

**INTER-ELECTIONS POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND DEMOCRACY
CONSOLIDATION IN THE RURAL COMMUNITIES OF MALAWI: AN ANALYSIS
OF CIVIC EDUCATION OUTCOMES IN DEDZA DISTRICT**

M.A. (POLITICAL SCIENCE) THESIS

By

**WILLY MUMDERANJI MZAMA
B.A. (Public Administration)-University of Malawi**

Submitted to the Department of Political and Administrative Studies, Faculty of Social
Sciences, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts (Political Science)

**UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI
CHANCELLOR COLLEGE**

April, 2010

DECLARATION

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

Willy Mumderanji Mzama

Signature

Date

Certificate of Approval

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



Signature _____ Date _____

LARS SVASAND, PhD (Professor), University of Bergen

Main Supervisor

Signature _____ Date _____

HAPPY M. KAYUNI, MPA (Senior Lecturer)

Member, Supervisory Committee

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my wife and confidant, Maryflorence, my children – Nancy, Mercy, Chancy and Cliff for their understanding and patience during the whole period when my attention, company and financial contribution to the family were in short supply. Their constant prayers and encouragement made it possible for me to accomplish this achievement.

ABSTRACT

Malawi's transition from dictatorial rule to multiparty democracy in 1994 generated optimism that the regime change would bring a democratic or participant political culture. With the onset of multiparty politics, the number of registered civil society organizations engaged in the teaching of democracy rose to over 250 and consequently raised people's expectations that democracy consolidation would take root within a short time. Although civic education on democracy has been the preoccupation of civil society organizations, commentators have lamented that fourteen years after democratising, Malawi still embraces a subject political culture whose citizens are not active participants in the political process.

This study, therefore, sets out to investigate what civic education by civil society organizations has contributed to the consolidation of democracy. To do this, the research assesses the nature of messages on democracy that the people internalised after learning from the democracy educators. The methods used for teaching are also analysed.

The research is largely qualitative in nature and was conducted through focus group discussions, key informant interviews and a study of secondary data. The study findings show that political participation during the inter-election period is very minimal although civic education on democracy has been ongoing. The implication is that people are mainly subjects and not active participants in the political process. The study attributes this situation to the nature of democracy messages and methods of teaching democracy employed by civic education providers. It has found that the messages have predominantly touted elitist representative democracy and not participatory democracy. Consequently, people have only regarded political participation as taking part in elections and development projects without political considerations. The study further found that the dominant teaching techniques used by civic education providers were not active and participatory. In a country like Malawi where people had been under a repressive regime for over thirty years, the emphasis on non-participatory methods only helped to entrench a subject political culture. People are therefore averse to self-mobilization and formation of groups to advance their demands to the political and government representatives. To a great extent, these

findings confirm the assertion that Malawi's political culture is subject and not participant. Above that, they further show that this is not entirely due to the short period that Malawi has been a democracy, but due to the nature of messages on democracy and the methods used to impart such messages.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	x
LIST OF CASE STUDIES	xi
 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	 1
Introduction.....	1
Background to the Study.....	1
Definitions of Key Terms.....	4
Problem Statement.....	6
Study Sites	11
Objectives of the Study	12
Research Hypotheses.....	12
Chapter Outline.....	13
Conclusion.....	14
 CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF AVAILABLE LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	 15
Introduction.....	15
Democracy	15
Theories of Democracy.....	16
Liberal Democratic Theory.....	16
Elitist Democratic Theory.....	18
Participationist Democracy Theory.....	20
Forms of Citizen Participation.....	22
Major Conceptual Dimensions of Political Participation.....	55
Democracy Consolidation.....	31
Civic Education.....	34
Models of Civic Education.....	37
Traditional Model of Civic Education.....	37
Lifetime Learning Model.....	38
Effects of Civic Education on Political Participation.....	40
Conclusion.....	43
 CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	 44
Introduction.....	44
Units of Analysis.....	44
Sampling and Data Collection Methods.....	45
Focus Group Discussions.....	46
Key Informant Interviews.....	49
Secondary Data.....	49
Data Analysis.....	49
Content Analysis.....	50

Process Tracing.....	51
Cultural Analysis.....	51
Limitations of the Study.....	51
Conclusion.....	52
 CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSES.....	53
Introduction.....	53
Brief Background to Communities under Study.....	53
Brief Overview of CSOs Present.....	54
Malawi CARER.....	55
Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace.....	56
National Initiative for Civic Education.....	57
Young Politicians Union.....	58
Civic Education as Conducted by CSOs.....	58
People’s Perceptions of Political Participation	59
Political Participation Messages Imparted by Civic Education Providers.....	64
Civic Education Methods Used by Civic Education Providers	67
Outcomes of Messages on Political Participation.....	70
Lessons from the Civic Education Experience of the People.....	79
Conclusion.....	82
 CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	83
Introduction.....	83
Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations.....	83
Conclusion.....	88
 REFERENCES.....	90
 APPENDICES.....	102
Appendix 1.....	102
Appendix 2	103
Appendix 3	104

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Menu of Participation Forms	23
Table2: Major Conceptual Dimensions of Political Participation	26
Table 3: People's Perceptions of Political Participation at TA Kasumbu	60
Table 4: People's Perceptions of Political Participation at TA Kamenya Gwaza	61
Table 5: Definitions of Political Participation by CSOs and NICE	64
Table 6: Civic Education Methodology by CSOs and NICE	71
Table 7: Outcomes of Civic Education in Dedza	76

