student's daily experiences with the sun.</p>	<p>Longitudes and latitudes studied under the element: 'Understanding the earth', would help students to understand the positioning of the earth in relation to the sun that informs local time, and climatic and seasons differences.</p> <p>Understanding longitudinal and latitudinal locations of Malawi and its time zones before tackling the same for other countries would have helped to offer students a justification for the need to study the same for other parts of the world.</p> <p>Good time planning for a field trip to take students outside their classroom to</p>

	<p>Moreover, fragmenting the elements into Form 1 and Form 2 topics, further disconnects students, because it separates information that would offer good grounding for other concepts which are left hanging and isolated. This paves the way for rote learning.</p> <p>In addition to that, students further experience dissonance with symbols used to show what is obvious or they see on actual grounds. For example, relief features such as spur and drainage patterns are represented with contours in a way that does not show students a link that they are familiar features.</p> <p>On the other hand, topics such as Relief, Cross Sections, and Land Use form part of the students' practical environment and therefore should be engaging.</p>	<p>appreciate what actually is a spur or drainage pattern would create lasting memories through authentic experiences offered in their places.</p>
<p>1._Understanding the earth (pages 12- 22)</p>	<p>A general observation in this congested element is that there is a big conceptual jump between the core element and its related topics (the Solar System; Hydrosphere; Atmosphere; Weather and Climate and Biosphere). It is further observed that the core element is narrower than the concept of the Solar System, the Earth being a component of the Solar System.</p>	<p>The first lesson activity could begin with concrete or visible resources such as stars, moon and the sun and then link them to the earth before introducing the broader concept for the teachers to negotiate a link. This would help students accept existence of other invisible components of</p>

	<p>Although suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources include students' experiences, local environment and internet, the stipulated teaching and learning activities do not link students to their local environment.</p> <p>The introductory suggested teaching and learning activity requires teachers to explain the meaning of the term solar system, an unseen world to majority of Malawian schools/students without access to internet.</p> <p>The scripted methods such as debate, pair work and group discussion are not supportive in exploiting child-centred learning when the topic of discussion is new or unknown to students.</p> <p>Implementing these methods leaves students in suspense because they do not offer students a picture of the reality of their world. One teacher respondent comments:</p> <p>"I struggle answering sets of questions about components of the unseen world" (components of the solar system). This breeds ground for rote learning for the sake of passing examinations.</p> <p>Additionally, new developments in the solar system that SSCAR</p>	<p>the solar system such as planets, comets, asteroids which also move around sun.</p> <p>PBE flow of topics could make some alterations in the core element and perhaps topics. The core element could be 'Understand the World' with possible topics such as the Solar System in which the Earth is a component. The topics such as Hydrosphere, Atmosphere, Weather and Climate, and Biosphere could be reallocated to another core element where they may link better, 'Environment' for example.</p>
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	<p>Geography has made it more abstract to both students and teachers. With new content stipulating there are eight planets with a dwarf one conflicting with the nine-planets information which teachers acquired and still prevalent in available reference text books, teachers get confused on what to take or leave. This implies overreliance on textbooks, which is a case with the majority of schools in Malawi, but which does not adequately prepare students for the examination-oriented curriculum.</p>	
2._Understanding the Earth (pages 44-51)	<p>The topics under this element in Form 2 include Internal Structure of the Earth; Formation of Lakes; Importance of Shire River and Seasons.</p>	<p>Reaffirming communities' lakes, rivers and seasons could enhance an engaging platform. This would help students to relate/ apply their primary experiences to what happens in their local or neighbouring communities. For example, challenges and ways of caring for a local river and/or lake might help to understand</p>
	<p>Although the Internal Structure of the Earth is another intangible, too abstract topic, at least there is a good relationship between the element and the topic. However, the fact that no one, including the teacher has seen the core, mantle and crust, makes understanding them become an additional problem, and thereby forcing students to memorize the concepts for examinations purpose.</p> <p>Further, learning about how different lakes were formed as well as</p>	<p>how other rivers and lakes elsewhere could be understood. Moving students from unknown to what they know, as scripted in the syllabus, is</p>

<p>seasons of the world is not only a big load on young people, but also complicated because the congested concepts do not link.</p> <p>These topics are disconnected from Form 1 work that would offer links on what informs/causes them.</p> <p>Topics that start with world-level perspectives such as Seasons and Formation of East and Central African lakes, become less engaging for students since teachers talk about what they have never seen.</p>	<p>like a painkiller that is administered when damage has already occurred.</p>
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4.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has offered a step-by-step account of how data that were acquired through semi-structured interviews with three Geography teachers were analysed and discussed in this study. Interview data analyses indicated cases of students' disengagement arising from teachers' pedagogy, which was framed by the need to cover a congested Geography syllabus with limited resources and time. This section also offered a sample framework of how space for PBE can be created in the Form 1 and 2 syllabus. Triangulating the analyses of interview data and documentary evidence (the Geography syllabus) as integrated in Chapter 2 revealed that it is possible to create space in the Form 1 and 2 syllabus that may be used to operationalize PBE.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 gave an account on how the Form 1 and 2 syllabus contributes towards students' disengagement from school content, partly because the teachers have to deal with an overloaded curriculum. It has also demonstrated how PBE may become a platform for re-engaging the students with their places. This chapter will summarize the findings of this study and propose suggestions for future research. It will also present a summary and recommendations based on this study's findings.

5.2 MAIN FINDINGS

This study's findings are in line with views expressed in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. It demonstrates that Geography students lack opportunities for hands-on learning experiences. Despite the flexibility of the syllabus (which teachers acknowledge – see Chapter 4), teachers are still confined to what it stipulates, because they lack the time for relating their lessons to the students' own communities as the curriculum is so full. While teachers' attitudes can be attributed to complying with the external curriculum, there also appears to be an element of poor lesson preparation.

The question, if the overloaded curriculum is addressed, would the teachers make the abstract concepts more accessible to the learners without involving them in meaningful activities? There should be a combination of well-planned and logical activities that connect students' histories and experiences with class concepts to improve education achievement for all students. Teachers fail to make the abstract concepts accessible to learners, particularly the disadvantaged ones. As a result, the possibilities for resorting to rote learning are reinforced.

Even though the findings of this study cannot be generalized to all secondary schools in Malawi, the sampled schools represented the three categories of secondary schools in Malawi. As such, the findings may reflect the possible experiences of teachers in all categories of secondary schools in the country because, despite operating in different contexts, their curriculum is the same.

In addition, despite MoEST's considered policies for transforming the lives of the people it is entrusted to serve, they are silent on certain crucial aspects of the curriculum and education policies, because it receives aid to finance its projects. The aid, as highlighted in Chapter 2, does not come only in the form of cash, but also with strings attached on how it should be spent. This limits the possible benefits that could be reaped from the otherwise sound policies.

It is in constrained circumstances like these that teachers were advised to carry out their duties with a moral purpose, to find a way for presenting context-based lessons that recognize their students' needs, and/or to apply a critical pedagogy of place. The expanded notion of place, I have argued in this study, would expand learning access points for Geography students and render their lessons relevant to their communities. I contend that the PBE framework is the best practical approach for empowering students with knowledge that can be transferred from school to their own communities, as envisioned by MoEST.

5.3 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

This study offers teachers a practical approach on how they can help students re-engage with Geography content. It may supplement the limited available literature on the classroom realities with SSCAR. It was found that teachers were struggling with content overload, disconnected concepts, and limited time and resources. This continues to impact negatively on their profession with adverse effects such as breaking down the content as well as carrying over the uncompleted learning coverage to another class, so further aggravating the overload. These scenarios are enough to indicate how the overloaded subject disciplines in Malawi are silently being undermined. If teachers can only cover half of what was prescribed for a class and need to transfer it to the next class, which has its own allocation, what happens to the remaining contents or the content of the final class in which students graduate? This dilemma should act as a warning bell.

This investigation may sensitize policy makers and other stakeholders on the need to incorporate teachers, who are the curriculum implementers, in every step of the curriculum development, as teachers know the reality of the students for whom the curriculum is being designed. The teachers have a moral purpose of seeing to it that each of their students stands a chance of succeeding with their education. There are teachers out there who do not rest until they have devised a means that opens up the paths to learning for majority of their

students. Imposing a curriculum without a sustained support for them tantamount to social injustice. Most teachers also get deskilled and suffer in silence. While it is appreciated that not all teachers can be involved, at least there should be objectivity and merit in identifying teachers who should be engaged in curriculum design.

Most teachers in Malawi, where the education system is centrally controlled, suffer in silence for the fear of being victimised. This may extend to being deployed to a remote non-functioning school, to which teachers perceived as being 'a source of trouble' in the Education Division are sent. This study has created an opportunity for teachers to implement the syllabus without being victimized.

PBE is multidisciplinary in nature, and Geography could be a starting point which may extend to other disciplines offered in Malawi to allow students, particularly those who are marginalized, acquire adequate knowledge which they may use to make a difference in their community lives.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on experience gained in this study, I would advocate the following actions to facilitate meaningful education for the people of Malawi, particularly disadvantaged youths. To begin with, this study is a small-scale case study involving three schools in one education zone within a fixed study period. A bigger sample would give a better picture of the issues explored here. I would also recommend a similar study based on students' perspective to be conducted to investigate their experience with their curriculum, so as to establish a solid base for ascertaining what sort of intervention is required to re-engage the geography students of Malawi with the local environments.

There is a dire need for an explicit curriculum that should proceed from grassroots level and incorporate teachers' perspectives as they have to deal with the reality of their classrooms. Since the current syllabus already offers opportunities for creating PBE spaces, it could be supported with more explicit guidelines proposed by the experts and teachers who have to implement it.

There is also need to scrutinize the credentials of the curriculum designers so that the stipulated syllabus guidelines address the core issues of its discipline professionally.

There is a great need for context-oriented textbook developers. In the absence of, or limited opportunities for, utilising internet resources in the country, teachers struggle to make their lessons sufficiently explicit for their learners. Improvising complex materials such as map reading further detaches students from the realities of the lessons' objectives.

There is also a need for refresher courses, more interaction between subject advisers and teachers, as well as collaboration and peer support for teachers' professional development to enable them to keep pace with the dynamic nature of their discipline and contemporary education theories. As Malawian educators, we need to understand the need to engage in personal professional development, create school/cluster level study groups and/or school/community partnerships to continually share and update knowledge, in addition to attending refresher courses. This would go a long way towards influencing the paradigm shift from teacher-centred to student-centred teaching.

In addition, I would urge MoEST and graduate teacher education service providers to open up more opportunities to train teachers to become subject specialists in their own areas of teaching specialisations. This is because being a subject specialist has a direct impact on what actually happens inside the classrooms. There is need for more teachers who are curriculum specialists and who can become resource persons in their subjects within their cluster-level study groups. These may influence other teachers to rethink their roles in the classroom.

Sensitizing teachers to a critical pedagogy of place will empower them to take appropriate actions against a hegemony that undermines their potential to make a difference in promoting their students' potential to learn. I posit that the exploration of the PBE approach in all school disciplines is required to emphasize the need for the paradigm shift.

There is need for government to reconsider its provision of resources to public schools. Denying resources to one category of school because it caters for students who once performed poorly in a national examination that they had taken once at the end of their primary school years is a narrow conceptualization of schooling that reproduces inequalities. There should be purposeful budgetary support for all schools so that equal citizens of a sovereign state have equal opportunities for accessing learning opportunities. Actually, if education is to be an "instrument for empowering the poor, the weak and voiceless", as claimed by MoEST, the disadvantaged students who are selected to CDSS are the ones in

need of more support because they may be intellectually challenged. As such, they need to be supported fully to achieve what is expected.

If Malawian teachers and students, the majority of whom do not have access to the internet, are to function effectively in the knowledge society, there is need to support schools with valuable teaching and learning resources that should represent the digital world. For example, if each education zone could have a well-resourced centre, teachers would be able to support students effectively, particularly those exposed to a phenomenon for the first time. In a country where the majority of students do not have access to a computer and internet, teachers struggle when they have to improvise resources for complex and crucial concepts such as map reading for their Geography students. This limits the acquisition of knowledge of and skills in significant aspects of geography education. In fact, one would not be wrong to doubt if a curriculum that requires the internet application was really meant for all Malawian public school students in particular.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This study aimed to:

- Investigate extent to which the Geography curriculum contributes to students' disengagement from their local surroundings; and:
- Explore PBE in the Form 1 and 2 Geography curriculum as a potential platform to connect students with their school's local surrounding.

The findings of this study reveal that there are indeed significant reasons for students' disengagement from the Geography Form 1 and 2 syllabus. During the interview and syllabus analysis sessions the three participant teachers identified the following reasons: overloaded syllabus content alongside conceptual jumps; abstract and disconnected concepts; lack of meaningful teaching and learning resources; poor sequencing of core elements and themes; and inappropriate prescribed methods that disregard students' contexts. The syllabus's neglect of field work as a major component of the Geography discipline has also been identified as a syllabus weakness that advances students' lack of interest in the subject. These factors contribute to students' disengagement as the congested content takes up a lot of teachers' time, limiting their capacity to present lessons that acknowledge their students' contexts

Through syllabus analysis, the teacher participants suggested ways in which they may make the curriculum more meaningful so as to re-engage their students with their school's surroundings or the local environment using the PBE framework. For example, (re-)creating meaningful activities that would allow students to apply their lived experiences with syllabus concepts requires more fieldwork activities around their school and/or neighbouring areas. This will also connect and consolidate class concepts through hands-on experiences, and entail the rearrangement of themes so that core elements that are familiar to students such as 'Weather', 'Environment' are taught in a way that provides students with a link from topic to topic.

This study has also given an account of how the Form 1 and 2 Geography syllabus offers possibilities for PBE. These include the flexibility it the syllabus offers teachers to undertake their own teaching activities. Teachers could utilize this opportunity to base their lessons on their students' context. Moreover, the Malawi education policy documents are clear on the need to offer students empowering knowledge, based on their prior experiences, which they may transfer from school to their after-school lives.

Although the literature claims that PBE can be applied at any school regardless of its geographical location, this investigation reveals that the ability to implement the framework in disadvantaged contexts, such as that of school A, may be constrained. Nevertheless, in the case of Malawi, such challenges could be of the government's own making because of its funding policies for schools, which are meant to educate its citizens on an equal basis. I therefore maintain that PBE is the best avenue for promoting access and inclusivity in a way that that could transform the nature of education in Malawi.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY IN MALAWI

Telephone: (265) 01 912 437/870 677
Fax: (265) 01 870 821
E-mail: swed@sndp.org.mw

All correspondences should be addressed to:
The Education Division Manager



In reply please quote: Ref. No. SWED/1/1

SOUTH WEST EDUCATION DIVISION
PRIVATE BAG 386
CHICHIRI
BLANTYRE 3
MALAWI

15th March 2018

To: The Head teacher, Manja Community Day Secondary School
The Head Teacher, Njamba Day Secondary School
The Head teacher, Stella Maris Secondary School

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Doreen Chilungo Jana is a full time M.Ed student at Stellenbosch University in South Africa. As per requirement, she would like to conduct research at your institution (see attached details).

The purpose of this letter, therefore, is to request your office to assist Doreen accordingly.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Henry Gwede'.

Henry Gwede
EDUCATION DIVISION MANAGER (SWED)

FROM : Doreen Chilungo Jana
Manja C.D.S.S
P.O.Box 40019
Blantyre 4

TO : The Division Manager
South West Education Division
Private Bag 386
Blantyre 3.

DATE : 12th March, 2018

Dear Sir,

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT MANJA, NJAMBA AND STELLA MARRIS SECONDARY SCHOOLS AS CASE STUDIES FOR MY MED THESIS.

