School Inspectors' Support towards Positive Adolescent Sexuality Development (A Case of Malawi)

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*Abstract:-*The study used convergent mixed methods design with conveniently sampled school inspectors to analyse their contribution towards positive adolescent sexuality development. A total of 8 inspectors (5 females and 3 males) provided information from the researcher's workplace. Respondents demonstrated that school inspectors in Malawi offer limited support towards positive adolescent sexuality development due to inspectors' personal stance on adolescent sexuality development, inadequate continuous professional development, regular routines, real life obligations and dominant circumstances.

Key words: Convergent mixed methods design, Positive adolescent sexuality development, School inspector

I. INTRODUCTION

The mixed methods investigation addresses school inspectors' contribution towards positive adolescent sexuality development. A convergent mixed methods design is employed, where both quantitative and qualitative data are gathered at the same time, scrutinised and combined [19]. Closed-ended questions and open-ended questions are used to discuss factors that influence inspectors' viewpoints and examine their perceptions about adolescent sexuality development. The combination of the two datasets facilitates pattern probing [40] and advance rich insights [2].

Despite enormous literature regarding adolescent sexuality development in Malawi, little is acknowledged about school inspectors' engagement in adolescent sexuality development interventions. This lack of recognition contributes to poor service delivery [4], thereby promoting continuous risky health effects coupled with untimely and hazardous sexual endeavours [55]. Premature and unsafe sex results into untimely and unwelcome pregnancies, school dropout which further causes poor educational and employment achievement [14]. Sexual relationships induced school dropout is a result of engagement in elicit contending obligations [28]. Also, unsafe sex leads to sexually transmitted infections, such as HIV prevalence among the youth [15].

To clarify the problem, one overall question and four specific questions are addressed, namely:

Overall question:

Why do school inspectors fail to adequately support positive adolescent sexuality development?

Specific questions:

1. How does an inspector's gender influence perception about adolescent sexuality development?
2. How does training or lack of training in adolescent sexuality shape inspectors' views on the issue?
3. How do ecological factors influence inspectors' interpretations of positive adolescent sexuality development?
4. To what extent do school inspectors engage in activities and/or practices which promote positive adolescent sexuality development?

The selected research topic is suitable because it addresses adolescent sexuality as a youth dilemma. As such, the findings will inform policy makers, government departments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which support youth development interventions to review school inspectors' role in adolescent sexuality development. Ultimately this will improve stakeholders' collaboration thereby improving the value of adolescent sexuality initiatives.

School inspectors are influential figures in the education system. This is because inspectors shadow development-focused objectives [54] as such they can influence people around them to convey transformation and experience progress [30]. Inspector's position impacts decision-makers' judgements which further influences actions taken [54].

Adolescent sexuality is based on norms [33] and is vital to constructive sexual development [10]. Several factors are important in adolescent sexuality development because it is multidimensional. The factors include motive, mental, and interactive components of adolescents' sexual practices [33]. Components of the factors focus on delivery of healthful chances for early adolescents [35], outward show, mental, customs, knowledge [39], peer and family relations, provision of services such as education, health, and access to information [52].

To go beyond prevention, frameworks cover physical and psychological well-being, emotional and physical safety, self-awareness, constructive decision-making, desirable life-skills and educational engagement during early adolescence [35]. Nevertheless, in most developing countries frameworks of positive adolescent sexuality development are regarded as traditionally unresponsive due to its nonspiritual normatively [58]. For example, in Vietnam due to insufficient knowledge of the concept, the negativity has led to adolescents' premarital unsafe sex [22]. Across Africa, the thinking is that adolescent sexuality is immoral and hazardous, which consequently leads to premature pregnancies, abortions and sexually transmitted infections [15].

Several factors influence people's traditional attitudes and views regarding adolescent sexuality. For instance, Gyimah, Kodzi, Emina, & Cofie (2013) have pointed that religion is one of the factors that impact adolescent sexuality development in Africa. This is because the influence and significance of religion emerges from the African societal framework [44] and impacts numerous behavioural outcomes [31] which put sexuality customs in a moral setting [17].

Culture is another dominant aspect which forms understanding of adolescent sexuality. As an integral part of one's existence, culture covers understanding of oneself in view of beliefs and choice of lifestyle [17]. Additionally, due to generational transfer, culture leads to multiplicity of mindsets [47]. As such, trained experts can still feel ashamed and be reluctant to discuss sexuality issues with adolescents [58].So, it is evident that cultural constructions influence how parental figures intervene in adolescents' lives thereby forming contemporary abilities and constrictions for these adolescents [28].