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADC	- Area Development Committee
CBE	- Community based educators
CCJP	- Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace
CSO	- Civil society organization
DPP	- Democratic Progressive Party
GVH	- Group Village Headwoman
MASAF	- Malawi Social Action Fund
MCP	- Malawi Congress Party
MP	- Member of Parliament
NDA	- National Democratic Alliance
NGO	- Nongovernmental Organization
NICE	- National Initiative for Civic Education
TA	-Traditional Authority
UDF	- United Democratic Front
VDC	- Village Development Committee
VH	- Village Headman
YPU	-Young Politicians Union

LIST OF CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1: Responsiveness of MP to constituents' needs	77
Case Study 2: Is your village politically active?	78

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to lay out the focus of this study. Another aim is to provide a brief background to the study. This entails a brief look at civic education and inter-elections political participation in Malawi in order to set out the context in which the study is carried out. In this light, the chapter focuses on, the problem statement, definitions of key terms, objectives and research hypotheses. In its conclusion, the chapter winds up with an outline of thesis chapters.

1.1 Background to the Study

The study is about political culture in Malawi between 1994 and 2008. It focuses on assessing whether after embracing multiparty democracy in 1994, Malawi is a consolidated democracy, especially in the light of political participation between elections. Secondly, it examines the contributions of civic education to the political culture prevailing in the rural communities of Malawi where the majority of the people live. In this vein, the study looks at how the following have affected the democracy consolidation process: (a) the messages on democracy imparted by civic education providers, (b) the methods of teaching democracy employed by civic education providers, (c) outcomes of civic education. The study also draws lessons from the civic education experience of the people.

Malawi completed her democratic transition in 1994 after holding free and contested elections based on broadly inclusive suffrage (Linz and Stepan, 1996:14-33). The transition process itself had been characterized by increased activity of civil society organizations which disseminated democracy messages with emphases on human rights, political participation and governance (Meinhardt, 2004:101-130). People were thus mobilized to participate in elections and entrench a participant political culture. There was optimism that with increased civic education, people would internalize democratic values which would empower them to engage with both the electoral and non-electoral processes of the political system. Some of the non-electoral (inter-elections) acts are signing petitions against and demanding accountability from representatives, joining protest marches, campaigning for political parties and controlling the issue agenda of the elected representatives as they contributed to democracy consolidation. Inter-elections political participation is crucial because it is a vehicle through which the common man would actively influence policy outcomes by political representatives. This is important because as Verba (1967, 53) puts it, meaningful political participation includes “acts that are intended to influence the behaviour of those empowered to make decisions”. The hope was that democracy consolidation indicators like reformed state institutions, regularized elections, strong civil society and the overall habituation of the society to the new democratic “rules of the game” (Carothers, 2002:7) would be realized.

Fourteen years down the line though, studies have shown that Malawi is not yet a consolidated democracy. Among other factors, this is attributed to the persistence of a culture of silence and passivity whereby people still continue being subjects and not citizens (Tsoka, 2002:3). The people still look at political participation during the inter-elections period as alien. Surprisingly, this scenario is against the backdrop of

increased number of civil society organizations (CSOs) operating in the fields of governance and development as opposed to that of CSOs during the one party system of government (Meinhardt and Patel, 2003:36). Although the continued provision of civic education by CSOs is touted to have improved participation through phone-in radio programs (Patel et al, 2007:75), the influence of such participation on Government's policy is uncertain as it remains unknown whether Government listens to such views or not. In effect, Malawians remain politically passive as a very insignificant portion of the national population engages in inter-elections political participation.

In fact, broadly, Malawi can be described as a hybrid regime because it combines both authoritarian and democratic elements like regular elections and abuse of formal democratic rules respectively (Diamond, 2002:23). Precisely, Malawi is a feckless pluralistic regime because it has both positive and negative features. For example, there are significant amounts of political freedom, regular elections and alternation of power but participation does not go beyond voting (Carothers, 2002:10). In addition, political elites from major political parties are perceived as corrupt, self-interested and ineffective. Even alternation of power does not solve political problems and usually the state remains weak (Carothers, 2002:10).

Considering the above, the study sets out to investigate the contributions of civic education to inter-elections political participation in the rural communities in the process of democracy consolidation. The rural communities have been targeted because the population is higher than in the urban areas (GOM, 2008). The study is carried out in Dedza District, located in the central region of Malawi where a number of CSOs conducted civic education on democracy. It investigates whether the messages on political participation disseminated by CSOs like CCJP, Malawi

CARER, Young Politicians Union and NICE (National Initiative for Civic Education) contributed to the kind of participation available in Dedza. The kind of inter-elections political participation referred to in this study is demanding accountability from political representatives and initiating ideas on politics and development.

1.2 Definitions of Key Terms

In order to enhance clarity of this work, the key terms used in this study are defined and briefly discussed in this subsection. The key terms are as shown below.

The first term to be defined is *political culture* and is defined as public attitudes towards politics and their role within the political system (Almond et al, 2006:46). Almond identifies three types of political culture namely participant, subject and parochial. *Participant culture* is viewed as a political culture in which the relationship between specialized institutions and the citizen opinion and political activity is interactive (Almond et al, 2006:46). Participants are aware of and informed about the political system in both its governmental and political aspects. They actually make demands on the polity, rendering support to political leaders based on performance. The second type is *subject culture* portrayed as a political culture in which institutional and role differentiation exists in political life, but towards which the citizen stands in largely passive relations (Almond et al, 2006:46). Subjects passively obey Government officials and the law but they do not actively involve themselves in politics. The third type is *parochial culture* and is defined as a political culture in which there is no clear differentiation of specific political roles and expectations among actors (Almond et al, 2006:48). Parochials are hardly aware of government and politics. Mostly they are illiterate, rural people living in remote areas.