I would like to draw your attention to the above subject.

Following my MEd Studies at Stellenbosch University in South Africa, I am required to carry out an educational research to mark its completion. My study, 'Exploring Place – Based Education to re – engage students in Geography teaching in Malawian schools', requires me to interview three junior secondary school Geography teachers. The above schools as case studies have been sampled out as displaying distinct features within the Zingwangwa Zone and for easy access as they are situated within my residential area.

I will be very grateful if my application receives your kind attention.

Yours faithfully,



DOREEN CHILUNGO JANA (050622)



UNIVERSITEIT
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STELLENBOSCH
UNIVERSITY

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1918 - 2018

14 March 2018

The Division Manager
Ministry of Education
South West Education Division
Private Bag 386
Blantyre 3
Malawi

This letter serves to confirm that Doreen A. Chilungo Jana is currently enrolled as a Master's student at Stellenbosch University in South-Africa. The title of her study is: *"Exploring Place Based Education (PBE) in Geography teaching as an approach to (re)engage students to disciplinary content in Malawian schools"*. She is currently registered as a full-time student and in her second year of Master's studies. As part of her studies, she is required to conduct interviews with teachers in Malawian schools. I humbly want to request that permission is granted to her for doing so.

As Doreen's supervisor I am delighted to confirm that she is making good progress with her studies. If any other information is required, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Krystle Ontong (PhD)

Dosent, Departement Kurrikulumstudie | Lecturer, Department of Curriculum Studies

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde | Faculty of Education

e: krystle@sun.ac.za | t: +27 21 808 2645 | a: 4050, GG Cillie, Ryneveldstraat | Ryneveld street





APPENDIX B: SAMPLED SCHOOL PERMISSION LETTER

Telephone : 0888307467
Fax :



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY
NJAMBA SECONDARY SCHOOL
PRIVATE BAG 392
CHICHIRI
BLANTYRE 3
MALAWI

In reply please quote No.

02 JULY 2018

The Chairperson,
Research Ethics Committee
Stellenbosch University
South Africa

Dear Sir,

**PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW ONE GEOGRAPHY TEACHER AT NJAMBA
SECONDARY SCHOOL**

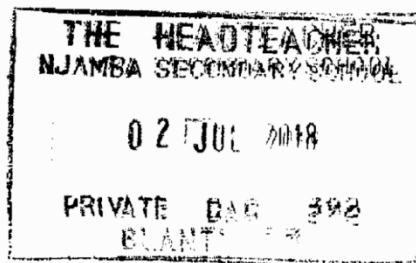
I write to confirm to you that your student, **Doreen Chilungo Jana**, is welcome to conduct part of her MEd studies at this institution as one of her case studies.

Yours Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'E. Lupiya'.

E. Lupiya

HEAD TEACHER.



APPENDIX C: REC APPROVAL LETTER



UNIVERSITEIT
STELLENBOSCH
UNIVERSITY

NOTICE OF APPROVAL

REC Humanities New
Application Form

7 November 2018

Project number: 7724

Project Title: Exploring Place Based Education in Geography teaching as a means to (re)engage students in Malawi

Dear Mrs Doreen Chilungo-Jana

Your response to stipulations submitted on 16 October 2018 was reviewed and approved by the REC: Humanities. Please note the following for your approved submission:

Ethics approval period:

Protocol approval date (Humanities)	Protocol expiration date (Humanities)
9 August 2018	8 August 2021

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: Humanities, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.

Please use your SU project number (7724) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project. Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

FOR CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC
APPROVAL PERIOD

Please note that a progress report should be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee: Humanities before the approval period has expired if a continuation of ethics approval is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary)

Included Documents:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Research Protocol/Proposal	Project Proposal(Chapter One)	05/07/2018	
Informed Consent Form	Informed Consent form	05/07/2018	
Proof of permission	Permission to conduct research in Malawian schools	05/07/2018	
Proof of permission	School A Permission Letter	05/07/2018	
Proof of permission	School B Permission Letter	05/07/2018	
Proof of permission	School C Permission Letter	05/07/2018	
Data collection tool	Data collection instrument	05/07/2018	
Data collection tool	Geography 1-2	05/07/2018	
Default	Request for Permission to schools	05/07/2018	

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at cgraham@sun.ac.za.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator: Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

*National Health Research Ethics Committee
(NHREC) registration number: REC-050411-
032.*

The Research Ethics Committee: Humanities complies with the SA National Health Act No.61 2003 as it pertains to health research. In addition, this committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research established by the Declaration of Helsinki (2013) and the Department of Health Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes (2nd Ed.) 2015. Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

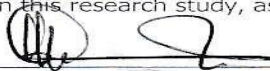
APPENDIX D: A SAMPLE CONSENT FORM

DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE PARTICIPANT

As the participant I confirm that:

- I have read the above information leaflet and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.
- All issues related to privacy and the confidentiality and use of the information I provide have been explained to my satisfaction.

By signing below, I _____ agree to take part in this research study, as conducted by Doreen Chilungo Jana.



Signature of Participant

10th December, 2018

Date

DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

As the **principal investigator**, I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the participant. I also declare that the participant has been encouraged (and has been given ample time) to ask any questions. In addition I would like to select the following option:

<input type="checkbox"/>	The conversation with the participant was conducted in a language in which the participant is fluent.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The conversation with the participant was conducted with the assistance of a translator (who has signed a non-disclosure agreement), and this "Consent Form" is available to the participant in a language in which the participant is fluent.



Signature of Principal Investigator

10th December, 2018

Date

APPENDIX E: Interview questions for teachers teaching Form1 and/or 2 Geography

(a) Teachers' Biographical questions:

- i. What is your highest level of education as a secondary school teacher of Geography?
- ii. How long have you been teaching the outcome-based geography?
- iii. How long have you received training for the new geography curriculum?
- iv. How many classes have been allocated to you?
- v. How many learners do you teach per class?

(b) Teachers' Experience of Geography teaching

1. Which of the geography themes do you find most engaging with students' community life? Justify your choice.
2. Which geography themes do you find least engaging with the context of the students? Motivate your answer.
3. How do you experience your students' performance over the past three years? Explain your case.
4. What would you suggest should be done from the teacher's side to motivate more students to stay engaged in geography lessons?

(c) PBE related Questions

1. What do you think would be the role of place in the learner-centred teaching of geography?
2. How do you understand the concept of PBE in relation to teaching of Geography?
3. How do you experience the prescribed geography syllabus' layout in relation to PBE approaches? Elaborate.
4. Which geography topics do you experience a connection with PBE framework? Why?
5. Which geography themes do you experience a gap with PBE teaching lens? Why?
6. Which topics encourage you to take your students out to learn from their school surroundings? Do you do so? Why?
7. What would you suggest needs to be done by teachers/ curriculum advisors/ schools/ communities to effect PBE in the geography teaching?

APPENDIX F: SCHOOL A Interview Transcript

1. What is your understanding of the role of 'Place' in teaching?

Place, which includes the local environment, is very important because it is where you can find teaching and learning materials for geography class. You can take students outside to feel the air; to see the ecosystem and, their environment itself. Geography cannot be taught without the environment.

PROBE: How else do you use school environment?

My school is a school with few teaching and learning resources for Geography. As such, we depend much on the environment when teaching Geography. For example, on the topic Climate, we use the environment, we go out with learners in the open space, we find elements of weather in the environment. This becomes easier for students to understand because they are able to see real things in life.

2. What are your most and least interesting themes to teach in the junior secondary Geography Syllabus and why?

Most Interesting Themes:

The Environment; Ecosystem; Weather and Climate and Population. These topics are based on things which learners already know, e.g. when you are teaching about Weather and Climate, learners already know how they differentiate local seasons. For example, they are able to tell this is rainy season when they see frogs cracking, when they see some birds flying, so these are topics which learners have got knowledge of, they already have pre-requisite knowledge about the topics, which becomes easier for the teacher to teach further such topics.

Least interesting Themes:

Oh gosh! Maps and Map Interpretation; Atmosphere. In these topics, it is like forcing learners, you teach of things they have never heard of. For example, layers of the atmosphere such as the troposphere It's like you are taking them into a new world. So for them to grasp the

concepts, you need to have a different departure point, somewhere very far from what is stipulated in the syllabus so that the learners should be able to acquire knowledge prescribed in the syllabus, of say grid referencing and they should be able to understand what is required of them.

It also becomes very difficult because it [map reading] involves Mathematics, as a result, the majority of Malawian students who do not like Mathematics automatically find Geography difficult; boring and consequently ignore it because its Mathematics related and not necessarily due to incompetence of teachers. On the other hand, a few who are good at Mathematics, enjoy the subject.

PROBE: Then how do you maximize engagement of your learners?

Takes a lot of effort. I employ real things. For example, last thing to teach in Maps and Interpretation is Sketch Maps. When I am teaching Sketch Maps, I give my students a task of drawing their way from their home to their classrooms. Then learners start liking the topic because it becomes what they are involved in daily.

‘Atmosphere’ becomes boring because it is abstract; it is more of what they cannot see, for example, layers of the Atmosphere. For learners to understand that the air we breathe has got layers it becomes difficult as they have never heard that there is atmosphere which is another body in the space.

We try as much as we can to teach to convince learners but we still are not comfortable as having delivered as required. We use charts, pictures, drawing, teaching and learning materials so that learners can follow since there is nothing from their immediate school environment which can help them actually see what the topic is actually about.

PROBE: Do you have freedom to plan your lessons in the way you feel would improve engagement of your learners besides what the syllabus stipulates?

Teachers have the liberty to plan their lessons using available resources that maximise students’ participation without restrictions.

3. How do you experience the implementation of the ‘school to community transferable knowledge and skills’ as stipulated in the curriculum in your own teaching of Geography?

There are a lot of knowledge that can be transferred. For example Map and Map work Interpretation from it, learners can give direction in their communities; in Natural resources, learners are able to plant trees, conserve the wild life and water as resources because they are taught that water is life; they cannot live without it. In terms of skills, they are able to draw house plans from Map-work skills.

4. How often do you engage in fieldwork learning experiences? What would such learning experiences entail?

Not very often. Once in a year, I only have one fieldwork.

PROBE: Would you wish more fieldwork opportunities or you are comfortable with one fieldwork in a year?

No, am not comfortable but restricted by lack of resources in my school. It is important for geography students to go out and appreciate what is happening outside in relation to what they are learning. If we had a chance in every topic, we could have consolidated what we teach in class with what is happening outside.

PROBE: What about taking your learners outside their classrooms?

It depends on the topic in question because it is not all topics that require real things. For example, Weathering requires real things like rocks. So taking your students outside where there is almost no rock does not add any value to the lesson.

PROBE: What would such learning experiences entail?

The new curriculum requires learners to discover things on their own. So in the context where the school does not have the resources, we tell them to go home and find out the things for themselves and come back to classroom to report what they found out.

PROBE: Do the students report back their assignments to class?

Not really, they still appear to require another push from their teachers in their discoveries.

5. What suggestions would you like curriculum designers to consider for enhancing geographical themes in the current Geography Curriculum?

The first thing they should consider is teaching and learning materials. When they were releasing the new curriculum, there were no text books for reference because publishers had

not yet finished publishing the recommended books. As such, It becomes very difficult to effectively deliver the new curriculum.

PROBE: Do you think the unavailability of recommended textbooks could be a source of students' disengagement in Geography?

Yes. It made teachers disorganized. Books coming in late after we had struggled finding information in the old reference books caused unnecessary panic. We later discovered that the old referencing were leaving out some important information or themes as required by the new syllabus which we had not covered. This meant going back to supplement or correct content previously taught.

PROBE: Any other thing which may have just come into your memory and you wish to add before we close this session?

The new curriculum is good because it can help learners within and after school life. However, curriculum developers should also consider involving curriculum implementers. The teachers need to be involved even during planning or designing. In evaluating relevance of recommended books, they used retired teachers leaving out serving teachers who are actively engaging with the current students for whom the curriculum is revised. Introducing the new curriculum to its implementers in a five days workshop is far from being enough.

APPENDIX G: SCHOOL B Transcript

1. What is your understanding about 'Place'?

The role of place in the teaching and learning of Geography, I believe it helps learners understand the content in Geography because most of the themes / topics we teach relate to place that learners come from. For example, we have topics like Environment, Climate, Weather. Hence, [lessons'] examples should come from immediate environment such that when the students go out, they should be able to relate to whatever they see in their environment.

2. What are your most and least interesting themes to teach in the junior secondary Geography Syllabus and why?

Most interesting

I like the topic of weather and climate because in this topic most of the things we still look back to the environment where learners have come from. For example right now a lot of things are happening for example environmental problems such as floods, drought, these are things that have just happened recently in the environment and are still happening in their environment. They are able to see e.g. from the television where those things are happening in other places. So you are able to help learners understand so they become very easy for learners to understand because we have specific examples from wherever they come from.

Since right now the media is something that is very common, learners are introduced to social media, televisions, so learners are learning from them. E.g recently there was an earthquake in Nsanje so such kind of things learners are able to relate with what they learn in class.

Least interesting

Yes this topic of Latitudes and Longitudes and also the Map Reading. The reason why I really don't like to teach is because these are more of abstract. You teach them but then you fail to relate, because *you leave a gap in their minds*. You fail to build an image in their minds. Then learners just memorize the topics. You teach them today and assess them, but if assess them with the same assessment another time, they fail and yet you taught them thoroughly.

PROBE: What do you do to keep them engaged?

I try and try as much as possible to bring in resources like right now there is a projector in the school so at home I can download some things on the internet and show them so that they can build a picture in their minds with what they can see.

3. How do you experience the implementation of the 'school to community- transferable knowledge and skills' as stipulated in the curriculum in your own teaching of Geography?

Not everything, some of them still have that gap. Just a few themes in the Junior (Form 1 and 2 syllabus). At least more applicability is in senior section. There are some topics that you really see their relevancy in the communities.

PROBE: Can you share with someone some of the themes?

Yes. Maybe because right now Malawi is still developing, its technological growth is still in infancy, so some topics like GIS introduced in the junior secondary show that there is still that gap, it is not possible to transfer such knowledge because of limited applicability in Malawi.

Apart from that, we still have the topic of map reading. There are so many things like bearing, grid reference it's like when learners are learning them they don't see how they can be applicable in their communities, so they just learn them in class.

On the other hand, Weather, Climate and Environment are applicable and transferable to their environment. Hence students easily learn to take care of their environment because they can see consequences of not taking care of it.

4. How often do you engage in fieldwork learning experiences? What would such learning experiences entail?

For me not often, for example this term I don't remember when I took the students out for field work. Of course, I was teaching the topic solar system, in this topic there is a lot of content that is new e.g. about new developments in the Solar System such as the introduction of a Dwarf Planet, it was a long topic and took most of my time.

So, for teachers to figure out how to relate such a topic to student's environment was hard for me so far this term I didn't take students for fieldwork for a whole academic year. I only took out students outside their classroom three times within the school campus that was for [topic] Weather and Climate.

PROBE: Do you think more field work could have an impact on the teaching of Geography?

Yes, because learners would remember what they saw and did in the fieldwork. Of course there are many disturbances with fieldwork as many of students make noise, telling stories when taken out for the fieldwork. They meet a lot of friends, are excited meeting their friends ending up disturbing the lesson.

They become too excited to get outside their classrooms, telling each other stories and end up disturbing their fellow students who are still learning in their classrooms. However for most of those who can participate in fieldwork, they are able to relate with class content.

5. What suggestions would you like curriculum designers to consider for enhancing geographical themes in the current Geography Curriculum?