Due to the cultural barrier, adolescent sexuality development requires comprehensive approach which employs laws, policy, programme, institution, project, prevention and services support [66]. Malawi has policies such as Youth Friendly Health Services (YFHS) policy, National Youth Policy, Gender Policy, National Education Policy, National Education Standards, and the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi. Additionally, Walker (2012) recognizes that the services support interventions include minimum standards, benchmarks and quality of services conventions on desegregated and perpendicular health services, HIV/AIDS, and education. In Malawi's education service, the minimum standards and benchmarks related to positive adolescent sexuality development are stipulated in the National Education Standards.

Significant stakeholder engagement in adolescent sexuality interventions fosters adolescent responsive services [4]. This results into execution of all-inclusive, gendered strategies and systems that acknowledge and respond to exceptional adolescent needs. However, Atuyambe, et.al., (2015) points out that conversion of these strategies into practice is a challenge. For example, in Malawi different organisations are still operating in isolation. This is consistent with sentiments made by Self, et.al., (2018) that participants in their study admitted the need for using existing structures, such as the education system, to enrich issues of adolescent sexuality.

Another drawback is the absence of an all-encompassing and receptive youth policy [60]. Such a policy would strengthen a community-based approach which absorbs key stakeholders of the community as collaborative resources to enhance adolescent sexuality development. Despite the challenges, implementation of comprehensive adolescent sexuality development facilitates adolescents' healthy shifts into adulthood [35].

The status quo of adolescent sexuality development in Malawi show that the Malawian school syllabi contains sexual and reproductive health information in subjects such as Life Skills, Social Studies, and Biology [55]. Rashid & Marisen,(2016) found that educators held beliefs that sexuality concepts strengthen immoral behaviour since some youth love testing sexual activities. As such, the educators hold information, hence curriculum's minimal impact. Also, Frye, (2017) argues that in Malawi, educators severely discipline students whom they doubt of engaging in a sexual relationship. Girls are affected more than boys because parents withdraw financial support from girls whom they think are sexually vigorous, and this leads to school dropout. On average girls become married by the time they are 18 years old [50] although 48.9% of Malawian girls are married earlier than 18 years [66].

This study focuses on the formulation of the connections between theory and practice [42] which surround school inspectors' support towards positive adolescent sexuality development. Positive youth development (PYD) approach is used as the meta-theory in the hypothetical element. The PYD approach describes and prescribes desirable aspects of adolescent sexuality development in societal systems and intentionally contests the status quo. The PYD approach presumes that adolescent sexuality development, respects strengths demonstrated by adolescents as assets. Also, social cognitive theory of gender is used to analytically scrutinise gender influences on shaping adolescent sexuality perceptions. Likewise, theories within the constructivist model assisted to examine the impact of inspectors' training in establishing their views about adolescent sexuality development. Similarly, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory helped to analyse the influence of ecological factors on inspectors' interpretation of positive adolescent sexuality development. This theoretical combination constructs an understanding of school inspectors' assistance in promoting positive adolescent sexuality development.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses convergent mixed methods design to deliver an inclusive examination of the research problem. Several authors, such as[2], [19], [20], [21], [40], [41] and [62]agree

that mixed methods research combines quantitative and qualitative strategies in research problems, techniques, data gathering, data analysis, and interpretation process.The amalgamation is considered valuable in researching social problems [21] and tackling everyday challenges [19].Therefore, the issue of school inspectors' failure to adequately support positive adolescent sexuality development as a real-life social problem in Malawi is best investigated using mixed methods. The study considers quantitative and qualitative approaches and data as interdependent [41] because the two data sets make available a comprehensive awareness of inspectors' support [19]. Mixed methods approach presents meaningful insights owing to overcoming weaknesses associated with each approach [2]. For example, qualitative method checks out patterns happening in quantitative data, in so doing allowing robust examination [40]. The design supports attainment of dissimilar but then complementary data which assists in comparing corroboration of the results [20]. Both Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Creswell (2014) agree that employing convergent mixed methods design strengthens analytical questioning of incongruities which enhances validation of the results. Nonetheless, the design demands extended time due to the process of gathering and analysing two data sets [19].