The second major term used frequently in the study is *civic education*. It is referred to as an interactive process that strives to stimulate and enlighten people on their entitlements in a democratic society on matters of government and governance, and effective participation in civic and political life (Mwalubunju, 2007:279).

Another term is *political participation*. It is used to mean acts that are intended to influence the behavior of those empowered to make decisions (Verba, 1967: 53). Political participation is crucial in the process of democracy consolidation. In this study, a *consolidated democracy* is depicted as a regime that meets all the procedural criteria of democracy and in which all politically significant groups accept the established political institutions and adhere to the democratic rules of the game (Higley and Gunther, 1992:3).

In the process of democracy consolidation, the civil society organizations (CSOs) play a vital role of among other things, teaching people democracy. The term *Civil society organizations* is used in this study as “the realm of social affairs between private life in the family on the one hand, and the political sphere of the state on the other, a realm in which individuals voluntarily form associations of various kinds to promote their interests collectively” (Ntseane and Youngman, 2002:121). In this study, these include community based organizations (CBOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The last term to be defined in this subsection is *hybrid regime*. It means a political regime that combines both authoritarian and democratic elements like regular elections and abuse of formal democratic rules respectively (Diamond, 2002:23).

1.3 Problem Statement

The political culture of Malawi during the one party era was one characterized by a veil of silence and passivity on political matters for fear of reprisals by the Government and the Malawi Congress Party. The leadership of the country at that time refused to acknowledge violations of human rights, its disrespect of the law or the plight of the marginalized groups (Chirwa, 2000: 93). Consequently, the people decided to keep their opinions and dissenting views to themselves to avoid arrests. In fact, Malawi was a country where “silence rule(d)” (Africa Watch, 1990:4-5). The implication of this aloofness was that people were not participants in the political developments in the country but mere subjects. The policy-making system was basically elitist in that as Chinsinga (2007:361) aptly posits regarding the MCP’s convention that deliberated Government’s policies, “... once the President introduced the proposed policies during the opening speech, the delegates discussed them ... without any critical debate. Delegates had to simply affirm their loyalty to the party and its leadership and support the proposed policies, which would be introduced later to parliament for legislation.”

In order to break the culture of silence and passivity in Malawi, external and internal political pressure was exerted on the regime. On the external front, international bodies like Amnesty International and Africa Watch started to publish political atrocities and were later joined by donors and pro-democracy governments which demanded democratization (Chirwa, 2000:93). Internally, pressure came from religious organizations, churches, university students, Law Society and trade unions (Meinhardt, 2004: 101-130), just to mention a few. Although the pressure for change was predominantly driven by external forces, CSOs on the local scene also applied considerable pressure to break the culture of silence. The CSOs embarked on

conducting civic education to sensitize people on their roles in democracy, human rights and governance. The belief is that a participant culture is important for democracy consolidation because it “makes each individual master of his own circumstances and environment rather than to train him to fit into an established pattern” (Wolff, 1949:130). The problem that arose, however, was that the CSOs were so urban and elite-based that they systematically alienated the majority of the people in the rural communities from the political arena (Chirwa, 2000:103). This scenario was coupled with the failure by CSOs to systematically map out the way they would operate in entrenching a participant culture. After the transition in 1994, these institutions of civil society started faltering and were not effective in applying the pre-referendum pressure on the state (Chirwa, 2000:103). In fact, Chirwa says of the 1994-1999 inter-election period: “due to their institutional weaknesses, poor strategies and the intransigence of the state, the institutions of civil society were relegated to the position of civic education providers, rather than process co-managers” (ibid: 89). In agreement with Chirwa, Chinsinga (2006:26) adds that inter-elections civic and voter education has been left to NGOs which lack expertise and tend to adopt partisan approaches which discourage voters.

However, although civic education has been carried out for over fourteen years now, Malawi is not yet a consolidated democracy because people are largely subjects and not participants especially during the inter-elections period (Tsoka, 2002:3). Even at the local level, where the Local Government Act (1998) provided for political participation through decentralized planning framework comprising Village Development Committees at the Ward level and Area Development Committees at the TA level that eventually reports to the District Assembly, there is no meaningful participation. The District Planning guidelines stipulate, among others, that (a), the

committees should include women and (b), the Chiefs should not head the committees but allow for the election of leaders (GOM, 2005). In practice, however, there is no meaningful participation as chiefs continue to head the committees and influence proceedings therein while the gender aspect is ignored altogether (Chiweza, 2007:158-159). This scenario causes NGOs and other development partners to create parallel structures, a duplication which confuses the people (Patel et al, 2007:75). In addition, they shun the decentralized planning networks because they view each other and the District Assemblies as competitors in grassroots development (Chinsinga, 2005:531). The situation is further exacerbated by the fact that Local Government Elections have not been conducted since 2000. This paper argues, though, that although lack of Ward Councillors in the District Assemblies has had negative effect on inter-elections political participation through the decentralized structures, people would still have been participating through informal and local political organizations by holding their members of parliament accountable and initiating development and political ideas if a participant culture were entrenched, aided by civic education.