I would encourage them that when they are giving examples of concepts those examples should be about Malawi other than sighting elsewhere's example, where students or even teacher's have never been to or never even have a picture of how such places looks like. E.g. about the Solar System, we don't see anything but we only hear other people go outside Malawi, such as America into space and discover things in the system.

So most of the examples we give are secondary information about their findings. However, there are other topics such as Flooding, Climate which also happen in Malawi but when it comes to giving examples, instead of giving local Malawian examples, we are expected to give examples from America, Europe, no examples of flooding in Malawi.

PROBE: Do you think the curriculum grants your freedom to insert your contextual factors?

Yes, curriculum grants freedom. When you look at the syllabus there is a section that indicates suggested methods of teaching and learning activities. So I think in that part it's where you can include what you think is more necessary and remove what you think is not relevant.

I would also suggest a wider training or orientation to the new curriculum would make a difference. We were just a few, for example from my school I was the only one picked for a trainer of trainee's workshop. So, if we could have enough time for each new concept, it would be much better for us to transfer what we have learnt to other teachers.

Teaching and learning resources is another huge problem. We have to struggle to get resources or materials which mostly are not there. For example, for me when I need pictures, I ask my husband to print for me in his office so that they can be presentable to students in terms of colour and quality, since we don't have a colour printer in the school. Resources are very scarce. We need to improvise even the map reading staff.

PROBE: Any other thing you which may just have come into your memory and you wish to add before we close this session?

Too long topics. I can tell you that in this academic year from September to July, I have only covered 6 out of 11 topics because of their wide coverage. And the nature of the content, for students to understand you really have to struggle which delays moving on to the next topic e.g. Map Work and Interpretation, because it's very practical.

PROBE: Do you mind sharing with me more examples of wide topics in the Junior Geography Syllabus?

No problem.

Map Reading and Interpretation, Solar System, Hydrosphere, Weather and Climate. These are too wide topics.

This [lifting Geography Book 1] huge reference book is designed only for Form Ones, looking at the syllabus coverage, it's very big and a similar one in volume is also available for Form Twos. The stuff in the two books of the same size are too detailed yet you still need to source some information from other books for students to understand the concepts. For example, the topic Weather and Climate starts from page 109 – 176 as one topic. We end up carrying it over to a next class which has its own content that is too detailed as well. Topic one covers pages 1-51 (student's book).

The same topics which are covered in Form One are continued in Form Two. If you tackle a topic in Form One there is no getting it back in the same form but you get its continuation in Form 2.

PROBE: Do you think the overload could be a source of students' disengagement in the Junior Geography?

Yes. It becomes difficult for students to apply what they learn in class to their communities because the only choice they have is to memorize content learnt to pass their exams.

APPENDIX H: School C Transcript

1. What is your understanding of the role of 'Place' in teaching?

Every Geography concept is attached to place, that's why it is advisable for Geography classes to have windows for students to look outside. We have almost all concepts attached to air, plants and water, all these have to do with place. If you are not a Geography teacher, you can just confine learning into class without looking outside the window for reference. All Geography themes take place on earth surface above it is the atmosphere such as energy, minerals, hydrological cycle all are in relation to place.

2. What are the most interesting and least interesting themes to teach in the Junior Secondary Geography Syllabus and why?

It is difficult for me to single out interesting themes in the syllabus because I find all themes interesting. Although, in primary school we had a general paper, I could still find all Geography topics interesting. However, I find teaching about the Earth most interesting, this is because it has other elements that are different from reality. For example, we teach students that the earth is round yet practically they see it as flat. Geography class then becomes very interesting when I brainstorm with new secondary school students to clear out their confusion. I enjoy brainstorming, asking students questions such as:

Why does the sun look afar during sometime while appearing like its coming closer to us at another time of a single day?

Why does the sun look red in the morning and looks different at noon or evening?

What lies above clouds and under the earth's surface?

PROBE: Then how do you maximize engagement of your learners?

I start with asking their views before I come in to respond to them for a shared conclusion. I ask why is it that when it is day here in other places it is dark/ night? Then I bring in models, for example a globe or ball to illustrate different positioning of countries of the earth in relation to the sun.

PROBE: Is there any theme you feel it would have been presented differently?

Map Work and its component is congested in Form One. However, teachers can decide to break it if they realize there is too much to teach as stipulated in the textbooks. On the other hand, if teachers feel there is too little to cover say in Atmosphere, they can combine criteria or go outside the box as long as they can communicate what they have actually done.

PROBE: Are you not restricted to implement the syllabus as it is?

There is liberty and no restriction in the syllabus.

3. How do you experience the implementation of the 'school to community transferable knowledge and skills' as stipulated in the curriculum in your own teaching of Geography?

Although there is not much differences, I find content of the new syllabus more appropriate to transferable knowledge because the former syllabus was mostly exam oriented. However, it depends on how a particular teacher approaches the content.

PROBE: May you please throw more light on your answer?

The exam-oriented curriculum forced teachers to concentrate on targeting their students for exams. The current one is giving much focus on students' critical development with teachers as facilitators. On the other hand, for the content to become relevant to the students' community, it depends on individual teacher because some teachers can choose to approach the new curriculum in the way they have been approaching content traditionally.

PROBE: Do you mind sharing an example of what you have just said?

Not really. The current curriculum requires teachers to change their ways of evaluating their learners' understanding of the concepts. For example, a shift from straight forward questions to proving questions. Thus, questions demanding to 'name; mention or what' should be transformed to 'which, or explain' to encourage students' participation in knowledge application. Teachers need to guide their students to talk more so that they are able to apply what they learn in school to solve problems in their community life.

Students come from different areas with different resources, so a variety of themes in the syllabus are reflecting this so that students are able to apply what they learn in class to what is in their community. All the same, it depends on an individual teacher.

4. How often do you engage in fieldwork learning experiences? What would such learning experiences entail?

It is not all the time that we have to go out for field work because some topics can just be covered within the classroom set-up. But after going through a number of some topics, I decide to take students out for firsthand experience of the knowledge acquired. For example this term, all three classes (Forms 1; 2 and 3) went to Chikwawa to experience some geographical phenomena along the way. This gave them opportunity for firsthand information.

PROBE: Do you find fieldwork a rewarding experience?

Fieldwork is important but meets challenges because to reach required fields, it is difficult when you think about transport and other logistics.

PROBE: Do you get chance to get students out to the local school environment? How often?

Rarely, we mostly use the inside. Still it depends on the teacher. Not much for me, I just use the windows for students to see what is outside since we are surrounded by a number of geographical features such as rain gauge; rocks; rivers; and there are cacti trees over there.

However, I ensure that each academic year there should be one field trip because if we don't do that I get a lot of pressure from students asking why aren't they going out for field work at this place or that for this topic and that.

Otherwise the syllabus does not pressurize teachers to emphasize on fieldwork.

5. What suggestions would you like curriculum designers to consider for enhancing geographical themes in the current Geography Curriculum?

The current syllabus is not a changed one but just some supplementation. However, there is a lot dumped on the junior section some of which was previously covered in the senior section. For example, on Hydrological Cycle, previously it was basics only covered in the junior section reserving details for the senior section. But now, all senior section stuff on the topic has been scripted for the junior section. It has even gone deeper and detailed on what factors can disturb it and how to maintain it.

In addition to that, the topic Energy has been expanded to nuclear, geothermal, biothermal, natural gas, crude oil, solar and biomass which were only partially covered in senior section, for example, wind energy.

PROBE: Do you think the overload could be a source of students' disengagement in the Junior Geography?

Students could be finding some of the content irrelevant to their lives because some of the topics such as Nuclear Energy, Geothermal are not here in Malawi. But perhaps after acquiring their knowledge in schools they may, at a later stage, be able to apply it in their communities. Moreover, since we are not teaching students for exams but knowledge, teachers should not have negative attitude to the topics but deliver as required.

On the other hand, too much stuff creates negative attitudes in the students that Geography is too overloading for them to master the concepts. It just strengthens students' negative attitude to the subject yet teachers still have to demonstrate to students that they are fine with the content.

PROBE: Anything else you may wish to add before we close this session?

There is no much consultation. Although there cannot be full presentation of all teachers, but at least if it could be a bigger sample at divisional level to ensure a wider incorporation of teachers' voice would make a difference. Otherwise blaming teachers as inaccurate implementers of externally designed curriculum is unfair.

Table 4.1: Participants' Biographical Information

S	Parti	G	Highest	Year	Numbe	OBE	Number of	Numbe
c	ci-	en	Teaching	and	r of	Training	periods	r of
h	pant	de	Qualificati	Place	OBE	Received	and roles	Learne
o		r	on	of	teachin	?	allocated	rs
o				Gradua	g			And
l				tion	years			stream
								s
A	Amy	F	BED, Geog raphy and Home Economic s	2008 UNIMA	3	Yes	3 Deputy Head	78 / 1 stream
B	Betty	F	BED	2010 at UNIMA	3	Yes	6 HOD (Human)	83 / 2 stream s
C	Clive	M	BED Geograph y and Theology	2017 Domasi Teache rs' College	3	Yes	3 periods Deputy Head	43 / 1 stream

Table 4.2: A sample of Coding Interview Data to its Source

Q	Question and Answer	Assigned Code
1	<p>What is your understanding of the role of 'Place' in teaching?</p> <p>Place, which includes the local environment, is very important because it is where you can find teaching and learning materials for Geography class. You can take students outside to feel the air; to see the ecosystem and, their environment itself. Geography cannot be taught without the environment.</p> <p>PROBE: How else do you use school environment?</p> <p>My school is a school with few teaching and learning resources for Geography. As such, we depend much on the environment when teaching Geography. For example, on the topic Climate, we use the environment, we go out with learners in the open space; we find elements of weather in the environment. This becomes easier for students to understand because they are able to see real things in life.</p>	T/1A
2	<p>What are your most and least interesting themes to teach in the Junior Secondary Geography Syllabus and why?</p> <p>Most Interesting Themes:</p> <p>The Environment; Ecosystem; Weather and Climate and Population. These topics are based on things which</p>	T/2A

learners already know, e.g. when you are teaching about Weather and Climate, learners already know how they differentiate local seasons. For example, they are able to tell this is rainy season when they see frogs cracking, when they see some birds flying, so these are topics which learners have got knowledge of, they already have pre-requisite knowledge about the topics, which becomes easier for the teacher to teach further such topics.

Least Interesting Themes:

Oh gosh! Maps and Map Interpretation; Atmosphere. In these topics, it is like forcing learners, you teach of things they have never heard of. For example, layers of the atmosphere such as the troposphere It's like you are taking them into a new world. So for them to grasp the concepts, you need to have a different departure point, somewhere very far from what is stipulated in the syllabus so that the learners are be able to acquire knowledge prescribed in the syllabus, of say grid referencing and they should be able to understand what is required of them.

It also becomes very difficult because it [map reading] involves Mathematics, as a result, the majority of Malawian students who do not like Mathematics automatically find Geography difficult; boring and consequently ignore it because its Mathematics related and not necessarily due to the incompetence of teachers. On the other hand, a few who are good at Mathematics enjoy the subject.

PROBE: Then how do you maximize engagement of

	<p>your learners?</p> <p>Takes a lot of effort. I employ real things. For example, last thing to teach in Maps and Interpretation is Sketch Maps. When I am teaching Sketch Maps, I give my students a task of drawing their way from their home to their classrooms. Then learners start liking the topic because it becomes what they are involved with daily.</p> <p>'Atmosphere' becomes boring because it is abstract; it is more of what they cannot see, for example, layers of the Atmosphere. For learners to understand that the air we breathe has got layers it becomes difficult as they have never heard that there is Atmosphere, which is another body in the space.</p> <p>We try as much as we can to teach to convince learners but we still are not comfortable as having delivered as required. We use charts, pictures, drawing, teaching and learning materials so that learners can follow since there is nothing from their immediate school environment, which can help them, actually see what the topic is actually about.</p> <p>PROBE: Do you have freedom to plan your lessons in the way you feel would improve engagement of your learners besides what the syllabus stipulates?</p> <p>Teachers have the liberty to plan their lessons using available resources that maximize students' participation without restrictions.</p>	
3	<p>How do you experience the implementation of the 'school to community transferable knowledge and</p>	T/3A

	<p>skills' as stipulated in the curriculum in your own teaching of Geography?</p> <p>There is a lot of knowledge that can be transferred. For example Map and Map work Interpretation from it, learners can give direction in their communities; in Natural resources, learners are able to plant trees, conserve the wild life and water as resources because they are taught that water is life; they cannot live without it. In terms of skills, they are able to draw house plans from Map-work skills.</p>	
4	<p>How often do you engage in fieldwork learning experiences? What would such learning experiences entail?</p> <p>Not very often. Once in a year, I only have one fieldwork.</p> <p>PROBE: Would you wish more fieldwork opportunities or you are comfortable with one fieldwork in a year?</p> <p>No, am not comfortable but restricted by lack of resources in my school. It is important for geography students to go out and appreciate what is happening outside in relation to what they are learning. If we had a chance in every topic, we could have consolidated what we teach in class with what is happening outside.</p> <p>PROBE: What about taking your learners outside their classrooms?</p> <p>It depends on the topic in question because it is not all topics that require real things. For example, Weathering requires real things like rocks. So taking your students</p>	T/4A

	<p>outside where there is almost no rock does not add any value to the lesson.</p> <p>PROBE: What would such learning experiences entail?</p> <p>The new curriculum requires learners to discover things on their own. So in the context where the school does not have the resources, we tell them to go home and find out the things for themselves and come back to classroom to report what they found out.</p> <p>PROBE: Do you the students report back their assignments to class?</p> <p>Not really, they still appear to require another push from their teachers in their discoveries.</p>	
5	<p>What suggestions would you like curriculum designers to consider for enhancing geographical themes in the current Geography Curriculum?</p> <p>The first thing they should consider is teaching and learning materials. When they were releasing the new curriculum, there were no textbooks for reference because publishers had not yet finished publishing the recommended books. As such, it becomes very difficult to effectively deliver the new curriculum.</p> <p>PROBE: Do you think the unavailability of recommended textbooks could be a source of students' disengagement in Geography?</p> <p>Yes. It made teachers disorganized. Books coming in late after we had struggled finding information in the old reference books caused unnecessary panic. We later</p>	T/5A

discovered that the old referencing books were leaving out some important information or themes as required by the new syllabus, which we had not covered. This meant going back to supplement or correct content previously taught.

PROBE: Any other thing that may just have come into your memory, and you wish to add before we close this session?

The new curriculum is good because it can help learners within and after school life. However, curriculum developers should also consider involving curriculum implementers. The teachers need to be involved even during planning or designing. In evaluating relevance of recommended books, they used retired teachers leaving out serving teachers who are actively engaging with the current students for whom the curriculum is revised. Introducing the new curriculum to its implementers in a five days workshop is far from being enough.