The study considered the population, sampling design, type of sampling, stratification, and sample size determination [20]. The study's population are 107 school inspectors across the three regions of Malawi. All these inspectors are accessible through emails, however, not all of them access their emails frequently. The study used a single-stage sampling procedure because the researcher has access to names in the population and sampled the people directly [20]. The participants' selection is a non-probability convenience sample. Convenience sampling provided a degree of flexibility in sampling strategy to achieve the desired results [41] which enabled collection of readily available information from colleagues within the workplace. The subjects were carefully chosen based on their availability [26], easiness of access, functional distance, approach ability at a specified time, and preparedness to take part in the study [23].

Population social stratification was used in the sample to reproduce the correct population proportion [20]. The characteristics included gender, age range, region of origin, region of work, religious affiliation, level of workplace (headquarters or division), sub sector of jurisdiction (primary, secondary, teacher training college), and work experience. Therefore, this study's sample represented diverse sub-sets of the school inspector's population in Malawi. The study targeted 10% of the population as its sample, however, 8.6% responded. The sample comprised 8 inspectors, 2 of whom are based at the central office (1 female and 1 male). The remaining 6 (4 females and 2 males) are inspectors based at the education division offices in each of the three regions of Malawi. Inclusion of each of the regions was to represent inspectors across the nation. Two of the division inspectors

are responsible for primary schools while four are responsible for secondary schools. The central level officers are responsible for primary and secondary schools as well teacher training colleges.

The study used email-interview approach [36] and the researcher used Creswell and Creswell (2018) proposed phases for managing and following-up the questionnaire. The initial email was a notice to all sampled participants, followed by the second email which contained actual questionnaire. This was sent week later than the first email. The third email was sent a fortnight after sending the questionnaire to remind participants when the feedback was expected by the researcher. The researcher finished off the administration phase within six weeks after its commencement. The scheduled plan was extended by two weeks because some respondents did not reply to their emails as it was expected, and some did not reply at all. The researcher achieved a response rate of 72.7%.

Data was collected through E-mail interview method because the internet is being used as a medium worldwide. For instance, Ratislavova and Ratislav (2014) assert that internet-built interaction applications such as e-mail are generally being utilised as approaches for collecting research data in the age of globalized hypermedia.As such, email interview is apparently a qualitative research method for repetitively exchanging data concerning an investigator and respondents in a specified timeframe [56]. In the current study, the researcher selected email interview because of spatial distance. This is because the researcher is a student at the University of Queensland in Australia while the readily available information is situated in her workplace in Malawi. Therefore, email interview was the best option to collect required information. This demonstrates that the suitability of collecting information by means of email matched modern technology real-life experiences for both the researcher and the respondents since email use is now a normal practice [11].

Several authors such as [11], [24], and [56] agree that email interviewing is cost effective and lessens the time expected, even though detailed information is still collected. Their viewpoint is confirmed in the present investigation because the researcher was not constrained by location since email allowed her to interview numerous respondents at the same time thereby being economical on money and time [24]. The school inspectors involved in the present study work in all the three regions across Malawi which imply that the researcher's saving on travel expenses was substantial. However, it is worth mentioning that some participants did not reply to their emails as soon as it was expected, which prolonged the planned data collection period eventually affecting the whole research plan. Also, the major drawback of email interview is failure to capture non-verbal communication cues [34] which compromises emotional experiences linked to the collected data [56].

The study employed both statistical and text analysis. This is because data analysis in a convergent design entails scrutinising the quantitative data sets in terms of numerical results, probing the qualitative data sets by coding the information and breaking up the codes into far-reaching themes, and examining both data sets in a unified manner [20]. Data from the closed-ended questions were used to produce quantifiable variables that were believed to impact school inspectors' support towards adolescent sexuality development based on suggestions from previous research [27]. The statistical analysis used statistical package for the social sciences, particularly IBM SPSS Statistics version 24. The package was used to analyse numeric information gathered from the set of closed-ended question. The outcome variables for positive adolescent sexuality development were generated from the study's closed-ended questions 3,4, 6, and 7. Data from these closed-ended questions was entered directly in the Data Editor which consisted variables and cases. The variables represented the different types of data that were compiled. For instance, sex, age, work experience, region of origin, religious affiliation, and responses to each of the closed-ended content questions. Apart from defining data types, the researcher also defined descriptive variable labels and value labels for variable names and data values. These descriptive labels were later used in statistical reports and charts. Missing data was also checked to ensure that the analysis provided accurate results.