An analysis of the documents used for civic education in Malawi reflects the people's aspirations of greater freedom from state control, but shows a significant relegation of political participation to mere electoral participation. For example, the conceptions of democracy, human rights, freedom and development contained in the documents heavily rely on representative and constitutional forms (Divala, 2007:32) which emphasize on putting people in power through free and fair elections. The materials for teaching democracy mostly include principles of equality, tolerance, participation in free and fair elections multiparty system, rule of law, accountability and transparency, prevention of power abuse, human rights and responsibilities, and economic freedoms (TDU, Undated:991-995). Although the civic education content

touts the promotion of a participant culture in the economic, social and political spheres, its emphasis of political participation is on taking part in elections through political parties (Malawi CARER, 2001:20-21). The effect of this emphasis on representative and formalistic forms of democracy is that people have disengaged themselves from political participation in the inter-elections period (Tsoka, 2002:3).

A look at the methods used by the civic education providers in Malawi shows that more passive than participatory teaching methodologies are used. Passive methods are those that do not actively engage the intellect and action of the learner like lecturing, material distribution (involving distribution of T-shirts, caps, booklets and posters), poems and classroom method (Branson, 2004:3). On the other hand, participatory methods are those that help students to learn by doing like role-playing, dramatization, group decision-making, playing games, problem-solving, simulations and public debates (Finkel, 2002:1012; Branson, 2004:3). Most civic education providers used lecturing, poetry, drama, song and dance and material distribution as methods of imparting messages on democracy (Englund, 2003:199; Malawi CARER). Methods like role-playing, group decision-making, simulations and public debates are seldom used to impart messages. National Initiative for Civic Education at least conducts public debates albeit rarely due to financial constraints.

Could it be then, that the approach and design of the civic education project have been largely inappropriate? In Malawi, a study by Englund (2003:196) finds that NICE approaches beneficiaries as ‘the problem’ and not as partners in solving their problem. Related to this, Tengatenga (1998:188) takes a critical look at assumptions underlying civic education in Malawi and finds out that although civic educators see themselves as ‘facilitators’, ‘initiators’ or ‘partners’ who work with the people, they do not identify with the people but look down on them. Instead of challenging

hierarchical arrangements of the communities, the educators become imbedded in them by, for example, just greeting notables and dressing conspicuously differently from the locals during civic education (Englund, 2003:196). In yet another study in which Chirwa (2000:103-116) assesses the role of CSOs in Malawi's democratic transition, it is found that after 1994, CSOs have become weak and riddled with accusations of inefficiency, partisanship and being event-driven. In addition, they design the civic education project in such a way that a year before elections, civic and voter education is conducted and after elections, they concentrate on non-political issues like health, HIV/AIDS, food security, gender, youth empowerment and environment (Faiti, 1999). Since the inter-elections period is longer than the elections period, people associate the former period with development and the latter one with elections. Meinhardt and Patel (2003:35) also find the approach and design of the civic education project weak when in their analysis of political developments between 1990 and 2003, they find that CSOs are not neutral and that they lack credibility and accountability in their operations. When Chinsinga (2006:26) investigates factors behind voter apathy in Malawi, he finds that among other reasons, voter and civic education has been left to NGOs that often lack the expertise in civic education.

These studies have looked at the roles and weaknesses of civic education providers in the process of democracy in Malawi. They, however, do not specifically look at the direct link between political behaviour of people in the rural areas and civic education particularly during the inter-elections period. There is need, therefore, for a specific and in-depth study that assesses the link between political participation and civic education during the inter-elections period, especially fourteen years after the transition to democratic system of government. This is the knowledge gap that this study is meant to fill.

It becomes absolutely necessary to undertake this study because there is hope that civic education can produce desired outcomes in the process of democracy consolidation (like writing letters to and demanding accountability from representatives, campaigning for a political party, initiating ideas on politics and development and signing a petition and joining a protest march) within a short period of time if the right methodologies are used, running contrary to the traditional belief that political culture takes a long time to change (Almond and Verba, 1963; Eckstein, 1988). Studies carried out in South Africa and The Dominican Republic by Finkel (2002: 994-1020) show that if civic education is conducted frequently using participatory learning techniques for at least a year and that there are secondary group associations, very positive results are yielded. These findings put some emphases on the relevance of group membership as an avenue for political participation beyond voting. This makes it worthwhile to investigate why civic education in Malawi has not enabled people to meaningfully engage in political activities.

1.4 Study Sites

The study took place in Dedza District of the Central Region of Malawi particularly in four villages under Traditional Authorities Kamenya Gwaza and Kasumbu. The sites were chosen because of practical and economic considerations in terms of access to the villages, funds needed for successful conclusion of data collection and the time factor for completion of data collection. Dedza lies in the Western Mountains, near the border of Mozambique. The district has an area of 3,624 square kilometres accommodating a population of 623,789 people (GoM, 2008:3). Dedza is home to the leader of Malawi's largest opposition party, The Malawi Congress Party and in the period of the study, all Members of Parliament in the

district belonged to the party. It has a number of civil society organizations operating in the district in the field of democracy, human rights and governance like Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP), Malawi CARER, Young Politicians Union and National Initiative for Civic Education Project that carry out civic education.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study have been divided into the main objective, which is the overarching one, and specific objectives that basically break down the main objective into distinguishable aspects.