Table 4.3. Coding Numbers to Each Unit of Meaning

	5	T/5A	-Should consider supply of teaching and learning materials -New curriculum without reference materials undermines teachers' potential.
		t/5A	-Lack of resources disorganizes teachers -Struggle for new information in old references was inadequate. -New curriculum can help learners within and after school -Curriculum implementers to be involved from its planning or designing.
B	1	T/1B	-Place helps students to understand geography concepts because they relate to it.
	2	T/2Bi	-Most interesting: Weather and Climate -Learners easily relate class work with what they see. -There are a lot to refer to their environments.
		T/2Bi i	Least interesting: Latitudes and Longitudes; Map reading -Too abstract, students just memorize and fail to apply the knowledge.
		t/2B	-I outsource teaching resources. -I download materials from internet to help students build a picture about what they are learning.
	3	T/3B	-Not in all themes

			-Some show their relevance to communities.
		t/3B	-Malawi is still developing so GIS application is limited. -Learners don't see relevance of map work elements like bearing, grid references to their communities. -Weather and Climate; Environment are more appropriate because students see consequences of not taking care of them.
	4	T/4B	-Not often, can't remember when I last took them for fieldwork. -Only three times outside their classroom in a year for Weather and Climate. -There is a lot of new information added which overloads content and consumes much time. -Limited time to relate content to environment
		t/4B	-Students remember well what they saw -More disturbances in class management when students are outside than inside class walls. -Students become too excited and make noise.
	5	T/5B	-They should start with Malawian examples of Geography concepts before sighting them elsewhere.
		t/5B	-Curriculum is flexible, syllabus only prescribes suggested methods. -New curriculum orientation should be given enough time for each topic to empower its implementers

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack of teaching and learning resources despairs teachers. -Too detailed topics limit movement from one theme to another. -Students simply memorize content to pass examinations.
C	1	T/1 C	-All geography themes are attached to place
	2	T/2 Ci	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Most interesting: The Earth -It has some elements that are different from reality.
		T/2 Cii	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Least interesting: Map work -Too congested
		t/2C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I ask them questions. -I use TLA for illustrations. -I break down too much workload -I go outside the syllabus stipulations. -There is liberty, no restrictions for teachers.
	3	T/3 C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -More appropriate to community -Depends on individual teacher.
t/3C		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Curriculum's much is on critical development -A shift from straight forward to proving questions. -A variety of themes reflect different places where students come from. 	
	4	T/4	-Once a year

		C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Some themes can be covered within class set-up. -Opportunity for first hand information
		t/4C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Fieldwork is important but faces logistical problems. -Students get outside classroom rarely -Students see what is outside through windows. -Students pressurize teachers to go for fieldwork -No syllabus emphasis for fieldwork. -Too much advanced content dumped on junior section -Too detailed contents -Former senior section content is overloading junior section.
		t/5c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Some content is irrelevant for students' lives but perhaps for future use. -We don't teach for exams but knowledge. -Too overloaded content for students to master -No much consultation for teachers' inputs. -Unfair to blame teachers for inaccuracy in implementation.

Table 4.4: Summaries of Units of Meanings Identified from the Responses

Teacher Participant	Question Number	Assigned Code	Unit of Meaning
A	1	T/1A	-Source of Teaching and Learning materials for Geography. -Geography and environment are inseparable.
		t/1A	-With few teaching and learning in the school, I rely on the environment.
	2	T/2Ai	-Most Interesting: Environment; Ecosystem; Weather and Climate; and Population. -These are easy to start from what learners already know.
		T/2Aii	-Least interesting: Maps and Map interpretation; Atmosphere. -We force students to learn strange things. We have to start afar from what syllabus stipulates to help students access the concepts. -Students who are not good at Mathematics ignore Geography. -Teachers are not incompetent but students find geography difficult and boring.
		t/2A	-Takes a lot of effort. I give students practical tasks similar to what they are involved with daily. -Abstract topics like Atmosphere. Teachers' efforts fail to convince learners about the unseen world. -Teachers are at liberty to plan lessons according to learners' contexts.
	3	T/3A	-There are opportunities for transferable knowledge.
	4	T/4A	-Not very often -One fieldwork in a year.
		t/4A	-Restricted by resources. -Helps learners relate what they learn in class to what happens outside. -Depends on a topic in question. -Not all topics require real things -Depends on availability of required resource eg a rock

			<p>for weathering.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Schools without resources struggle with learner-centeredness' approach. -Teachers' support still required in homework.
	5	T/5A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Should consider supply of teaching and learning materials -New curriculum without reference materials undermines teachers' potential.
		t/5A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack of resources disorganizes teachers -Struggle for new information in old references was inadequate. -New curriculum can help learners within and after school -Curriculum implementers to be involved from its planning or designing.
B	1	T/1B	-Place helps students to understand geography concepts because they relate to it.
	2	T/2Bi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Most interesting: Weather and Climate -Learners easily relate class work with what they see. -There are a lot to refer to their environments.
		T/2Bii	<p>Least Interesting: Latitudes and Longitudes; Map reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Too abstract, students just memorize and fail to apply the knowledge.
		t/2B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I outsource teaching resources. -I download materials from internet to help students build a picture about what they are learning.
	3	T/3B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Not in all themes -Some show their relevance to communities.
		t/3B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Malawi is still developing so GIS application is limited. -Learners don't see relevance of map work elements like bearing, grid references to their communities. -Weather and Climate; Environment are more appropriate because students see consequences of not taking care of them.

	4	T/4B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Not often, can't remember when I last took them for fieldwork. -Only three times outside their classroom in a year for Weather and Climate. -There is a lot of new information added which overloads content and consumes much time. -Limited time to to relate content to environment
		t/4B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students remember well what they saw -More disturbances in class management when students are outside than inside class walls. -Students become too excited and make noise.
	5	T/5B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -They should start with Malawian examples of geography concepts before sighting them elsewhere.
		t/5B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Curriculum is flexible, syllabus only prescribes suggested methods. -New curriculum orientation should be given enough time for each topic to empower its implementers -Lack of teaching and learning resources despairs teachers. -Too detailed topics limit movement from one theme to another. -Students simply memorize content to pass examinations.
C	1	T/1C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -All geography themes are attached to place
	2	T/2Ci	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Most interesting: The Earth -It has some elements that are different from reality.
		T/2Cii	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Least Interesting: Map work -Too congested
		t/2C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I ask them questions. -I use TLA for illustrations. -I break down too much workload -I go outside the syllabus stipulations. -There is liberty, no restrictions for teachers.

	3	T/3C	-More appropriate to community -Depends on individual teacher.
		t/3C	-Curriculum's much is on critical development -A shift from straight forward to proving questions. -A variety of themes reflect different places where students come from.
	4	T/4C	-Once a year -Some themes can be covered within class set-up. -Opportunity for first hand information
		t/4C	-Fieldwork is important but faces logistical problems. -Students get outside classroom rarely -Students see what is outside through windows. -Students pressurize teachers to go for fieldwork -No syllabus emphasis for fieldwork. -Too much advanced content dumped on junior section -Too detailed contents -Former senior section content is overloading junior section.
		t/5c	-Some content is irrelevant for students' lives but perhaps for future use. -We don't teach for exams but knowledge. -Too overloaded content for students to master -No much consultation for teachers' inputs. -Unfair to blame teachers for inaccuracy in implementation.

TABLE 4.5: Illustration of Emerging Themes

Rephrased meaning	Code Number/s	Emerging Themes
<p>-Place is where we find teaching and learning materials.</p> <p>-Geography and environment are inseparable.</p> <p>-Place helps students understand geography content because they relate to it.</p> <p>-All geography themes are attached to place.</p> <p>-Few teaching and learning resources in the school so rely on the environment.</p> <p>-I just use windows for students to see what's outside,</p>	<p>T/1A; T/1B; T/1C; t/1A; t/4C</p>	<p>Teachers' Conceptions about Place</p>
<p>-Environment; Ecosystem; Weather and climate; Population.</p> <p>They start from what</p>	<p>T/2A; T/2Bi; T/2Ci; t/3B</p>	<p>Most Interesting Themes</p>

<p>learners already know; see in their environment.</p> <p>-Weather and Climate</p> <p>Learners easily relate with what they see.</p> <p>Many examples in their environment to refer to.</p> <p>-The Earth has some elements that are different from reality.</p>		
<p>-Map work and Interpretation of Geographical Information; Atmosphere.</p> <p>We force students to learn strange things.</p> <p>We have to start from afar to help students acquire the knowledge.</p> <p>Students with Mathematics problems find</p>	<p>T/2Aii; T/2Bii; t/2C2; T/2AB</p>	<p>Least Interesting Themes</p>

<p>Geography boring.</p> <p>-Map work and Interpretation of Geographical Information;</p> <p>I have to go outside the box to break down the content overload.</p> <p>-Longitudes and Latitudes; Map reading</p> <p>Too abstract so students simply memorize and fail to apply content later.</p>		
<p>-From Maps students learn how to give direction; from Natural Resources, students learn how to take care of their community resources.</p> <p>-can help learners within and after school.</p> <p>-Some content</p>	<p>T/3A; T/3B; T/3C; T/3C1; t/3B; t3C1; t5A; t/5B1; t/5C1</p>	<p>Syllabus viability for 'school -community' transferable knowledge</p>

<p>irrelevant now but maybe for future use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Too overloading content for students to master,-focuses on critical development-Not all themes but some are community relevant.-More appropriate but depends on individual teacher.-A variety of themes reflect on different places students come from.-Malawi is still developing so GIS application is limited.-Themes like Weather and Climate; the Environment are applicable because students see consequences of		
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<p>not taking care of them.</p>		
<p>-Not very often. One fieldwork in a year.</p> <p>-Rare. I just use windows for students to see what is outside.</p> <p>-it depends on a topic in question.</p> <p>-It depends on availability of resources.</p> <p>-Some themes can be covered within class.</p> <p>-Students pressurize teachers to go for fieldwork.</p> <p>-Not often. I can't remember when I last took them out; only three times outside their classroom.</p> <p>-No time for relating content to environment.</p> <p>-An opportunity for</p>	<p>T/4A; T/4B; T/4C; t/4B4; t/4C; t/4Aii</p>	<p>Field work Learning Experiences</p>

<p>first hand information\</p> <p>-Fieldwork is important but meets logistical challenges.</p> <p>-Lack of syllabus emphasis on fieldwork.</p>		
<p>-Curriculum implementers should be involved in its planning and designing.</p> <p>-New curriculum orientation should be given enough time for each concept for effective training of trainers.</p> <p>-Local Malawian case studies to precede international ones.</p> <p>-Unrealistic to deliver new curriculum effectively without resources.</p> <p>-Content should be</p>	<p>T/5A; T/5B; T/5C; t/5A1; t/5B1; t/5C1; t/5C2</p>	<p>Suggestions to Curriculum Designers</p>

<p>appropriate and applicable to students' level and community.</p> <p>-There should be enough consultation to incorporate teachers' voices.</p>		
<p>-Too detailed for Form 1s and 2s.</p> <p>-Students only memorize content to pass examinations.</p> <p>-No time for relating content to environment because of long and time consuming added information.</p> <p>-Malawi still developing so GIS application is limited.</p> <p>-Learners don't see relevance of map work elements transferable.</p> <p>-Latitudes and Longitudes; Map</p>	<p>t/5B3; t/5B4; t/4B; t/3B; T/2Bii; t/5Ci; t/5c, t/5A1</p>	<p>Sources of Students' Disengagement</p>

<p>reading; are too abstract, so students just memorize and fail to apply the knowledge.</p> <p>-Irrelevance of content to students' lives e.g. nuclear energy; geothermal are not here in Malawi.</p> <p>-Overload reinforces negative attitude among students towards geography as there becomes too much to master</p> <p>-Lack of resources disorganizes teachers as they struggle to look for new information references.</p>		
<p>-Takes a lot of effort</p> <p>-I give learners practical exercise they are involved with everyday</p> <p>-I give students</p>	<p>t/2A; t/2C1; t/2B; t/4Aiii</p>	<p>Teachers' Interventions to Improve Students' Engagement</p>

<p>homework to come back to report to class.</p> <p>-I ask them questions.</p> <p>-I use teaching and learning aids for illustrations.</p> <p>-I do what I can to outsource teaching resources.</p> <p>-I download some materials from internet to help students build images of what I teach.</p>		
<p>-No much consultation</p> <p>-Unfairly blamed for implementation inaccuracy</p> <p>-Students still require teachers' support in assignments and discoveries.</p> <p>-Class management problems when</p>	<p>t/2A; t/2C1; t/2B; t/4Aiii</p>	<p>Teachers' Interventions to Improve Students' Engagement</p>

<p>students are taken outside,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Too much advanced content dumped on junior section.-Too detailed and overloading content-Fieldwork faces logistical problems.-Restricted by resources availability.-Too much added information making content long and time consuming.-No time for relating content to environment		
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APPENDIX I: Syllabus For Geography



Republic of Malawi

Syllabus for

Geography

Forms 1 and 2

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

Syllabus for

Geography

Forms 1 and 2

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

Prepared and published by

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Foreword

Education is the vehicle through which every citizen can realise his or her potential and contribute to national development. The vision of the education sector in Malawi is to be a catalyst for socio-economic development, industrial growth and an instrument for empowering the poor, the weak and the voiceless. Its mission is to provide quality and relevant education to Malawians. As a catalyst for the development, education should equip the individual with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to enable one to perform one's roles effectively, in an attempt to promote and sustain the social-economic development of a nation.

It is the conviction of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology that primary education alone is not sufficient for achieving socio-economic development. As argued in the NESP (2008-2017), 'In an evolving and changing world of education, there is no way basic education can be taken as a complete transformer of our society when the world at large is getting more complex and sophisticated'. Therefore, secondary education is critical as it provides additional knowledge, skills and attitudes crucial for enabling Malawians to cope with the complex and sophisticated socio-economic and political environment of the global village to which Malawi belongs. Specifically, secondary education is:

- a human right, and important for achieving gender equity
- important for improving the health and quality of life for individuals, families and communities
- important for the socio-economic and political development of the nation
- necessary for reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Education For All (EFA) and for promoting Universal Primary Education (UPE)

Against this background, the Malawi Government through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has reviewed the secondary school curriculum with a view to improving its quality and relevance, and to align it with the primary curriculum which has since been reviewed and emphasises continuous assessment as a tool for learning.

The rationale for reviewing the secondary school curriculum is contained in the NESP (2008-2017), and PIF (2000). The documents clearly state that the purpose of secondary education is to provide students with the academic basis for gainful employment in formal, private and public sectors. They further state that secondary education will prepare students for further education according to their abilities and aptitudes. However, it is important to note that for the majority of the children in Malawi, secondary education is terminal. Consequently, the curriculum has put emphasis on practical skills that enable them to achieve self-employment.

It is also clear that a good secondary school curriculum enables a student to develop into an adult with sound intellectual, moral, physical, and emotional abilities. Therefore the curriculum needs to address the whole range of students' abilities and interests. In addition, it should aim at equipping the student to become an independent learner in order to promote personal, family, community and national development. The new curriculum has therefore been deliberately designed to achieve these important goals. The importance of this syllabus therefore, cannot be over-emphasised.

I would like to thank all those who were directly or indirectly involved in the preparation of the syllabuses. Key among the stakeholders are the Director and staff of the Department of Inspectorate and Advisory Services (DIAS) in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), for facilitating the development of the syllabuses in collaboration with the Director and staff of the Malawi Institute of Education (MIE). I would also like to extend my gratitude to university colleges (both public and private), teachers from secondary schools (both public and private), members of different religious groups and officers representing special interest groups such as the Malawi Revenue Authority (MRA), Reserve Bank of Malawi (RBM), Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS), Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) and Malawi Blood Transfusion Services (MBTS) for their valuable contribution to and participation in the preparation of these syllabuses.

Most of all, I would like to express my hope that teachers will implement this curriculum diligently and in the best interest of the students so that the goals for reviewing the curriculum are achieved.