Thematic analysis was used to classify patterns that are significant or thought-provoking and used these themes to address the research. The process included translating the themes and patterns that cropped up from the data [19]. The open-ended responses to questions 1,2,5, 8, 9, and 10 were manually arranged and analysed based on themes by the researcher [27]. The researcher considered the underlying notions, expectations, conceptualisations and philosophies that are imagined as determining or enlightening the respondents 'subject matter [16]. The scrutiny was determined by the overall research question and the specific questions.

To examine school inspectors' support towards positive adolescent sexuality development, Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phases of thematic analysis was applied. The researcher read through the open-ended responses, produced preliminary categories and themes, polished and made clear codes, coded all information, revised all coding, marked out and termed the categories and themes; and wrote down analyses. Following this model assisted the investigator toacquaint herself to the collected data. Additionally, inspection of the codes filtered codes which fitted together in a similar theme. This resulted into identification of themes which explained relevant patterns linked to the research question. Then Microsoft Excel was used to revise, amend and work out reasonable themes which are defended by the existing findings. Then the themes were polished further to discover the real meaning in each theme.

The two data sets were combined using a side-by-side comparison approach [20]. The approach facilitated identification of convergent and divergent areas across the quantitative and qualitative methodologies [27]. A contrast was made in the discussion, displaying initially a set of quantitative results and then qualitative results. The mixed results of the open- and closed-ended questions helped to explain why school inspectors do not adequately support positive adolescent sexuality development. In addition, the results aided to distinguish the social-cultural factors which have brought about this challenge [41]. Likewise, the combination facilitated justification of the outcomes following an analytical discussion [27].

To strengthen and triangulate the study's analysis the researcher used existing data. This secondary data set was re-examined to support the study's results by considering the similarities and differences with the existing literature [41]. Review of literature on how adults perceive adolescent sexuality augmented and strengthened the study. This helped the researcher to triangulate information from respondents with existing data sets. Secondary data sets were appropriate in this study because it is extremely economical [41]. In addition, the researcher had limited time and resources that is why she valued existing literature. Furthermore, use of relevant secondary data sets provided significant answers to the presented research questions [37]. However, the drawback is that the data were gathered for different object. As such Johnston (2014) points out that such data cannot sufficiently attend to the topic under study. Nevertheless, to increase the worth of secondary data, the researcher matched up the literature to her investigation.

The current study has some potential threats to validity because of using the convergent approach, for example, irregular sample sizes [20]. This threat is minimised by using similar sample in gathering both quantitative and qualitative data. However, this implies that the sample for quantitative database is small. The sample size is 7.5% of the population which is 2.5% lower than the percentage recommended by Creswell & Creswell (2018). Another threat is due to use of the convenience sampling technique which is non-probability in nature. This brings subjectivity in selecting the sample, hence population not well-represented [26]. The threat due to sampling is minimised by stratification of the population before choosing the sample which helps to provide an accurate proportion [20].

III. RESULTS

Table 1 Characteristics of the sample

Characteristic	N (%)
Age Range %: 40-49 50-59 Standard deviation	87.5 12.5 0.518
Gender Female Male Standard deviation	62.5% 37.5% 0.518

Ethnicity	
Southern region	62.5%
Central region	37.5%
Northern region	0%
Standard deviation	0.518
Religious status	
Christian	100%
Moslem	0%
Non-religious	0%
Standard deviation	0.000
Workplace location	
Southern region	50%
Central region	37.5%
Northern region	12.5%
Standard deviation	0.744
Work experience as a school inspector	
Less than 1 year	0%
1-5 years	37.5%
6-10 years	37.5%
More than 10 years	25%
Standard deviation	0.835

Table 1 shows that participants' religious affiliation is not dispersed (standard deviation = 0), hence did not represent Christian beliefs of school inspectors in Malawi.

Table 2 Outcome indicators for support towards positive adolescent sexuality development (based on closed-ended questions)

Indicator	N (%)
Inspector's capacity to share knowledge and skills on positive adolescent sexuality development	
Not capable	12.5%
Slightly capable	37.5%
Capable	25%
Very capable	25%
Standard deviation	1.061
Inspector's comfortability to discuss adolescent sexuality issues	
Not comfortable	12.5%
A little bit comfortable	12.5%
Comfortable	50%
Very comfortable	25%
Standard deviation	0.991
Inspector's view regarding open discussion of adolescent sexuality issues as being culturally and religiously appropriate	
Totally disagree	12.5%
Partially disagree	12.5%
Partially agree	50%
Totally agree	25%
Standard deviation	0.991
Inspector's value of adolescent sexuality issues	
Some value	25%
Great value	75%
Standard deviation	0.463