1.5.1 Main Objective

The main objective of the study is to investigate contributions of civic education to inter-elections political participation in the rural communities of Dedza District

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

- To find out the kind of messages on political participation that the rural people internalised from civic education providers
- To assess the methods of teaching that were utilized to impart the messages on political participation
- To analyse the outcomes of the messages on political participation
- To draw lessons from the civic education experience of the people

1.6 Research Hypotheses

The study intends to either verify or falsify the following hypotheses:

- Civic education has not resulted in effective inter-elections political participation
- The methods of teaching employed had significant effects on political participation

1.7 Chapter Outline

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter introduces the thesis to the reader. It provides the background to the study, which is followed by definitions of key terms. The problem statement comes after the study background. Immediately after the problem statement, the chapter provides a description of the study sites. After this, the objectives of the study and research hypotheses are laid out. After a narrative on chapter outline, the chapter comes to its conclusion.

Chapter Two: Review of Available Literature and Theoretical Review

This chapter presents a review of available literature after the chapter introduction. The review basically discusses various studies carried out in the thematic areas of democracy consolidation, political participation and civic education. After this, the chapter discusses the theoretical framework that anchors the study. Finally, the chapter ends with a concluding section.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

The chapter provides salient issues of research design, methods and procedures the researcher used to collect information required to address the problem studied. Units

of analysis, sampling methods and data analysis techniques have been discussed. Limitations of the study have also been acknowledged.

Chapter Four: Research Findings and Analyses

The chapter provides findings of the study and critically analyses them. The findings are discussed according to the specific objectives of the study. Thus findings on the kinds of messages on political participation imparted by civic education providers are discussed. Methods used to impart the messages are also assessed. Thereafter, the outcomes of such messages are analysed. Lastly, the chapter draws lessons from the civic education experience of the people.

Chapter Four: Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

This chapter contains major conclusions drawn from the civic education project in the light of inter-elections political participation, which is a very important component in the democracy consolidation process. Implications of such conclusions are also discussed in this chapter. Then the chapter provides recommendations for the betterment of the civic education project so that the inter-elections political participation is meaningful to the people of Malawi.

1.8 Conclusion

The chapter has shown the focus of the study. It has given a background to the study by briefly discussing the inter-elections political participation and civic education. Definitions of key terms, problem statement, objectives, hypotheses and research methodologies have also been discussed. The chapter has also presented an outline of chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF AVAILABLE LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the available literature on the themes of democracy consolidation, political participation and civic education. The review helps to solidify the problem that this thesis aims to address by showing gaps in research. Then, in order to provide the theoretical framework in which the study is couched, the chapter discusses theories of democracy and civic education. In this regard, the discussion clearly shows why amongst a number of theories, the study has adopted the participationist democracy theory and the lifetime learning model of civic education to guide the general direction of the thesis. Afterwards, some effects of civic education on political participation are discussed before the chapter is brought to its conclusion.

2.1 Democracy

Democracy is a term that has been defined by many scholars with emphases on different aspects. For example, Robert Dahl (in Benavot, 1996:379) defines democracy as a polity holding regular elections in which votes are weighted equally and where individuals possess enough information to decide among alternative candidates or parties. Furthermore, Downs(1957:23-24) conceives of a democracy as a society which holds periodic elections, decided by majority rule in which each voter

casts only one vote, and where one party emerges a winner among two or more parties competing for control of government resources. Although Downs differs from Dahl in his recognition of parties as suppliers of contestants in elections, both of their conceptualizations regard fair, open and regular elections as the crucial feature. On the other hand, Lipset (1963:27) views democracy as “a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials, and a social mechanism which permits the largest part of the population to influence major decisions by choosing among contenders for political office”. Lipset’s definition emphasizes less on elections and more on constitutional guarantees providing citizens with opportunities to make decisions about politicians and public policies. This study adopts Lipset’s definition because it allows the majority to participate in activities that would influence major decisions even during the period when elections are far away. A look at some theories of democracy clarifies this choice.

2.1.1 Theories of Democracy

This section discusses the liberal democratic theory, the elitist democratic theory and the participationist democracy theory. It then justifies why the participationist democracy theory has been chosen to anchor the study.

2.1.1.1 Liberal Democratic Theory

The liberal democratic theory is one that holds that there are certain aspects of life, including some actions that are private and against which others can never rightfully interfere (Levine, 1978:303). It attempts to articulate at the same time both democratic and liberal value judgements on political institutions. Levine posits that the

democratic judgement holds that what society does should be a function of each individual's preference, determined according to some procedure of decision making like majority rule method. Political institutions are therefore justified to the extent that they allow for the fulfilment of each of these values (ibid). The liberal democratic theory, basing on the contractualist principle, requires that the exercise of political power respect both the freedom of the individual and the freedom of the people to make law (Marneffe, 1994:764). Marneffe argues that in a democratically liberal society, no system of principles can be accepted by everyone unless it recognises and protects certain basic liberties like freedom of opinion, rights giving effect to the rule of law and liberties of political participation. Key features of liberal democracies are that liberal democracy and capitalism have been closely connected and that they were liberal before they were democratic (Schumpeter, 1962). This means that more than being a liberal theory of democracy, liberal democracy refers to attempts to find a democratic implementation of liberalism. Both liberal politics and liberal economics are based on individualistic conception of society where what counts is the welfare of individuals, and each individual seeks to maximize his or her own welfare regardless of that of others (Katz, 1997:46).

This theory has a big weakness. There is an inherent tension created by the combination of 'liberty' and 'democracy' because the former emphasizes maximization of individual freedoms whilst the latter focuses on freedoms of the majority such that liberalism and democratic collective choice can not coexist in the same constitution (Levine, 1978:307). This is particularly true because it is practically difficult to balance the two. For liberals, liberty is the absence of restraints with respect to the pursuit of personally defined wants.