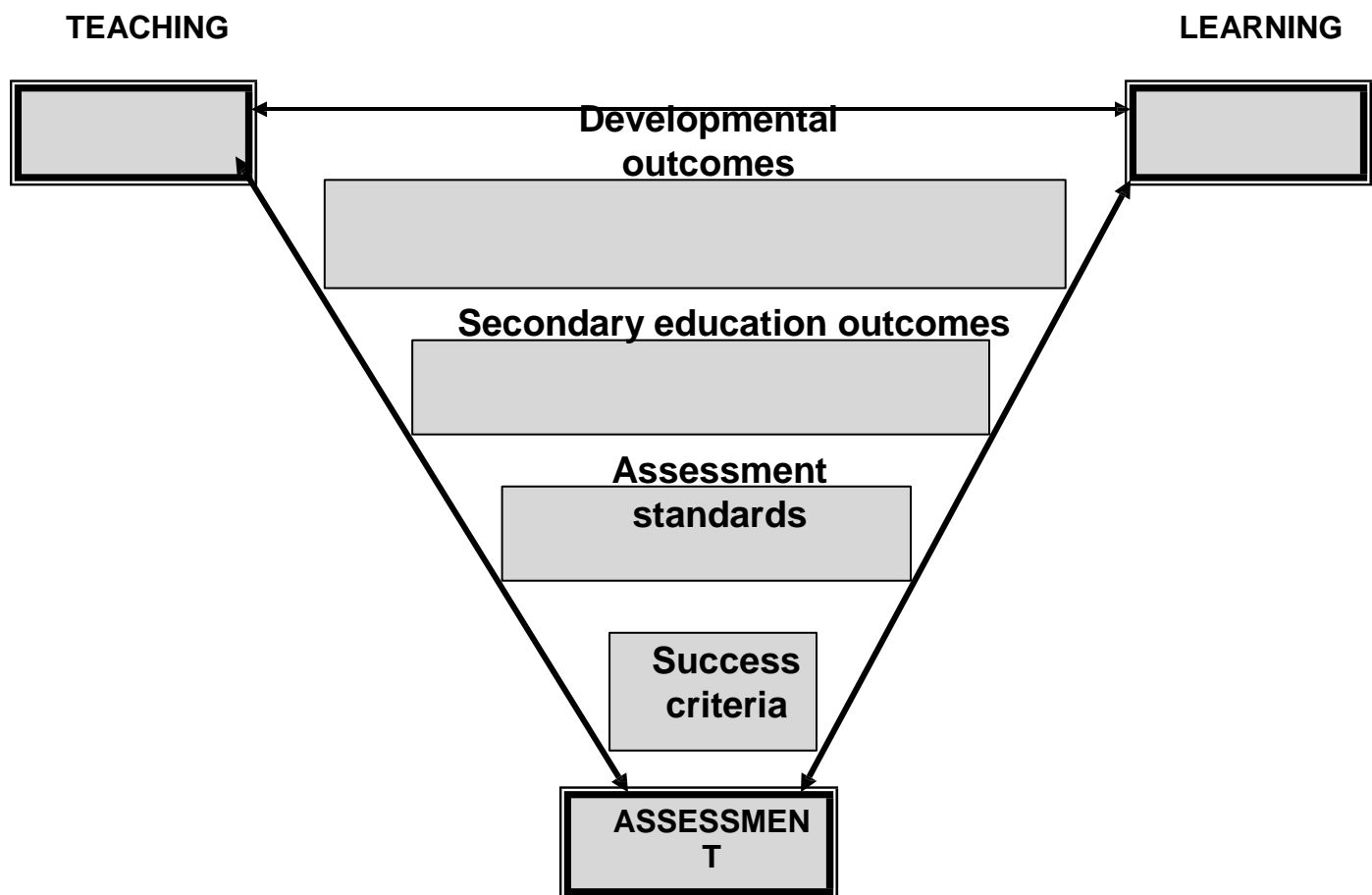
Dr McPhail Magwira
Secretary for Education Science and Technology (SEST)

The secondary school curriculum in Malawi

Among other reasons, the secondary school curriculum has been reviewed to align it with the primary school curriculum. This curriculum puts emphasis on student-centred teaching and learning approaches, including continuous assessment.

This curriculum focuses on student achievement. To achieve the outcomes, students must be introduced to new knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in the context of their existing knowledge, skills, attitudes and values so that they develop a deeper understanding as they learn and apply the knowledge. In this way, the process of learning is integral to the final product. The final products are the outcomes, that is, what students are expected to achieve in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, which must be clearly stated before teaching and learning begin. The achievements made at school, however, are only truly beneficial when the students transfer them to life beyond the school and view learning as a lifelong process. This is essential to keep pace with the changing social environment of home and work.

The figure below illustrates the structure and major elements of Malawi's secondary school curriculum, which are elaborated in the text below.



The developmental structure of the secondary school curriculum in Malawi

Developmental outcomes

The developmental outcomes are over-arching; they are what the student is expected to achieve by the end of the secondary school cycle both in and out of school. These outcomes apply to subject areas and they have been derived from the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi, Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS), National Education Sector Plan (NESP), Education Act and other education policy documents, including global policies and multilateral agreements to which Malawi is a signatory, as well as from the Secondary School Curriculum and Assessment Review (SSCAR). That is, students should be able to:

- 1 demonstrate appropriate moral and ethical behaviour in accordance with the accepted norms and values of the society
- 2 demonstrate local, regional, and international understanding
- 3 communicate competently, effectively, and relevantly in a variety of contexts, in an appropriate local or international language
- 4 apply mathematical concepts in socio-cultural, political, economic, environmental, scientific, and technological contexts to solve problems
- 5 apply scientific, technological, vocational, and managerial skills in a creative and innovative way to identify problems and develop appropriate solutions, so as to participate productively in society
- 6 demonstrate health-promoting behaviour in their personal lives as well as in their communities and the wider environment, with particular attention to prevalent diseases
- 7 appreciate and interact with the environment in a responsible and sustainable manner
- 8 apply the indigenous and non-indigenous knowledge and skills necessary for lifelong learning, personal advancement, employment, and the development of society
- 9 use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) responsibly and productively
- 10 demonstrate an understanding of the functioning of the economy and the contribution of agriculture and other sectors to national development
- 11 make use of entrepreneurial and vocational skills for personal and national development
- 12 apply research skills for problem-solving
- 13 demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of issues of human rights, democracy, gender, governance, and other emerging issues

Secondary education outcomes

The secondary education outcomes are categorised into seven sets of essential skills to be acquired by a secondary school graduate. The skills are:

- 1 citizenship skills
- 2 ethical and socio-cultural skills
- 3 economic development and environmental management skills
- 4 occupational and entrepreneurial skills
- 5 practical skills
- 6 creativity and resourcefulness
- 7 scientific and technological skills

Citizenship skills

- 1 demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the symbols of nationhood
- 2 demonstrate a spirit of patriotism and national unity
- 3 apply decision-making skills necessary for participation in civic affairs
- 4 demonstrate a spirit of leadership and service
- 5 show respect for one's own and other people's rights and responsibilities
- 6 tolerate other people's attitudes and beliefs
- 7 demonstrate respect for the rule of law
- 8 understand characteristics of good governance
- 9 initiate and implement community development projects
- 10 demonstrate a sense of good neighbourliness
- 11 demonstrate a sense of national, regional and international understanding
- 12 demonstrate cooperative behaviour
- 13 demonstrate personal and social responsibility

Ethical and socio-cultural skills

- 14 demonstrate moral, spiritual and ethical attitudes and values
- 15 appreciate Malawi's diverse cultures and their respective practices
- 16 appreciate existing national institutions and cultural heritage
- 17 appreciate the value of the relationship between the individual and society
- 18 respect one's own and other people's cultures
- 19 identify beliefs which promote or retard national development
- 20 evaluate beliefs, taboos and superstitions in relation to national development
- 21 uphold beliefs which promote national development

Economic development and environmental management skills

- 22 understand Malawi's economy and economic structure
- 23 demonstrate entrepreneurial and/or vocational skills for formal or informal employment
- 24 exploit economic opportunities stemming from agriculture
- 25 demonstrate an interest in land husbandry, animal husbandry and aquaculture
- 26 apply appropriate agricultural practices and methods
- 27 acquire positive attitudes and skills, and apply them to the sustainable development of the natural and physical environment
- 28 understand the importance of diversified agriculture for Malawi's economy
- 29 understand the impact of technologies on economic productivity
- 30 apply relevant technologies to various economic activities
- 31 apply value addition practices to agricultural and environmental resource utilisation and management
- 32 appreciate Malawi's environmental resources
- 33 understand the impact of rapid population growth on natural resources and the delivery of social services
- 34 apply a variety of measures to conserve Malawi's natural resources
- 35 apply ICT skills to improve intellectual growth, personal enhancement and communication
- 36 demonstrate the ability to adapt to climate change and mitigate its impact on the economy and environment

- 37 appreciate the importance of energy in economic development
- 38 understand the importance of diversifying the economy through sectors such as tourism, mining and manufacturing

Occupational and entrepreneurial skills

- 39 demonstrate the spirit of self-reliance through vocational and entrepreneurial activities
- 40 apply appropriate vocational, occupational and entrepreneurial skills to individual and national advancement
- 41 demonstrate effective communication skills for the transfer of occupational and entrepreneurial knowledge, skills, attitudes and values
- 42 apply the principles of science and technology, entrepreneurship and management to promote active and productive participation in the society
- 43 demonstrate creativity and innovation for the benefit of the individual, community and the nation as a whole
- 44 demonstrate an understanding of indigenous and non-indigenous knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, and apply them to personal intellectual growth and national development
- 45 use vocational, occupational and entrepreneurial skills for the creation of economic opportunities in agriculture and other sectors

Practical skills

- 46 acquire entrepreneurial skills related to agriculture, commerce and industry
- 47 apply appropriate skills to agricultural, commercial and industrial production
- 48 demonstrate positive attitudes to manual work
- 49 demonstrate excellence in any kind of workmanship
- 50 demonstrate sporting ability and sportsmanship
- 51 demonstrate the ability to use creative and innovative artistic talents for self-employment

Creativity and resourcefulness

- 52 demonstrate a spirit of inquiry and creative, critical and lateral thinking
- 53 use problem-solving techniques to solve practical problems
- 54 demonstrate an imaginative and creative mind
- 55 exploit creative potential
- 56 understand personal strengths and weaknesses and use strengths to promote healthy self-esteem
- 57 maximise the use of available resources

Scientific and technological skills

- 58 apply appropriate scientific, technological and vocational skills to improve economic productivity
- 59 apply relevant innovations in science and technology
- 60 demonstrate a capacity to utilise appropriate technology
- 61 demonstrate basic research skills

Rationale for geography

Geography, a natural and social science, involves the study of the physical environment and the interaction of people with the environment. It helps learners to acquire appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in order to understand and appreciate the world and manage its resources sustainably. It also makes them appreciate the interdependence of societies in various areas at local, national, regional and global level.

The dawn of the 21st Century has the earth getting overcrowded, natural resources getting depleted, world climates becoming more erratic, the global economy becoming more competitive and world events getting more interconnected. Resolving these contemporary issues require critical and creative minds that geography helps to realize. Through geography learners appreciate the value of nature and be able to conserve it.

Core elements and their outcomes

Map work and interpretation of geographical information

The student will be able to demonstrate the ability to read, transform and interpret maps as well as analyse and interpret other geographical information in various forms.

Understanding the earth

The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere and biosphere.

Environmental and natural resources management

The student will be able to appreciate the importance of the environment, consequently be able to protect it and practise sustainable natural resource management.

Spatial organisation

The student will be able to demonstrate increasing knowledge and understanding of places in the local, regional, national, international and global contexts, in relation to distribution of economic and social activities.

Interdependence between Malawi and the world

The student will be able to understand the interdependence between and among countries in environmental, economic, social and technological aspects for sustainable development.

Scope and sequence chart for Forms 1 to 4

Core element	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4
Map work and interpretation of geographical information	<p>Map work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ map and its components ☐☐ types and uses of maps ☐☐ maps and scale ☐☐ map symbols and conventional signs ☐☐ location and grid reference ☐☐ direction and bearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ longitudes and latitudes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - time zones - standard time ☐☐ contour patterns ☐☐ relief ☐☐ gradient ☐☐ drainage patterns ☐☐ riverine features ☐☐ coastal features ☐☐ cross sections and long profiles ☐☐ land use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ fundamental map reading and interpretation skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - land use - landforms - riverine features - coastal feature ● map work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - measuring distance - calculation of area - cross sections and river profiles - reducing and enlarging maps - gradient Statistical methods ● statistical methods in geography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ Geographical Information system (GIS) and remote sensing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - interpretation of GIS - aerial photographs - satellite images
Understanding the earth	<p>Earth as a planet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ solar system ☐☐ shape of the earth ☐☐ movements of the earth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rotation - revolution 	<p>Lithosphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ internal structure of the earth ☐☐ internal and external processes that shape the landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ theory of continental drift ☐☐ plate tectonics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mountain building - volcanism - earthquakes ☐☐ rocks 	

Core element	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4
	<p>Hydrosphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrological cycle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - main features and processes - importance - factors which disturb the cycle (global warming, deforestation and acid rain) <p>Atmosphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> composition and structure of atmosphere <input type="checkbox"/> weather and climate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - elements of weather 	<p>Lithosphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internal structure of the earth <input type="checkbox"/> internal and external processes that shape the landscape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> formation of lakes <input type="checkbox"/> formation of east and central African lakes <input type="checkbox"/> drainage system of east and central Africa <input type="checkbox"/> importance of lakes and rivers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - case study: Shire River <input type="checkbox"/> distribution of seasons in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tropical regions - temperate regions - polar regions - seasons of Malawi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> landforms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - riverine - coastal <input type="checkbox"/> relief features of the ocean basins <input type="checkbox"/> ocean currents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> pressure belts <input type="checkbox"/> planetary/prevaling winds <input type="checkbox"/> air masses and fronts <input type="checkbox"/> local winds <input type="checkbox"/> land and sea breeze <input type="checkbox"/> cyclones and anticyclones <input type="checkbox"/> clouds <input type="checkbox"/> precipitation <input type="checkbox"/> rainfall (types) 	

Core element	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4
	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Biosphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - composition and structure 		<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> climatic regions and world biomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - equatorial - tropical continental - tropical desert - mediterranean/warm temperate western margin - cool temperate interior 	
Environmental and natural resources management	<p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> components of environment <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> importance of environment <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> ecosystem <p>Natural resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> types (renewable and non-renewable) <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> importance of natural resources 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> environmental management</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> natural resources in Malawi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - forestry - wildlife - soil - energy (case study: HEP in Malawi) - minerals 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> environmental issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pollution - desertification - climate change <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> world fishing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - factors influencing development of world fishing industry - major fishing grounds - types of fish - main fishing methods - importance of the fishing industry 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> environmental issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wetlands - wildlife - waste management <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> responses to climate change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - national initiatives - international agreements - examples and aims <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> minerals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - types of minerals - world distribution - uses (uranium, petroleum, coal, gold, iron and copper) - mining methods - effects of mining

Core element	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4
	<p>Natural disasters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐meanings (disaster, hazard, risk) ☐☐types of natural disasters ☐☐effects of natural disasters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐fish (case study: fishing in Malawi) ☐☐natural disasters in Malawi ☐☐precautionary measures ☐☐disaster risk management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - challenges of the fishing industry - management and conservation of fisheries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - case studies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 uranium in Malawi 2 petroleum ☐☐energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - types (HEP, solar, wind, biomass, thermal, geothermal) - energy crisis in Malawi
<p>Spatial organisation</p>	<p>Population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐meaning ☐☐composition ☐☐distribution ☐☐density ☐☐growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐population of Malawi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - composition - distribution - density - growth ☐☐effects of population growth in Malawi 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐world population distribution and density ☐☐population dynamics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - birth rate - fertility rate - mortality rate - migration - age- sex structure - demographic - transition model Settlements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - types (rural and urban) - settlement patterns - urbanisation - urban land use model case study: Lilongwe