Table 3 Qualitative thematic analysis framework (based on open-ended questions)

Categories	Categorical description and illustrative examples
Open-mindedness/Stance on adolescent sexuality development	Responses indicating that stance of adolescent sexuality development impact inspector's support towards adolescent sexuality development -It is a taboo to discuss sexuality with children and adolescents - Discussion about adolescent sexuality is culturally and religiously sensitive - educators generally have challenges in handling adolescent sexuality topics as they regard such information a taboo
Professional development	Responses indicating that professional development impact inspector's support towards adolescent sexuality development -I gained knowledge about adolescent sexuality in other trainings - I don't tackle adolescent sexuality issues due to lack of knowledge -I had a chance to attend a Life Skills training -The only training is through peer information on adolescent sexuality - I have a little knowledge gained through trainings on 'Why wait?' and 'Guidance and counselling' -training in keeping girls in school equipped me with knowledge on how to support adolescents
regular routines	Responses indicating that one's view towards regular routines impact inspector's support towards adolescent sexuality development -I facilitate in in-service trainings on adolescent sexuality concepts - I talk to learners during inspection visits in schools - I encourage members of mother groups to engage girls in discussing issues of adolescent sexuality - Whenever need arises, I provide some talk to students on issues to do with adolescent sexuality. - No chance to support schools on adolescent sexuality issues -During inspection, I monitor the extent to which students are engaged in adolescent sexuality activities during co-curricular activities -I see no chance to support schools or communities on issues of adolescent sexuality
real life obligations	Responses indicating that one's perception of real-life obligations impact inspector's support towards adolescent sexuality development - I share adolescent sexuality concepts to my child and children of my relations -I talk to my own children about adolescent sexuality development -I teach girls the need to reduce premature pregnancies that cause complications during delivery
dominant circumstances	Responses indicating that dominant circumstances impact inspector's support towards adolescent sexuality development - Home, school, cultural and religious setting shape one's level of participation in adolescent sexuality development - Open sharing of information on adolescent sexuality development is regarded as a taboo in many Malawian societies due to cultural and religious beliefs - Parental figures are too timid to share adolescent sexuality information with their children - Ways should be found to encourage parents to talk to their children from early stages like age of 8 about adolescent sexuality issues -A change of mindset by educators, parents, religious leaders and traditional leaders in sexuality issues is required

Table 3 shows the five categories which emerged from the thematic analysis of the open-ended questions. These categories include inspectors' stance on adolescent sexuality development, continuous professional development, regular routines, real life obligations, and dominant circumstances. Each of the categories exhibited how it influences school inspectors' support towards adolescent sexuality development.

Table 4 Merged results (side-by-side comparison)

Quantitative results			Qualitative results		
Concept	Results	Percentage	Concept	Results	Percentage
Inspectors' capacity to share adolescent sexuality knowledge and skills	Capable	50% (female 60%, male 33%)	Inspectors' open-mindedness on stance of positive adolescent sexuality development	Sexual knowledge	25% (female 60%, male 0%)
	Not capable	50% (female 40%, male 67%)		Sexual empowerment	13% (female 40%, male 0%)
Inspectors' comfortability to openly discuss adolescent sexuality issues	Comfortable	75% (female 80%, male 67%)		Sexual growth	63% (female 80%, male 100%)
	Not comfortable	25% (female 20%, male 33%)	Inspectors' professional development engagement in adolescent sexuality issues	No training	25% (female 40%, male 33%)
Inspectors' cultural and religious beliefs influence their perception about adolescent sexuality development	Agree	75% (female 80%, male 67%)		Informal or peer sharing	13% (female 20%, male 0%)
	Disagree	25% (female 20%, male 33%)		Training in related fields	63% (female 40%, male 67%)
Inspectors' value of adolescent sexuality	High value	62.5% (female 60%, male 67%)	Inspectors' integration of adolescent sexuality development activities in regular routines	No integration	63% (female 80%, male 33%)
	Low value	37.5% (female 40%, male 33%)		Monitoring clubs and societies	13% (female 0%, 33%)
				Facilitating In-service trainings	25% (female 20%, male 33%)
			Inspectors' application of adolescent sexuality development in real life obligations	Home support	10% (female 20%, male 0%)
				School support	40% (female 60%, male 67%)
				Community support	20% (female 0%, male 33%)
				No support	30% (female 40%, male 33%)
			Inspectors' stance on dominant conditions which influence adolescent sexuality development	Social influence	93% (female 60%, male 100%)
				Biological influence	7% (female 0%, male 33%)
			Inspectors' suggestions on how to handle positive adolescent sexuality development	Open discussion of sexuality issues	55% (female 60%, male 100%)
				Training inspectors in adolescent sexuality development	9% (female 20%, male 33%)
				Inspectors' change of mindset regarding adolescent sexuality development	27% (female 0%, male 33%)
				Collaboration among stakeholders in handling adolescent sexuality development	9% (female 20%, male 0%)
				Introducing the concept of positive adolescent sexuality at an early stage	12.5%(female20%, male 0%)