Liberal democratic theory is not ideal for this academic work because it tends to breed discord in a political system, as people would fight to maximize satisfaction of their individual rights at the expense of others. It lacks the spirit of genuine compromise due to its individualistic stance in the pursuit of rights and consequently, unity is hard to get through aggregation of wants. It also does not emphasize the importance of collective participation which is a crucial element in this study.

2.1.1.2 Elitist Democratic Theory

This is a theory whose major premise is that the average citizen is inadequate and relies on the wisdom, loyalty and skill of leaders to have democratic systems but not the community as a whole (Walker, 1966: 286). The political system is divided into two groups: the elite or the ‘political entrepreneurs’ who possess ideological commitments and manipulative skills; and the citizens at large who are referred to as the ‘apolitical clay’ of the political system, a much larger group of inert, passive followers who have little knowledge of public affairs and even less interest (Dahl in Walker, 1966:286). In an elitist democracy, there is limited competition among the elite for formal positions of leadership within the system. An average citizen has the role of voting for the elite though he cannot initiate policy. The elitist theory of democracy asserts that as carriers of the democratic creed, elites are mainly responsible for the maintenance of the democratic institutions and that minimizing the political participation of the masses is acceptable (Gibson and Duch, 1991:192) because the masses are considered politically intolerant. Elitist theorists believe that if the uninformed masses participate in large numbers, democratic self-restraint will break down and peaceful competition among the elites, the central element in the elitist theory will become impossible.

The theory has been riddled with criticisms. An elitist political system is concerned with needs and functions of the system as a whole and not with human development (Walker, 1966:288). The central question is not how to design a political system that stimulates greater individual participation and enhances the moral development of its citizens, but how “to combine a substantial degree of popular participation with a system of power capable of governing effectively and coherently” (Beer in Walker, 1966:288). In this regard, an elitist democratic system is not genuinely for the people as argued by John Stuart Mill that

... the most important point of excellence which any form of government can possess is to promote the virtue and intelligence of the people themselves. The first question in respect to any political institutions is how far they tend to foster in the members of the community the various desirable qualities, ... moral, intellectual and active (Mill, 1862:39-40).

Another criticism of the theory is that it promotes differences in understanding of democratic values between the masses and the elite since it breeds a political culture whose norms are predominantly libertarian and access to those norms is greater among the elites than among the members of the general public (McClosky and Brill, 1983:240). Learning democratic values is made difficult by the remoteness of the mass public from the discussion and information that help one to achieve insight and clarification about the norms. On the other hand, elites are in general, more exposed to democratic values and are much better equipped to assimilate them (Gibson and Duch, 1991:194). This probably explains why the masses are intolerant to political differences.

Therefore, considering what the theory entails and what this paper intends to achieve, elitist theory of democracy is not good enough as a theoretical anchorage of the discussions because it tends to look down upon the very people who comprise the

majority of any political system. Since a vibrant participatory democracy is expected to put the majority of the people in a position to influence policy, taking people as apolitical is counterproductive to the development of the masses in the light of intellect, morals and activity.

2.1.1.3 Participationist Democracy Theory

The current study is guided by the participationist democracy theory that emphasizes the popular participation of people in public life where the great masses of the people are regularly, actively and intimately involved in the making and implementation of public policies (Katz, 1997:67). This theory (developed in the work of Rousseau, Mill and Cole), proposes that participation produces popular control of the issue-agenda, decision-making and implementation (Wolfe, 1985:371). According to Rousseau (1973), participation yields popular control of the body politic because it involves each member in the equal sharing of benefits and burdens. Participation is fundamental to a just society because it involves every member in deciding his own best interest and because it links that interest to wider public interest. Not only is participation said to lead to control, it also has an educative effect that reinforces and sustains participation; a function which is crucial to the theory because participation itself transforms man's character by strengthening his psychological and practical capacity for political involvement (Wolfe, 1985:371). Unlike elitist and liberal theorists of democracy who focus primarily on the content of government decisions, participationist theorists focus instead on the consequences of the process by which decisions are reached. It attempts to maximize democracy as government of the people in the literal sense. Political participation enables citizens to voice their grievances through numerous channels and be heard by those in authority.

The channels, that are also the intended outcomes of civic education, include voting, writing letters to and demanding accountability from representatives, campaigning for a political party, signing a petition and joining a protest march.

Among several advantages of employing the participationist democratic theory is that the theorists aspire for the development of human potential, of a more complete human being and of a more humane society (Katz, 1997:68). In a participatory society, the development of each person's intellectual capacities is promoted because people would seek out information and have the opportunity and the incentive to test and improve their ideas, knowing that they ultimately would have to reach decisions and have to live with the consequences.

Participation is important also because in a society of functional and continuous associations based on every day activities and concerns, members would be able to scrutinize their representatives because they would have first hand knowledge of their representatives' activities (Pateman, 1970:35-42). However, as expressed by Mill (in Katz, 1997:69), "a political act, to be done only once in a few years and for which nothing in the daily habits of the citizen has prepared him, leaves his intellect and his moral dispositions very much as it found them". This clearly shows how relevant the current study is in the light of democracy consolidation with regard to frequent demand and supply for political accountability by the rural people and political representatives respectively. It also clearly shows the relevance of the lifetime learning model of civic education which advances that early attitudes and beliefs can be changed within a short time due to subsequent experiences (Rose and Mishler, 1994:434) in providing knowledge to the people in order to promote their intellectual capacities which would in turn enable them participate meaningfully during the inter-elections period. Although the variations in electoral turnout and party membership

batter the assumption of a ‘participatory man’ due to informal relations (Erdmann, 2004: 68-69), the theory in question still augurs well with the notion of participation by the masses in order to have politically active people who can demand accountability from elected political representatives like members of parliament even during periods between elections. It is particularly important if viewed against other forms of citizen participation as discussed below.