Core element	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4
		<p>Industries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ types ☐☐ location of industries in Malawi ☐☐ case study on tourism in Malawi 		<p>World agriculture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ factors influencing agriculture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - physical - human - economic - technological ☐☐ types of agriculture ☐☐ case studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rice farming in South East Asia - dairy farming in Denmark - irrigation farming in Israel - tea plantation in Malawi ☐☐ industrialisation ☐☐ major industrialised areas in the world ☐☐ impact of industries ☐ case studies on the motor vehicle industry in Japan and tourism in Africa

Core element	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4
<p>Interdependence between Malawi and the world</p>		<p>Communication, transport and trade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - means of communication - importance of communication - communication in Malawi ☐☐transport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - types of transport - transport in Malawi - problems of transport in Malawi ☐☐trade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - imports/exports - balance of trade in Malawi - factors affecting balance of trade in Malawi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐aims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - regional trade blocks (SADC and COMESA) - WTO ☐☐benefits and challenges of trade agreements ☐☐role of customs in international trade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐major world transport routes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sea routes - air routes ● railway network in Africa

Teaching syllabus for Forms 1 and 2

Form 1 Term 1

Core element: Map work and interpretation of geographical information

Outcome: Students should be able to demonstrate the ability to read, transform and interpret maps as well as analyse and interpret other geographical information in various forms.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when the students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> read and interpret maps 	<p>The students must be able to :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 explain the term <i>map</i> 2 explain the components of a map 3 differentiate a map from an aerial photograph 	<p>Map and its components</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>map</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term <i>map</i> <input type="checkbox"/> identifying components of a map <input type="checkbox"/> discussing components of a map <input type="checkbox"/> studying different types of maps <input type="checkbox"/> distinguishing types of maps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> pair work <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> teacher assessment <input type="checkbox"/> group work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> maps <input type="checkbox"/> aerial photographs <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> compasses <input type="checkbox"/> checklists

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>4 explain different uses of maps</p> <p>5 explain ways of expressing scale</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐distinguishing maps from aerial photograph ☐☐brainstorming uses of maps ☐☐discussing uses of maps ☐☐matching types of maps to uses ☐☐brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>scale</i> ☐☐discussing the meaning of the term <i>scale</i> ☐☐identifying ways of expressing scale ☐☐converting various scales into other types 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐group work ☐☐question and answer ☐☐peer assessment ☐☐group discussion ☐☐written exercises ☐☐demonstration ☐☐question and answer ☐☐pair work ☐☐peer assessment ☐☐individual/self assessment ☐☐group work ☐☐practical exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐different types of maps ☐☐observation checklists ☐☐atlases ☐☐topographical maps ☐☐atlases ☐☐strings ☐☐pairs of dividers ☐☐strip of paper

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>6 explain symbols and signs on a map</p> <p>7 interpreting maps using different signs and symbols</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> measuring a straight course distance on a map <input type="checkbox"/> measuring a winding course distance on a map <input type="checkbox"/> drawing a sketch diagram <input type="checkbox"/> drawing a diagram to scale <input type="checkbox"/> indicating the scale used in a diagram <input type="checkbox"/> identifying symbols on a map <input type="checkbox"/> discussing conventional signs used on maps <input type="checkbox"/> reading maps with different map symbols <input type="checkbox"/> drawing maps using map symbols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> group discussion <input type="checkbox"/> pair work <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> practical exercises <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> topographical maps <input type="checkbox"/> atlases <input type="checkbox"/> map reading textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> charts with map symbols

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>8 locate features and places on a topographical map using four-figure and six figure grid references</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ locating features and places on a topographical map using four-figure grid references □□ locating features and places on a topographical map using six-figure grid references □□ identifying features located on a map using four-figure grid references □□ identifying features located on a map using six-figure grid references □□ distinguishing large scale maps from small scale maps □□ reducing maps to a given scale □□ enlarging maps to a given scale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ demonstration □□ group work □□ pair work □□ group discussion □□ practical exercises □□ observation checklists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ topographical maps □□ grid lines □□ map reading textbooks □□ sketch diagrams

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>9 explain compass points in relation to cardinal points</p> <p>10 explain true north, magnetic north, and grid north</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> calculating the area of a regular feature <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> calculating the area of an irregular feature <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing compass points in relation to cardinal points <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> locating features on a map using compass points <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> locating features in the school environment using cardinal points <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meaning of the terms <i>true north</i>, <i>magnetic north</i> and <i>grid north</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the relationship between true north, magnetic north and grid north <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> locating features on a map using bearing <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> calculating bearing of features on a map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstration <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> fieldwork <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> pair work <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> group discussion <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> practical exercises peer assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> topographical map <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> compass <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> observation checklists <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> charts <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> atlases

Core element: Understanding the earth

Outcome: The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere and biosphere.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of the solar system 	<p>The students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 explain the term <i>solar system</i> 2 explain new developments related to the solar system 	<p>The solar system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> explain the meaning of the term <i>solar system</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the concept <i>solar system</i> <input type="checkbox"/> identifying components of the solar system <input type="checkbox"/> listing new developments related to the solar system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - examining new developments in the solar system eg number of planets, shifting of the poles and inclination of the planets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> group discussion <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> pair work <input type="checkbox"/> debate <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> individual assessment <input type="checkbox"/> research work <input type="checkbox"/> role play <input type="checkbox"/> projects <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> diagrams of the solar system <input type="checkbox"/> diagrams of the shape of the earth <input type="checkbox"/> checklists <input type="checkbox"/> scoring rubrics <input type="checkbox"/> videos <input type="checkbox"/> newspaper articles <input type="checkbox"/> internet

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 relate the position of the earth to the sun</p> <p>4 explain the shape of the earth</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> examining the position of the earth in relation to the sun <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing how the position of the earth contributes to life and human activities <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the shape of the earth <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing proofs of the shape of the earth <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the effects of the shape of the earth 		

Core element: Understanding the earth

Outcome: The students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere and lithosphere.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of the term hydrosphere 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 explain the term <i>hydrosphere</i> 2 explain the main features and processes of the hydrological cycle 	<p>Hydrosphere</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>hydrosphere</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term 'hydrosphere' <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the distribution of water on earth <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term 'hydrological cycle' <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the main features and processes of the hydrological cycle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> pair work <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> essay questions <input type="checkbox"/> oral exercise <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> individual assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> globes <input type="checkbox"/> diagrams showing the hydrological cycle <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> videos <input type="checkbox"/> internet <input type="checkbox"/> atlases

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 explain the importance of the hydrological cycle</p> <p>4 suggest ways of maintaining the hydrological cycle</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the importance of the hydrological cycle <input type="checkbox"/> examining the importance of the hydrological cycle <input type="checkbox"/> analyzing factors that can disturb the hydrological cycle <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming ways of maintaining the hydrological cycle <input type="checkbox"/> discussing ways of maintaining the hydrological cycle 		

Term 2

Core element: Understanding the earth

Outcome: The students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere and lithosphere.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate an understanding of the atmosphere 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> explain the term <i>atmosphere</i> explain the composition of gases in the atmosphere 	<p>Atmosphere</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>atmosphere</i> discussing the meaning of the term <i>atmosphere</i> identifying the main gases in the atmosphere interpreting data on the main gases in the atmosphere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> question and answer group work pair work brainstorming written exercises peer assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tables pie charts/graphs diagrams of the atmosphere videos internet

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 describe layers of the atmosphere</p> <p>4 explain the importance of the atmosphere</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ identifying layers of the atmosphere □□ discussing the characteristics of each layer □□ drawing layers of the atmosphere • brainstorming the importance of the atmosphere • discussing the importance of the atmosphere 		

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate an understanding of weather and climate 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> explain the terms <i>weather</i> and <i>climate</i> explain elements of weather and factors that affect them explain factors that affect the elements of weather 	<p>Weather and climate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> brainstorming the meaning of the terms <i>weather</i> and <i>climate</i> discussing the meaning of the terms <i>weather</i> and <i>climate</i> brainstorming the elements of weather <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discussing the elements of weather discussing factors that affect the elements of weather analyzing factors that affect elements of weather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> question and answer pair work peer assessment brainstorming written exercises teacher assessment demonstration practical exercises field visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> students' experiences weather instruments weather maps written exercises television weather bulletins peer assessment local environment weather stations weather data

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 identify instruments used to measure elements of weather</p> <p>4 interpret weather data and symbols</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> identifying instruments used to measure elements of weather <input type="checkbox"/> discussing instruments used to measure different weather elements <input type="checkbox"/> measuring elements of weather <input type="checkbox"/> interpreting data collected using weather instruments <input type="checkbox"/> forecasting weather using data collected <input type="checkbox"/> discussing sources of data for forecasting weather <input type="checkbox"/> interpreting weather symbols 		

Core element: Understanding the earth

Outcome: The students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere and lithosphere.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> develop an appreciation for conserving the biosphere 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 describe the term <i>biosphere</i> 2 identify the components of biosphere 	<p>Biosphere</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>biosphere</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term <i>biosphere</i> <input type="checkbox"/> identifying components of the biosphere <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the relationship between different components of the biosphere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> field visits <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> teacher assessment <input type="checkbox"/> case study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> videos <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> checklists <input type="checkbox"/> flow diagrams <input type="checkbox"/> pictures of the biosphere

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 explain the importance of the biosphere</p> <p>4 suggest ways of maintaining the biosphere</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> examining the importance of the biosphere <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the importance of the biosphere from the local environment <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> identifying problems affecting the biosphere <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> analyzing problems affecting the biosphere <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing ways of maintaining the biosphere 		

Core element: Environmental and natural resources management

Outcome: The student will be able to appreciate the importance of the environment, consequently be able to protect it and practice sustainable natural resource management.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when the students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an appreciation of the environment 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 explain the of <i>environment</i> 2 explain how the components of the environment and the earth are related 3 explain the importance of various components of the environment 	<p>Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>environment</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term <i>environment</i> <input type="checkbox"/> identifying components of the environment <input type="checkbox"/> classifying components of the environment <input type="checkbox"/> observing the use of various components in the local environment <input type="checkbox"/> discussing how various components of the environment are related <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the importance of various components of the environment <input type="checkbox"/> debating how life would be without the components of the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussions <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> debate <input type="checkbox"/> role play <input type="checkbox"/> field visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> charts showing components of the environment <input type="checkbox"/> pictures <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> checklists <input type="checkbox"/> posters <input type="checkbox"/> flow charts <input type="checkbox"/> venn diagrams <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> videos <input type="checkbox"/> internet

Term 3

Core element: Environmental and natural resources management

Outcome: The student will be able to appreciate the importance of the environment, consequently be able to protect it and practice sustainable natural resource management.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when the students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ develop an appreciation for the ecosystems 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 explain the term <i>ecosystem</i> 2 explain the components of an ecosystem 	<p>Ecosystem</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ brainstorming the meaning of the concept <i>ecosystem</i> ☐☐ discussing the meaning of the concept <i>ecosystem</i> ☐☐ identifying components of an ecosystem ☐☐ discussing how the components are interrelated ☐☐ drawing processes of ecosystems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ field work ☐☐ group discussion ☐☐ question and answer ☐☐ teacher assessment ☐☐ brainstorming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ flow charts ☐☐ venn diagrams ☐☐ local environment ☐☐ pictures ☐☐ students' experiences ☐☐ videos ☐☐ internet ☐☐ checklists

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 describe factors that can disturb the ecosystems</p> <p>4 explain ways of maintaining ecosystems</p> <p>5 explain the importance of ecosystems</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ brainstorming factors that can disturb the ecosystems ☐☐ examining factors that can disturb the ecosystem ☐☐ suggesting ways of maintaining ecosystems ☐☐ discussing ways of maintaining ecosystems ☐☐ brainstorming the importance of ecosystems ☐☐ discussing the importance of ecosystems 		

Core element: Environmental and natural resources management

Outcome: The student will be able to appreciate the importance of the environment, consequently be able to protect it and practice sustainable natural resource management.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Topic/ theme	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of natural resources 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 explain the term <i>natural resources</i> 2 explain the different types of natural resources 3 explain the importance of natural resources 	<p>Natural resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>natural resources</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term <i>natural resources</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing types of natural resources <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the difference between renewable and non-renewable resources <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the uses of natural resources from various sources <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the importance of natural resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> photo observation <input type="checkbox"/> pair work <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> field work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> photographs <input type="checkbox"/> realia <input type="checkbox"/> resource persons <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> charts showing natural resources <input type="checkbox"/> videos <input type="checkbox"/> posters <input type="checkbox"/> newspaper articles

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>4 explain how natural resources are being mismanaged in Malawi</p> <p>5 suggest ways of managing natural resources</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming how natural resources are mismanaged</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> discussing how natural resources are mismanaged</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> discussing the effects of mismanagement of natural resources</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming management strategies for natural resources</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> discussing management strategies for natural resources</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> group discussions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> practical exercises</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> group discussions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> practical exercises</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> realia</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> pictures /photographs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> resource persons</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> realia</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> pictures/9photographs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> resource persons</p>

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of natural disasters and ways of managing them 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 explain the terms <i>natural disasters</i>, <i>disaster</i>, <i>risk</i>, <i>hazard</i>, and <i>vulnerability</i> 2 differentiate natural disasters from natural hazards 	<p>Natural disasters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meanings of the terms: <i>natural disasters</i>, <i>disaster</i>, <i>risk</i>, <i>hazard</i>, and <i>vulnerability</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meanings of the terms: <i>natural disasters</i>, <i>disaster</i>, <i>risk</i>, <i>hazard</i>, and <i>vulnerability</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the difference between natural disasters and natural hazards <input type="checkbox"/> identifying natural disasters <input type="checkbox"/> identifying different types of natural disasters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> pair work <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> case study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> photographs of natural disasters <input type="checkbox"/> resource persons <input type="checkbox"/> statistics <input type="checkbox"/> videos <input type="checkbox"/> newspaper articles <input type="checkbox"/> local environment

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 explain the effects of natural disasters</p> <p>4 suggest ways of managing disasters</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the effects of natural disasters <input type="checkbox"/> analyzing the effects of natural disasters <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term <i>disaster risk management</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing ways of preventing disasters <input type="checkbox"/> discussing ways of managing disasters 		

Core element: Spatial organization

Outcome: The student will be able to demonstrate increasing knowledge and understanding of places in the local, regional, national, international and global contexts, in relation to distribution of economic and social activities.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when the students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of different aspects of population 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 explain the term <i>population</i> 2 describe the composition of the population of a given area 	<p>Population</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>population</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term <i>population</i> <input type="checkbox"/> finding out the number of people in a population according to age groups and sex <input type="checkbox"/> analysing the composition of population <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the population composition in a given area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> discussion <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> teacher observation <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> observation checklists <input type="checkbox"/> school records <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> observation checklists <input type="checkbox"/> census data

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 analyse the population composition of a given area</p> <p>4 explain population composition at district and regional levels according to where the school is located</p> <p>5 explain the meaning of term <i>population distribution</i></p>		<p>³⁵₁₇ analyzing the population composition graphically</p> <p>³⁵₁₇ brainstorming population composition at district and regional levels</p> <p>³⁵₁₇ discussing population composition at district and regional levels</p> <p>³⁵₁₇ brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>population distribution</i></p> <p>³⁵₁₇ discussing the meaning of the term <i>population distribution</i></p> <p>³⁵₁₇ comparing a physical map with a population distribution map</p>	<p>³⁵₁₇ question and answer</p> <p>³⁵₁₇ group or pair work</p> <p>³⁵₁₇ teacher assessment</p> <p>³⁵₁₇ discussion</p> <p>³⁵₁₇ group work</p> <p>³⁵₁₇ pair work</p>	<p>³⁵₁₇ school records</p> <p>³⁵₁₇ observation checklists</p> <p>³⁵₁₇ population census reports</p> <p>³⁵₁₇ maps of ethnic groups</p>