Table 4 is a side-by-side comparison which presents combined quantitative and qualitative findings which is segregated by gender. The findings display some convergent points of the two data-sets.

IV. DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to investigate school inspectors' support towards positive adolescent sexuality development.As such, research findings in the current study are discussed

following the four specific research questions. The questions address issues contributing to the reasons why school inspectors fail to adequately support positive adolescent sexuality development.

Influence of gender on school inspectors' perception of adolescent sexuality development

The current research findings portrayed some gender differences regarding female and male perception of adolescent sexuality development. For example, 60% of the female respondents feel they can share adolescent sexuality knowledge and skills although, only 40% of the female respondents were trained in field related to adolescent sexuality. On the other hand, 67% of the male respondents felt they lack capacity to share adolescent sexuality information despite 67% of these male respondents being trained in fields related to adolescent sexuality. Additionally, 80% of the female respondents compared to 67% of the male respondents feel comfortable to openly discuss adolescent sexuality issues. Such a gender variation is extended by the circumstantial and societal practices of the respondents [68]. The ecological and social settings have setup personal respondents 'theories [12] to the extent that it has formed a build-up of assumed knowledge. Such information establishes how female and male respondents understand adolescent sexuality issues [6]. Therefore, the results imply that the environmental and social practices have influenced the female respondents to feel more confident than their male counterparts to share their expertise in adolescent sexuality development. As such, there is need to nurture constructive environmental and social practices which promote school inspectors' desired opinions towards adolescent sexuality.

Impact of training in shaping views about adolescent sexuality

Participants demonstrated that training in adolescent sexuality development helps to shape one's views regarding adolescent sexuality. This is because training equips trainees with relevant knowledge and skills which improves one's level of subject matter. Eventually, increasing one's confidence in handling the trained content. For instance, in this study 25% of the respondents who are not trained in adolescent sexuality development explained that they do not handle adolescent sexuality issues because they lack knowledge. On the other hand, 67% of the respondents who were trained in other fields related to adolescent sexuality, such as Life Skills and 'Why Wait' programmes, they can tackle a certain level of adolescent issues. This demonstrates that sexuality training although in other fields facilitated respondents'knowledge creation about adolescent sexuality development [32].

The need for inspectors' training is justifiable because the results show that inspectors' definition of positive adolescent sexuality development is focused on sexual growth (63%), sexual knowledge (25%), and sexual empowerment (13%). However, adolescent sexual development includes a wide-range of aspects. For instance, it coversfinding out one's sexual identity, discovering one's own values and beliefs

about sexual conduct and associations, understanding and observing affection in romantic affairs, articulating sexual thoughts, and facing sexual deeds [45]. Positive adolescent sexuality development also acknowledges that adolescents have a mixture of unique assets which create distinctive and complex sexualities [69] and demands understanding of the assets of sexuality development set in the adolescent years [65]. Therefore, positive adolescent sexuality development is going beyond preventing unwanted consequences.

Moreover, training assists to build understanding on a social basis through trainees' joint experiences [18]. As such, training school inspectors in adolescent sexuality development creates opportunities for them to socially construct a shared understanding of the subject matter. This shared understanding will facilitate inspectors 'clarification of their misconceptions about adolescent sexuality development [53]. According to Hamilton-Ekeke & Thomas (2011), failure to address misconceptions end into opposing change which impedes adaptation of new knowledge. Therefore, to promote shared understanding, clarify misconceptions, and permit adaptation of new ideas; it is worthy to train school inspectors in positive adolescent sexuality development.