2.1.1.3.1 Forms of Citizen Participation

There are different forms of citizen participation. According to Langton (1978:34), citizen participation can be grouped into four broad categories namely citizen action, citizen involvement, electoral participation and obligatory participation. Citizen action denotes all actions initiated and controlled by the citizens for their own objectives, for example, lobbying and press statements. On the other hand, citizen involvement entails all actions initiated and controlled by the government *and political leaders* (added for purposes of this study) in order to obtain input in decision-making, for example, constitutional review meetings. Electoral participation is one initiated and controlled by government in line with the law to elect representatives and vote on issues. Obligatory participation encompasses all mandatory responsibilities and legal obligations of citizens in a country, for example, the paying of taxes and rates (Langton, 1978:16-34). For more information on some specific participatory acts falling under the broad categories, see Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: Menu of Participation Forms

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORMS			
Citizen Action	Citizen Involvement	Electoral Participation	Obligatory Participation
• Mass action • Lobbying • Taking petitions around for signing • Talking/writing to political officials about local problems • Meeting government officials about a public policy • Demanding accountability from elected officials • Initiating political and development ideas for action of elected officials • Boycotts • Sit-ins • Press statements	• Attending political rallies • Attending law review consultations • Participating in opinion polls • Holding a political office • Taking part in political discussions • Reading and listening to political materials • Attending political caucuses • Being an active party member • Campaigning for a party or politician • Radio phone-in programs	• Voter registrations • Being party monitors during voter registration and voting • Being a candidate • Voting	• Paying taxes and rates • Observing law and order

Personal compilation from various sources including Langton, 1978:16-34; Welch, 1975:556; Rogers et al, 1975:305-318; Marneffe, 1994:764; Katz, 1997:67; Wolfe, 1985:371; Patel et al, 2007; Divala, 2007:35 and Verba, 1967:55

Much as all participation forms are important in a participatory democracy, this study focuses on the citizen action category because it is premised on the understanding that the actions are initiated and controlled by the citizens themselves. This is in line with Verba's notion of political participation because the citizens' actions are intended to influence the decisions of those in decision-making positions (Verba, 1967:53). Thus political participation is instrumental to achieving or realizing the people's goals.

Worthy noting in the menu of political participation is the fact that citizen actions are a reflection of an empowered citizenry that is well informed about its rights and civic duties and is better organized to demand the supply of democracy from their elected officials and government agencies (Verba, 1967:61). The fact that people organize themselves in groups to pursue their goals anchors the belief that they can meaningfully elect a member of parliament or councilor who would be responsive to the societal needs of his/her constituents, just in line with the assumption that political participation is instrumental action towards achieving a particular objective (Scaff, 1975:455). This protects the rights of the weak in society because as appropriately put by Michels (1961:61), “Organization... is the weapon of the weak in their struggle with the strong.” Such constituents initiate ideas on what projects they need and demand accountability from their elected representatives on their political conduct in parliament or outside parliament with politicians of other parties. Although cooperative activity may mean that those who are better organized receive favors from the elected officials and may lead to neopatrimonialism, it also shows that there is strength in being organized. Thus civic education is then provided to sharpen people’s civic, leadership and organizational skills where they are lacking so that they view their good as human beings as being coextensive with the good of the human community (Pratte, 1988:304).

Although electoral participation is crucial for its import in ensuring that people choose their own leaders who would do their bidding, experience has shown that once MPs are elected, they do not fulfil the promises they made to their constituents but are viewed to be interested in their own welfare (Tsoka, 2002:17). Thus the kind of democracy being entrenched is elitist because they do what they want without consulting the constituents. But democracy is more than just casting one’s vote

(Verba, 1967:56). One needs to actively engage with the political process every time to ensure that the elite do not violate his/her democratic rights whether as individuals or groups. Therefore, inter-elections political participation helps to address such concerns and enables them to appreciate challenges facing their political representative. This embraces acts like writing letters to officials, demanding accountability from elected representatives, initiating political and development ideas and many other acts that do not border on elections.

2.1.1.3.2 Major Conceptual Dimensions of Political Participation

A brief examination of the history of political theory shows that the issue of political participation has been at the centre of politics as exemplified by Aristotle who wrote of a citizen as “one who has the right of sharing in deliberative or judicial office” (Aristotle, 1962). Aristotle’s view of political participation was therefore one of an affirmation of belongingness rather than an exercise of purely legal rights and obligations. His language shows that political participation has nothing to do with rule, power or a competitive struggle for an advantage. Rather, it should be understood as “the set of activities and relationships concerned with maintaining a consociational community characterized by a sharing of equality, law and justice among members” (Scaff, 1975:450).

Unlike Aristotle’s conception that views political participation as ‘interaction’, another conception views participation as ‘instrumental action.’ Participation as instrumental action is closely related to influence and power than to justice and community, for it stresses the idea of protecting one’s rights and advancing one’s interests within a competitive context (Scaff, 1975:455). In this context, politics is understood as a struggle over power resources and protection of private advantage and

that political participation becomes ‘instrumental’ to that end. These two broad conceptual dimensions of political participation are better depicted in Table 2. Though real life situations do not reflect absolute distinction of participation forms, this tabulation is still useful for depicting potential dimensions of the proposed conceptual distinctions.