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>6 describe factors that determine population distribution in a given area</p> <p>7 explain how population distribution influences allocation of resources</p> <p>8 explain the meaning of the term <i>population density</i></p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the factors that determine population distribution</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing how a population distribution map is drawn</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> drawing population distribution sketch-maps of an area</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming how population distribution influences the allocation of resources</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing how population distribution influences the allocation of resources</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>population density</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term <i>population density</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> calculating population densities from a given set of figures</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> group work</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> teacher observation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> teacher observation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> group work</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> individual work</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> group work</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussion</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> teacher observation demonstration</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> economic maps</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> physical maps of a region</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> raised maps</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> population distribution maps</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> local environment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> observation checklists</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> charts</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> data showing the allocation of resources</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> population census figures</p>

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>9 describe factors that influence population density in a given area</p> <p>10 explain the effects of population density on resources</p> <p>11 explain the meaning of the term <i>population growth</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ identifying areas of high and low population densities on a map of a given area □□ discussing the factors that determine population density in a given area □□ brainstorming the effects of high and low population densities on resources □□ discussing the effects of high and low population densities on resources □□ brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>population growth</i> □□ discussing the meaning of the term <i>population growth</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ question and answer □□ teacher observation □□ discussion □□ teacher observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ population density map of an area □□ data showing allocation of resources to different areas □□ raised map □□ local environment □□ students' experiences □□ students' experiences □□ local environment □□ data on population growth

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>12 explain factors that influence population growth</p> <p>13 explain the impact of population growth on the family and environment</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> analyzing a graph showing population growth from a given area (line graphs, bar graphs) <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming factors that influence population growth <input type="checkbox"/> discussing factors that influence population growth <input type="checkbox"/> calculating birth rates and death rates <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meanings of the terms: <i>birth rate</i>, <i>death rate</i> and <i>migration</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meanings of the terms <i>birth rate</i>, <i>death rate</i> and <i>migration</i> <input type="checkbox"/> calculating birth rates and death rates <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the effects of population growth on the family and environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussion <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> group discussions <input type="checkbox"/> teacher observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> population census reports <input type="checkbox"/> hospital records <input type="checkbox"/> newspaper cuttings <input type="checkbox"/> pictures of refugee camps <input type="checkbox"/> refugee data

Form 2: Term 1**Core element:** Map work and interpretation of geographical information**Outcome:** Students should be able to demonstrate the ability to read, transform and interpret maps as well as analyse and interpret other geographical information in various forms.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when the students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of longitudes and latitudes 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 distinguish a line of latitude from a line of longitude 2 explain the uses of lines of latitudes and lines of longitudes 	<p>Longitudes and latitudes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the terms <i>latitude</i> and <i>longitude</i> <input type="checkbox"/> explaining the difference between latitudes and longitudes <input type="checkbox"/> discussing uses of longitudes and latitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> demonstration <input type="checkbox"/> pair work <input type="checkbox"/> group discussion <input type="checkbox"/> practical exercises <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> group discussion <input type="checkbox"/> practical exercises <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> demonstration <input type="checkbox"/> practical exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> protractor <input type="checkbox"/> ruler <input type="checkbox"/> atlases <input type="checkbox"/> topographical maps <input type="checkbox"/> globes <input type="checkbox"/> world maps

Core element: Map work and interpretation of geographical information

Outcome: Students should be able to demonstrate the ability to read, transform and interpret maps as well as analyse and interpret other geographical information in various forms.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> develop knowledge and skills on the use of time zones 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 explain a time zone 2 explain why time zones were created 	<p>Time zones</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the transition from telling local time using the sun to using zones <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the concept <i>time zone</i> <input type="checkbox"/> identifying time zones from an illustration <input type="checkbox"/> suggesting reasons for the creation of time zones <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the reasons for the creation of time zones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussion <input type="checkbox"/> demonstration <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> situation analysis <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> practical activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> world maps of time zones <input type="checkbox"/> atlases <input type="checkbox"/> checklists

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 calculate time for different countries</p> <p>5 explain the importance of using standard time</p> <p>6 explain the importance of the international date line</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing how to calculate time using time zones for different countries <input type="checkbox"/> calculating time using time zones for different countries <input type="checkbox"/> identifying time zones on a world map <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the importance of using standard time among countries <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the international date line <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the importance of the international date line <input type="checkbox"/> locating the international date line on a world map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussion <input type="checkbox"/> demonstration <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> situation analyses <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> practical activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> world maps of time zones <input type="checkbox"/> atlases <input type="checkbox"/> checklists

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> read and interpret topographical maps 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 identify ways of showing relief on a map 2 explain the advantages of contour lines over other ways of showing relief on topographical maps 	<p>Relief</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> defining the meaning of the term <i>relief</i> <input type="checkbox"/> identifying various ways of showing relief on a map <input type="checkbox"/> differentiating between spot heights and trigonometrical points <input type="checkbox"/> explaining how layer tinting is used in maps <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the advantages of contour lines over hachures, bench marks and hill shading <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the advantages of contour lines over hachures, bench marks and hill shading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> pair work <input type="checkbox"/> written exercise <input type="checkbox"/> oral assessment <input type="checkbox"/> discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> topographical maps <input type="checkbox"/> atlases <input type="checkbox"/> map reading textbooks

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 identify landforms using contour patterns</p> <p>4 calculate the average gradient between two points</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ identifying landforms using contour patterns □□ explaining the difference between a pass/gap and a saddle/col □□ relating the occurrence of a spur to a valley □□ identifying the steepness of a slope using contour lines □□ differentiating a concave slope and a convex slope □□ calculating the gradient between different points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ question and answer □□ group work □□ practical exercises □□ written exercises □□ pair work □□ discussion □□ demonstration □□ group work □□ practical exercises □□ question and answer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ topographical maps □□ map reading textbooks □□ sketch diagrams □□ topographical maps □□ map reading textbooks □□ sketch diagrams

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 explain the formation of riverine features</p> <p>4 identify coastal features on a topographical map</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□identifying riverine features on topographical maps □□discussing the formation of the following riverine features: gorge, flood plain, oxbow lake, levee, meander, waterfalls, rapids, delta □□drawing diagrams of riverine features □□identifying coastal features on a topographical map □□studying a topographical map of coastal features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□pair work □□group discussion □□question and answer □□written exercises □□practical exercises □□teacher observation □□field work □□pair work □□group discussion □□question and answer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□topographical maps □□diagrams of riverine features □□map reading textbooks □□local environment □□topographical maps □□diagrams of coastal features

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>5 explain the formation of coastal features</p> <p>6 draw cross- sections and long profiles between different points on a map</p>	<p>Cross section and long profile</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the formation of the following coastal features: peninsula, cape, point, beach, shoreline, spit, sandbar, lagoon, delta, estuary <input type="checkbox"/> drawing the following coastal features: peninsula, cape, point, beach, shoreline, spit, sand bar, lagoon, delta and estuary <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrating how to draw a cross section and a long profile <input type="checkbox"/> drawing cross-sections and long profiles between given points <input type="checkbox"/> annotating a cross section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> practical exercises <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> field work <input type="checkbox"/> demonstration <input type="checkbox"/> pair work <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> practical exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> map reading textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> topographical maps <input type="checkbox"/> map reading textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> graph paper <input type="checkbox"/> pieces of paper

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	7 interpret map symbols in relation to land use	Land use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> interpreting map symbols in relation to land use <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the effect of relief on land use <input type="checkbox"/> explaining the effect of relief on land use patterns discussing land uses from topographical maps eg settlements, communication, vegetation, mining/quarrying, industrial use, parks and reserves and tourist resorts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> pair work <input type="checkbox"/> group discussion <input type="checkbox"/> practical exercises <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> topographical maps <input type="checkbox"/> map reading textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> atlases

Core element: Understanding the earth

Outcome: The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere and lithosphere

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of the internal structure of the earth 	<p>The students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 describe the internal structure of the earth 2 identify features that shape the earth's landscape 	<p>Internal structure of the earth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> identifying different layers of the earth <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the different layers of the earth <input type="checkbox"/> discussing basic characteristics of each layer <input type="checkbox"/> relating the characteristics to the main occurrences <input type="checkbox"/> identifying the features that shape the earth's landscape <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the features that shape the earth's landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> discussion <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> teacher assessment <input type="checkbox"/> discussion <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> diagrams of the internal structure of the earth <input type="checkbox"/> videos <input type="checkbox"/> checklists <input type="checkbox"/> scoring rubrics <input type="checkbox"/> internet <input type="checkbox"/> local environment

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 explain the formation of the features that shape the earth's landscape</p> <p>4 explain the advantages and disadvantages of physical features to life and human activities</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing internal and external processes that form features <input type="checkbox"/> illustrating the processes of how some of the features are formed <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the advantages and disadvantages of physical features to life and human activities <input type="checkbox"/> relating the advantages and disadvantages to specific features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> field excursion <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> individual assessment <input type="checkbox"/> teacher assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> pictures/diagrams <input type="checkbox"/> videos <input type="checkbox"/> internet <input type="checkbox"/> checklists <input type="checkbox"/> scoring rubrics

Core element: Understanding the earth

Outcome: The students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere and lithosphere.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of the formation of east and central African lakes 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 explain how lakes are formed 2 identify the lakes of east and central Africa 	<p>Formation of lakes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing different of lakes <input type="checkbox"/> discussing how different types of lakes were formed <input type="checkbox"/> identifying the lakes of east and central africa <input type="checkbox"/> locating the lakes of east and central Africa on a map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> individual assessment <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> practical exercises <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> field visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> atlases <input type="checkbox"/> physical maps of east and central Africa showing drainage systems <input type="checkbox"/> diagrams on formation of lakes <input type="checkbox"/> resource persons <input type="checkbox"/> videos <input type="checkbox"/> internet

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 explain how east and central African lakes were formed</p> <p>4 explain the importance of lakes and rivers of east and central Africa</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ discussing how the lakes of east and central Africa were formed □□ analyzing, according to their location, how the east and central African lakes were formed □□ discussing the importance of east and central African lakes and rivers □□ suggesting ways of protecting lakes and rivers 		

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of the river Shire 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 identify major rivers in Malawi 2 explain the course of Shire river 3 explain the importance of Shire river 	<p>Importance of Shire river</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the major rivers of Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> locating major rivers in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> identifying the position of Shire river on the map of Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the course of Shire river <input type="checkbox"/> drawing a profile of the Shire river <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the importance of Shire river <input type="checkbox"/> identifying social and economic activities along Shire river 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> individual assessment <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> practical exercises <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> field visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> atlases <input type="checkbox"/> physical maps of east and central Africa <input type="checkbox"/> diagrams illustrating the formation of lakes <input type="checkbox"/> resource persons <input type="checkbox"/> videos <input type="checkbox"/> internet <input type="checkbox"/> pictures of economic activities along Shire river <input type="checkbox"/> aerial photos <input type="checkbox"/> topographic maps showing Shire river

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	4 explain challenges faced by the social and economic activities along Shire river		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1120 446 1473 542">□□ discussing the challenges along Shire river <li data-bbox="1120 590 1438 686">□□ analysing challenges faced along Shire river <li data-bbox="1120 734 1473 877">□□ suggesting ways of dealing with challenges facing along Shire river 		

Term 2

Core element: Understanding the earth

Outcome: The students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere and lithosphere.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when the students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of seasons 	<p>The students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 explain the term <i>season</i> 2 explain the causes of seasons 	<p>Seasons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>season</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term <i>seasons</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the factors that cause seasons <input type="checkbox"/> drawing the position of the earth in relation to the sun that cause the seasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> pair work <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> discussion <input type="checkbox"/> written work <input type="checkbox"/> demonstration <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> individual/self assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> globes <input type="checkbox"/> torches <input type="checkbox"/> tables <input type="checkbox"/> diagrams of the revolution of the earth <input type="checkbox"/> pie charts of cycle of seasons <input type="checkbox"/> climatographs <input type="checkbox"/> videos <input type="checkbox"/> internet
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment

				methods	resources
	3 explain the characteristics of seasons according to regions		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> identifying types of seasons according to regions <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the characteristics of seasons in the tropical, temperate and polar regions <input type="checkbox"/> identifying the cycle of seasons in the three climatic regions <input type="checkbox"/> labelling the cycle of seasons on a pie chart 		<input type="checkbox"/> climatic graphs
	4 interpret climatic data into seasons		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> analyzing climatic data on given graphs <input type="checkbox"/> interpreting climatic data into types of seasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> explanation <input type="checkbox"/> pair work <input type="checkbox"/> class discussion <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> pie charts <input type="checkbox"/> checklists <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> students experiences
	5 relate the seasons of the tropical regions to the seasons of Malawi		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> relating seasons in tropical regions and the seasons of Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> inserting months on the cycle of seasons of Malawi on pie charts 		

Core element: Environmental and natural resources management

Outcome: The student will be able to appreciate the importance of the environment, consequently be able to protect it and practice sustainable natural resource management.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when the students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ demonstrate an understanding of activities that endanger the environment 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 identify activities which endanger the environment 2 explain the effects of activities that endanger the environment 	<p>Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ brainstorming human activities that endanger the environment ☐ discussing activities that endanger components of the environment ☐☐ brainstorming the effects of various human activities on the environment ☐☐ discussing the effects of various human activities on the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ educational visits ☐☐ case study ☐☐ question and answer ☐☐ written exercises ☐☐ project work ☐☐ discussion ☐☐ role play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ local environment ☐☐ diagrams ☐☐ tables of data ☐☐ checklists ☐☐ videos ☐☐ pictures ☐☐ newspaper articles
<p>Assessment standard</p>	<p>Success criteria</p>	<p>Theme/topic</p>	<p>Suggested teaching and learning activities</p>	<p>Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods</p>	<p>Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources</p>

	3 explain environmental management practices		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term <i>environmental management</i> <input type="checkbox"/> identifying common environmental management practices in Malawi in relation to legislative provisions/procedures <input type="checkbox"/> carrying out environmental education activities 		
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Core element: Environmental and natural resources management

Outcome: The student will be able to appreciate the importance of the environment, consequently be able to protect it and practise sustainable natural resource management.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning	Suggested teaching, learning
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				assessment methods	assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of natural resources management 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 explain the term <i>forestry</i> 2 identify major forests on a map of Malawi 3 explain the importance of forests 	Forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>forestry</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term <i>forestry</i> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the major forests of Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> locating major forests on a map of Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the importance of forests <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the importance of forest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> debate <input type="checkbox"/> pair work <input type="checkbox"/> field visits <input type="checkbox"/> case study <input type="checkbox"/> written reports <input type="checkbox"/> enter-educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> forest products <input type="checkbox"/> pictures/photographs <input type="checkbox"/> resource persons <input type="checkbox"/> newspaper articles <input type="checkbox"/> magazines <input type="checkbox"/> videos <input type="checkbox"/> internet <input type="checkbox"/> forest reserves <input type="checkbox"/> school woodlots
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4 describe human activities that endanger forests 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming activities that endanger forests 		

	5 explain how forests can be conserved		<input type="checkbox"/> discussing human activities that endanger forests <input type="checkbox"/> discussing ways of conserving forests <input type="checkbox"/> carrying out a tree planting activity		
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
We will know this when students are able to: <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of wildlife	Students should be able to: 1 explain the term <i>wildlife</i>	Wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>wildlife</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term <i>wildlife</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> debate <input type="checkbox"/> practical exercises <input type="checkbox"/> field visits <input type="checkbox"/> case study	<input type="checkbox"/> pictures/ photographs showing wildlife <input type="checkbox"/> news paper articles <input type="checkbox"/> resource persons