Engaging inspectors in training ultimately empowers the inspectors to become accustomed to sexuality concepts which address adolescents' evolving needs [7]. In so doing, inspectors will be supporting youths to recognise the value of their strengths and properly utilise the strengths in their daily existence [43]. Additionally, the empowered school inspectors will professionally support educators under their supervision to refrain from severely disciplining students whom they imagine of being in sexual affairs, thereby encouraging more students, who drop out of school due to this punishment, to advance in schooling [28]. Also, empowered inspectors can offer guidance to parents who withdraw financial support from girls whom they suspect are sexually active [28]. Such guidance can reverse the situation and save the affected girls from dropping out of school. Allowing more girls an opportunity to continue schooling will help reduce instances of early marriages in Malawi.

Ecological factors that influence inspectors' interpretations of positive adolescent sexuality development

Most respondents (93%) were supportive that social-cultural factors are dominant conditions which influence adolescent sexuality development while 7% also considered biological influences. Respondents displayed inadequate knowledge of a wide-range of factors that create prominence in adolescent sexuality development. Such factors includesocial contacts with peers and family, sociocultural and sociopolitical organizations regulating education, access to information as well health care [52], physical appearance, mental, social, cultural norms, and experience [39]. Little knowledge of the prominent factors justifies the need to train these inspectors in adolescent sexuality development. Nevertheless, respondents' understanding that social-cultural factors affect adolescent

sexuality development agrees with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems model.

Bronfenbrenner's microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem influence differently the development of individuals [51]. For example, the microsystem which is the closest setting promotes an individual's pattern of actions and responsibilities. This explains why three-quarters of the respondents were supportive that religious institutions (a microsystem) influence one's perception about adolescent sexuality development. It is also evident in the current findings that cultural context (macrosystem) has influenced respondents' understanding of adolescent sexuality development. This is because inspectors' social belief systems, customs, ideologies, and regulations [59] have constructed their meaning of adolescent sexuality development.

Therefore, the ecological factors, particularly religious institutions and societal belief systems, are coming out clearly as contributing factors which have shaped inspectors' views in the current study. The effects are displayed in some of the feedback. For example, some of the respondents expressed that they cannot openly discuss sexuality issues with adolescents. The perception is common across African tradition, communication on sexuality issues between parental figures and adolescents is a taboo [49].This is because parental figures turn down the fact that adolescents are sexual beings and feel that a dialogue on sexual matters can lead to premarital sexual intercourse [15].Likewise, some parental figures dodge sexuality conversation because they do not have correct information [61]. They consider sexuality as barely sexual intercourse, which they believe is only proper after marriage [22].

Most respondents (75%) were supportive that religious beliefs shape one's view about adolescent sexuality. The finding is consistent with Gyimah, et.al.'s (2013) arguement that religion is one of the influences of sexuality development in Africa. This is because religion has its emergent influence and significance in the African society [44]. Also, religion is a moral compass for ethical behavioural outcomes [31] such as treating open discussion of adolescent sexuality as a taboo. As such, culture and religion hinder inspectors' open discussion of sexuality issues with adolescents, thereby failing to support adolescents constructively.

The effects of this hindrance are manifested in the country's status quo of adolescent sexuality development. For instance, society interprets sex and opposite sex affairs as inevitably relating to sexual intercourse [67]. Additionally, failure to positively influencein-school adolescents'sexual conducts [55] which contradicts the purpose of positive adolescent sexuality development. Therefore, constructivism approach should be employed to eliminate these religious and cultural barriers. Such an approach gives inspectors an opportunity to readjust and substitute prevailing misconceptions (due to religion and culture) to adopt new philosophies [32]. This is

because constructivism principles will deal with dominant inspectors' experiences which influences their conduct towards adolescent sexuality development [18].

School inspectors' engagement in adolescent sexuality development activities and/or practices

Participants expressed some activities and practices as their way of engaging in adolescent sexuality development. Such activities include monitoring clubs and societies (13%), facilitating in-service trainings (25%), supporting children in their homes (10%), supporting individual students as need arise during inspection (40%), supporting their communities (20%). However, most of the respondents (63%) expressed that they do not integrate adolescent sexuality development activities in their regular routines.

Failure to integrate adolescent sexuality practices is contributed by inspectors' beliefs towards sexuality issues [17]. For instance, trained experts in positive adolescent sexuality development feel embarrassed to discuss sexuality issues with adolescents because of their beliefs [58]. Also, parental figures embrace traditional belief that conversations regarding sexuality are unsuitable for adolescents [22]. As such, school inspectors' beliefs determine what they choose to integrate as they fulfil their core functions.