	<p>2 locate wildlife reserves in Malawi</p> <p>3 explain the significance of wildlife</p> <p>4 suggest ways of conserving wildlife</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming wildlife reserves of Malawi</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> discussing wildlife reserves of Malawi</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> locating game and national parks on map of Malawi</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> debating the significance of wildlife</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> discussing the significance of wildlife</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming ways of conserving wildlife</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> identifying human activities that can endanger wildlife</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> discussing ways of conserving wildlife</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> pair work</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> enter-educate</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> videos</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> internet</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> maps of Malawi</p>
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of characteristics of soil</p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <p>1 explain the different characteristics of soil types</p>	Soil	<p><input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term ,soil'</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> identifying soil types</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> conducting an experiment to find out the characteristics of soil types</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> practical work</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> group work</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> question and answer</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> drawing soil profiles</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> pair work</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> pictures of soil profile</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> resource persons</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> samples of soil</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> water</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> pictures of soil erosion</p>

	<p>2 describe soil profile</p> <p>3 explain the importance of soil</p> <p>4 explain ways of conserving soil</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the characteristics of soil types</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing soil profiles</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> analysing soil profiles</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> drawing soil profiles</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the importance of soil</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the importance of soil</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming ways of conserving soil</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing human activities that affect soil</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing ways of conserving soil</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> enter-educate</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> field visits</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> videos</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> internet</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> local environment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> realia</p>
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of energy</p>	<p>1 explain types of energy</p>	Energy	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>energy</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term <i>energy</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> practical exercises</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> pictures</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> maps of Malawi</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> resource persons</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences</p>

	<p>2 explain the importance of energy</p> <p>3 explain ways of conserving energy resources</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> listing types of energy <input type="checkbox"/> identifying sources of energy <input type="checkbox"/> discussing types of energy <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the importance of energy <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the importance of energy <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming ways of conserving energy resources <input type="checkbox"/> discussing ways of conserving energy resources 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> flow diagrams showing HEP generation
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of Hydro-electric power in Malawi 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <p>1 locate hydro-electric power sites in Malawi</p>	Hydro-electric power in Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming hydro-electric power sites in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> discussing hydro-electric sites of Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> locating hydro-electric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussion <input type="checkbox"/> field visits <input type="checkbox"/> written reports <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> case study 	

	2 explain the factors ideal for the generation of hydro-electric power		<p>power sites in Malawi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming factors ideal for the generation of hydro-electric power <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the factors ideal for the generation of hydro-electric power <input type="checkbox"/> discussing why a hydro electric power station was located at either Nkula or Tedzani 	<input type="checkbox"/> debate	
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 explain how power is generated and distributed at either Nkula or Tedzani</p> <p>4 assess the challenges</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing how HEP is generated in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> drawing a flow diagram showing how HEP is generated in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> discussing how HEP is distributed in Malawi 		

	associated with the generation, transmission and use of hydro-electric power in Malawi		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the challenges associated with the generation, transmission and use of hydro-electric power in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> suggesting solutions to the challenges associated with the generation, transmission and use of hydro-electric power in Malawi 		
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
We will know this when students are able to: <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of the importance of minerals	Students should be able to: 1 explain the term <i>minerals</i> 2 explain the	Minerals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>minerals</i> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term 'minerals' <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> group discussions <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming <input type="checkbox"/> field visits <input type="checkbox"/> report writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> pictures <input type="checkbox"/> resource persons <input type="checkbox"/> realia <input type="checkbox"/> videos

	importance of minerals		examples of minerals <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the importance of minerals <input type="checkbox"/> studying products made from minerals		
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Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
We will know this when students are able to : <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of fishing in Malawi	Students should be able to: 1 explain the importance of fish 2 identify human activities that endanger fish resources	Fishing in Malawi	<input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the importance of fish <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the importance of fish <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming human activities that endanger fish resources <input type="checkbox"/> discussing human activities that endanger fish	<input type="checkbox"/> group discussions <input type="checkbox"/> oral exercises <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> field visits	<input type="checkbox"/> pictures <input type="checkbox"/> resource persons <input type="checkbox"/> realia

	<p>3 explain ways of preserving fish</p> <p>4 locate the major fishing grounds of Malawi</p>		<p>resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming ways of preserving fish <input type="checkbox"/> discussing ways of preserving fish <input type="checkbox"/> identifying the major fishing grounds in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> locating the major fishing grounds on a map of Malawi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> group discussions <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming <input type="checkbox"/> field visits 	
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>5 explain methods of catching fish</p> <p>6 assess the economic</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing factors that influence the location of fishing grounds in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> identifying types of fish <input type="checkbox"/> discussing methods of catching fish <input type="checkbox"/> drawing diagrams to illustrate methods of fishing <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> maps of Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> pictures and photographs <input type="checkbox"/> resource persons <input type="checkbox"/> statistics <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> realia

	importance of fish in Malawi 7 explain ways of conserving fish		importance of fish <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the importance of fish <input type="checkbox"/> identifying activities that can endanger fish resources <input type="checkbox"/> discussing ways of conserving fish		
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
We will know this when the students are able to: <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of natural disasters in Malawi	Students must be able to: 1 identify natural disasters that are common in Malawi 2 explain the effects of natural disasters	Natural disasters in Malawi	<input type="checkbox"/> Brainstorming natural disasters common in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> discussing natural disasters common in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> locating areas that are prone to natural disasters <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the effects of natural	<input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> class discussion <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming <input type="checkbox"/> checklists <input type="checkbox"/> map completion <input type="checkbox"/> field visits <input type="checkbox"/> case study	<input type="checkbox"/> videos <input type="checkbox"/> photographs/pictures <input type="checkbox"/> statistics <input type="checkbox"/> posters <input type="checkbox"/> maps of Malawi showing disaster prone areas <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> newspaper

			<p>disasters in Malawi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ discussing the effects of natural disasters in Malawi 		<p>articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ field reports
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>3 explain precautionary measures against natural disasters</p> <p>4 explain the term <i>disaster risk management</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ suggesting precautionary measures against natural disasters ☐☐ discussing precautionary measures that can be taken against natural disasters ☐☐ discussing the meaning of the term <i>disaster risk management</i> ☐☐ suggesting ways of managing disaster 		

			risks		
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Term 3

Core element: Spatial organization

Outcome: The student will be able to demonstrate increasing knowledge and understanding of places in the local, regional, national, international and global contexts, in relation to distribution of economic and social activities.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when the students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ demonstrate an understanding of the population of Malawi 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 describe the population composition of Malawi 2 explain factors that influence population distribution in Malawi 	<p>Population of Malawi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ studying population figures of Malawi ☐☐ analysing the population composition of Malawi ☐☐ comparing a physical map of Malawi with a population distribution map ☐☐ identifying factors that influence population distribution in Malawi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ question and answer ☐☐ pair or group work ☐☐ observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ students' experiences ☐☐ population census reports ☐☐ map of Malawi showing ethnic groups ☐☐ charts ☐☐ physical maps of Malawi

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing factors that influence population distribution in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> drawing a sketch map of Malawi showing population distribution 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> maps of Malawi showing population density
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	3 describe factors that influence population density in Malawi		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> locating areas of various population densities on a map of Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> discussing factors that influence population density in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> calculating population densities of an area <input type="checkbox"/> drawing bar graphs to represent population densities <input type="checkbox"/> distinguishing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> teacher observation <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> economic maps of Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> population data <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> observation checklists

			population distribution from population density		
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>4 determine factors that influence rapid population growth in Malawi</p> <p>5 explain the effects of rapid population growth in Malawi</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming factors that influence rapid population growth in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the factors that influence rapid population growth in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> analysing a graph showing population growth in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the effects of rapid population growth in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the effects of rapid population growth in Malawi on the environment, natural resources, economy, social 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> discussion <input type="checkbox"/> group work <input type="checkbox"/> observation <input type="checkbox"/> pair work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> graphs showing population growth <input type="checkbox"/> newspaper cuttings <input type="checkbox"/> posters and charts illustrating the effects of rapid population growth

			services and others		
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	6 suggest strategies for controlling rapid population growth in Malawi		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ surveying neighbourhood to assess the effects of rapid population growth □□ discussing the importance of controlling rapid population growth in Malawi □□ suggesting strategies for controlling rapid population growth in Malawi □□ drawing future's wheels on rapid population growth in Malawi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ group work □□ written reports □□ pair or group work □□ discussion □□ observation □□ future's wheels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ newspaper articles

Core element: Spatial organization

Outcome: The student will be able to demonstrate increasing knowledge and understanding of places in the local, regional, national, international and global contexts, in relation to distribution of economic and social activities.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when the students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ develop an appreciation of the role of industries in Malawi 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 explain the meaning of the term <i>industry</i> 2 classify industries in Malawi 	<p>Industries in Malawi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>industry</i> □□ discussing the meaning of the term <i>industry</i> □□ identifying some industries in Malawi □□ grouping industries in Malawi into primary, secondary and tertiary □□ discussing the activities of each type of industry as extractive, manufacturing and service industries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ group work □□ discussion □□ question and answer □□ pair or group work □□ discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ local environment □□ students' experiences □□ products from industries □□ pictures and posters illustrating products of industries □□ checklists
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and	Suggested teaching, learning and

				assessment methods	assessment resources
	<p>3 explain factors that influence the location of industries in Malawi</p> <p>4 explain the importance of industries to Malawi</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ discussing factors that influence the location of industries in Malawi □□ identifying places where industries are located in Malawi □□ drawing a map of Malawi showing the location of different types of industries □□ brainstorming the importance of industries to Malawi □□ discussing the importance of industries to Malawi analyzing graphs or figures which illustrate industrial production and exports for Malawi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ peer assessment □□ teacher observation □□ question and answer □□ discussion □□ group work □□ question and answer □□ discussion □□ pair work □□ teacher observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ students' experiences □□ maps of Malawi showing location of different types of industries □□ charts □□ atlases □□ industrial production figures □□ industrial employment figures □□ export figures □□ posters
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources

<p>We will know this when the students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ demonstrate an understanding of tourism in Malawi 	<p>The students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 explain the term <i>tourism</i> 2 explain factors that promote tourism in Malawi 	<p>Tourism in Malawi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ brainstorming the meaning of the term <i>tourism</i> ☐☐ discussing the meaning of the term <i>tourism</i> ☐☐ discussing tourists centres in Malawi ☐☐ locating tourist centres on a map of Malawi ☐☐ brainstorming factors that promote tourism in Malawi ☐☐ discussing factors that promote tourism in Malawi (physical, cultural and economic) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ group discussion ☐☐ pair work ☐☐ question and answer ☐☐ brainstorming ☐☐ debate ☐☐ pair work ☐☐ field visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ maps of Malawi ☐☐ pictures/ photographs ☐☐ students' experiences ☐☐ videos ☐☐ local environment ☐☐ resource persons ☐☐ statistical data on tourism
<p>Assessment standard</p>	<p>Success criteria</p>	<p>Theme/topic</p>	<p>Suggested teaching and learning activities</p>	<p>Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods</p>	<p>Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources</p>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3 assess the impact of 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ brainstorming the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ group discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐☐ photographs

	<p>tourism in Malawi</p> <p>4 analyse the challenges facing the tourism industry in Malawi</p>		<p>positive and negative impact of tourism in Malawi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> debating the advantages and disadvantages of tourism in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> analyzing data on tourism in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming challenges facing the tourism industry in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> analysing challenges facing the tourism industry in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> suggesting ways of overcoming the challenges facing tourism industry in Malawi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> case study <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> resource persons
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Core element: Interdependence between Malawi and the world

Outcome: The student will be able to understand the interdependence between and among countries in environmental, economic, social and technological aspects for sustainable development.

Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment	Suggested teaching, learning and
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					assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> appreciate the role of communication and transport in the socio-economic development of Malawi 	<p>students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 identify means of communication in Malawi 2 explain the advantages and disadvantages of the different means of communication 	<p>Communication in Malawi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming various means of communication in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> discussing means of communication in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the advantages and disadvantages of different means of communication <input type="checkbox"/> debating the advantages and disadvantages of different means of communication <input type="checkbox"/> analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of each means of communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussion <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> discussion <input type="checkbox"/> case study <input type="checkbox"/> role play <input type="checkbox"/> games and simulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> checklists
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3 explain the importance of communication 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the importance of 		

	4 analyse problems of communication in Malawi		<p>communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the importance of communication <input type="checkbox"/> identifying problems of communication in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> analyzing the problems of communication in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> suggesting solutions to the problems of communication in Malawi 		
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Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	1 identify types of transport in Malawi	Transport in Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming means of transport in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> discussing types of transport in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> locating main 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> discussion <input type="checkbox"/> debate <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> pair work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> map showing transport routes in Malawi

			<p>transport routes in Malawi on a map</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> identifying factors that influence the development of transport routes in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> discussing factors that influence the development of transport routes in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> relating the factors to specific transport routes in Malawi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> role play <input type="checkbox"/> case study <input type="checkbox"/> field excursions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> pictures of means of transport <input type="checkbox"/> trade figures and routes for Malawi
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Topic/ theme	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	<p>2 explain factors that influence the development of transport routes in Malawi</p>				
	<p>3 analyse the advantages and disadvantages of each means of transport</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the advantages and disadvantages of each means of transport <input type="checkbox"/> examining the advantages and disadvantages of each 		

	<p>4 explain the role of transport in the development of Malawi</p> <p>5 examine problems of transport in Malawi</p>		<p>means of transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> comparing the volume of trade and transport routes <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the role of transport in the development of Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming problems associated with transport in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> analyzing problems associated with transport in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> suggesting solutions to problems associated with transport in Malawi 		
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
<p>We will know this when students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate an understanding of issues of trade in Malawi 	<p>Students must be able to:</p> <p>1 explain the term <i>trade</i></p>	<p>Trade in Malawi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the meaning of the term <i>trade</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing how the people acquire the goods or commodities that they have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussion <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> debate <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> written exercises <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> case study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> local environment <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> pictures of export and import

	<p>2 explain the difference between exports and imports</p> <p>3 identify the main imports and exports of Malawi</p> <p>4 explain the importance of trade</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the difference between imports and exports</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> researching on the main exports and imports</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> identifying the main imports and exports of Malawi</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> identifying Malawi's trading partners</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the importance of trade</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing why countries export and import</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> written reports</p>	<p>products</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> trade statistics</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> checklists</p>
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested Teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment
	<p>5 explain the concept <i>balance of trade</i></p> <p>6 analyse factors that affect balance of trade</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming the meaning of the concept balance of trade</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussing the concept <i>balance of trade</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> discussion</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> peer assessment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> role-play</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> individual/self assessment</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> students' experiences</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> resource persons</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> trade statistics</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> checklists</p>

	7 examine problems of balance of trade in Malawi		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming factors that affect balance of trade <input type="checkbox"/> discussing factors that affect balance of trade <input type="checkbox"/> identifying problems of balance of trade in Malawi <input type="checkbox"/> discussing problems that affect balance of trade in Malawi 		
Assessment standard	Success criteria	Theme/topic	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Suggested Teaching, learning and assessment methods	Suggested teaching, learning and assessment resources
	8 suggest solutions to the problems of balance of trade between Malawi and its trading partners		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> suggesting solutions to the problems of balance of trade between Malawi and its trading partners <input type="checkbox"/> discussing solutions to the problems of balance of trade between Malawi and 		

			its trading partners		
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