Again, the high rate of failure to integrate adolescent sexuality concepts is due to inadequate knowledge caused by lack of proper training in positive adolescent sexuality development. Cottone (2017) and Hamilton-Ekeke and Thomas (2011) agree that training will empower the inspectors to regulate their individual learning processes and generate chances where they can reflect on their as simulation practices. The process will be inducing the inspectors' expected knowledge and behaviour change. Further, the transformation will create room for identifying links between positive adolescent sexuality development concepts and inspectors' core functions. For example, proper analysis of the positive adolescent sexuality development approaches and the education minimum standards and benchmarks can help to identify relevant and possible aspects of integration.

School inspectors' suggestions on how to handle the implementation of positive adolescent sexuality development

Respondents proposed some suggestions on how to handle the implementation of positive adolescent sexuality development interventions. The suggestions include need for open discussion of sexuality issues (55%). Mutema (2013) argues that honest conversations regarding adolescent sexuality matters enables decline in unacceptable sexual interventions which is deployed by adolescents due to parental figures' failure to communicate about sexual matters. Also, respondents proposed inspectors' change of mindset regarding adolescent sexuality development (27%).Do, et.al., (2017) agrees that traditional mentalities make parental figures become hesitant to support positive adolescent sexuality interventions. So, inspectors' mindset change will help them

to look at adolescent sexuality from multiple point of view [30]. This will strengthen inspectors' influence on decision-makers and other stakeholders [54] which eventually results into accomplishing the preferred developmental needs [30].

Likewise, respondents suggested introducing the concept of positive adolescent sexuality at an early stage (12%). Marques et.al (2017) confirms that such an approach presents valuable reinforcement needed during commencement of intense period of adolescence. Early adolescence brings about physical, mental and emotional pressures which consequently affect children's self-esteem and their capacity to evaluate reproductive health hazards [35].

Similarly, participants proposed improving collaboration among stakeholders in handling adolescent sexuality development interventions (9%). Participants noted that there are conflicts on implementation of policies related to adolescent sexuality development among institutions such as Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and non-governmental organisations. Atuyambe, et.al., (2018) supports involvement of various stakeholders because that encourages adolescent responsive interventions. However, it is noted that Malawi does not have a more youth inclusive and reactive policy which informs community-based approaches [60]. This lack is due to challenges of convertingstrategies into actions [4]. Furthermore, respondents held supportive views towards training inspectors in adolescent sexuality development (9%).

V. CONCLUSION

The study had a disproportionate representation of the religious and ethnicity affiliations among school inspectors. All the respondents were Christians and did not include the Northern region ethnicity. The disparity was due to lack of response from these two categories.

It is evident from current study that most school inspectors have influence regarding adolescent sexuality development as displayed in their real-life obligations. Also, most of the inspectors see the need for open discussion regarding sexuality issues and they propose inspectors' change of mindset to achieve this openness. However, the study has found that religious and social practices shape inspectors' perceptions towards adolescent sexuality. These two major factors view open discussion as a taboo, as such it becomes problematic for the inspectors to support such activities.

Therefore, the current study concludes that school inspectors fail to adequately support positive adolescent sexuality development because of the following reasons:

- The environmental and social practices are not conducive to promote school inspectors' positive perception about adolescent sexuality.
- Lack of uniformity on how school inspectors integrate adolescent sexuality development activities in their regular routines

- Cultural and tradition barriers that hinder parental figures, including inspectors, from discussing sex with adolescents
- Inadequate stakeholder engagement due to poor translation of adolescent sexuality development policies into practice

In view of these findings the researcher suggests that:

- The Ministry of Education Science and Technology, the Ministry of Health in conjunction with the Ministry of Youth and the Non-Governmental Organisations responsible for positive adolescent sexuality development should train school inspectors to help these inspectors expand their knowledge base.
- The Directorate of Inspection and Advisory Services should standardise the school inspection process to address the inconsistencies surrounding the activities which school inspectors are engaged in regarding adolescent sexuality development.
- The standardisation process should consider rectifying the opportunities which school inspectors can utilise to offer comprehensive sexuality education to different stakeholders.
- The Directorate of Inspection and Advisory Services should network with other agencies providing trainings to school inspectors which are related to adolescent sexuality issues. The network can be used to strengthen knowledge and skills being shared with the inspectors by emphasising on positive adolescent sexuality development.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The researcher has no conflict of interest.

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