Table 2: Major Conceptual Dimensions of Political Participation

	Participation as interaction	Participation as instrumental action
Language Definition	‘sharing’	“taking part”
Value Orientation	Reciprocity	Competition
Action Type	communicate among citizens	influence elites
Ends of Action	Justice	Power
Functions	Promote self-realization, political knowledge and political virtues	protect rights, maximize interests and insure “legitimacy”

Source: Scaff, 1975:455

Implicit in the conception of participation as instrumental action is the implication that participation functions to ensure that citizen interests are not overlooked by elites. Interactional participation is strongly affirmed in the process of communication among citizens and citizen groups, especially those organized around interests or issues that are general to the public. Public political communication open to the use and scrutiny of all is central in interactional participation (Dewey, 1927:152). On the other hand, instrumental participation borders on the premise that man is a rational being as articulated by Riker and Ordeshook (1973:46) who argue that “... participation is rational in the sense that it consists of the examination of alternative

actions and the selection of that alternative which yields the greatest expected utility.” Therefore, this helps in understanding that citizens participate essentially to present their private desires, demands and interests to government elites.

Riker and Ordeshook agree with Verba (1967:53) when he defines participation as those “acts that are intended to influence the behaviour of those empowered to make decisions.” The intention to influence decision makers implies that the influence has the potential of assisting in the realization of some good. But crucial in the discussion of participation are issues of *who* participates, about *what* and *how* (Lasswell in Verba, 1967:53) because they articulate insights into the participants, issues being contested and the channels being employed. Verba notes that though participation is often thought of as a means to some other end, it may be an end in itself because if decisions are always made for us, our self-esteem is battered and may decline (ibid: 57). Some examples of participation mentioned are voting, demonstrations, campaign activity, writing a petition to a member of parliament and many more.

Effective participation is one where group members have an adequate and equal opportunity to place questions on the agenda and to express their preferences about the final outcome during decision-making.¹ Clearly, this is instrumental participation and can occur directly or through legitimate representatives. One example of participation through legitimate representatives is via the decentralized participatory framework. In Malawi, the election of councillors in 2000 did not result in significant inter-election political participation because even on the development front, most communities did not contact their elected representatives when there were problems with the quality of services that the Assemblies provided (Mthinda and Khaila, 2006).

¹ United Nations Development Programme, ‘Governance for sustainable human development’, **Glossary of Key Terms**, available at <http://mirror.undp.org/magnet/policy/glossary.htm> accessed on 13th February, 2008

The participatory structures have been dormant in most areas since they were constituted and the main reason for this is that they were constituted without training on their roles (Chinsinga, 2008:24), clearly showing that there was no civic education on the same. The fact that local government elections were not conducted in 2005 up to date only helped to solidify lack of inter-elections political participation using the decentralized structures.

Participatory democracy also entails direct participation through demonstrations, press statements and campaigning for a party. On direct participation, several studies have demonstrated that organizational involvement influences political participation independent of any influences exerted by any background characteristics and political attitudes (Olsen, 1972; Alford and Scoble, 1968; Verba and Nie, 1972:199-200). These findings show that individuals who belong to associations are more likely to be politically active than non-members irrespective of factors such as socio-economic status and political attitudes. On the other hand, some studies have found the opposite. For example, personal characteristics (such as socio-economic status) and political attitudes have also been found to influence political participation (Lipset, 1963:196-207; Sallac et al, 1972:879; Thompson and Horton, 1960:190-195). These findings clearly show that socio-economic characteristics and political attitudes predispose persons to be politically active. To resolve this apparent disagreement between the two sets of findings, Rogers, Bultena and Barb (1975) carried out a research in which socio-economic factors and organizational involvement were manipulated to see how each variable independently influenced political participation. The findings reveal that both socio-economic and organizational factors have a strong effect on political participation (Rogers et al, 1975:316). Noteworthy though is the realization that the socio-economic perspective tends to emphasize class-oriented nature of politics and

suggests that the interests of different classes will not be represented with equal force in the decision making process. The organizational one de-emphasizes class-oriented politics and suggests that voluntary associations mobilize persons of both lower and upper classes with equal effect thereby increasing political equality among various social strata (ibid). This is why the current study recommends formation of voluntary associations to champion the people's cause and de-emphasize class-oriented politics. Whatever reasons one has for participation, what matters is that there is a political culture that encourages participation to influence policy by decision makers.

But the discussion above does not in any way mean that participatory democracy does not have its critics. Others may argue that participatory democracy is premised on the contexts of European and American democracies where the bulk of the people are affluent and generally more literate than their counterparts in Africa. For example, a report by a human rights body (HRCC, 1999: 54-68) in Malawi attributes people's failure to articulate human rights issues to high illiteracy rate. On the other hand, Englund (2003:194-196) attributes the Malawian scenario to human rights NGOs' and projects' lack of capacity to impart realistic messages on democracy as they are largely poorly trained. Therefore, the Malawian context where the majority of people still remember the experiences during Kamuzu Banda's era epitomizes their reluctance to embrace participatory democracy which tends to disregard hierarchical relationships in societies.

Some proponents of elitist democracy view some participatory acts like mass action as a niche for breeding totalitarianism because masses can, as in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*- which shows how Roman mobs are mobilized after speeches of Brutus and Anthony, be used by crafty politicians to upset the status quo (Seshadri, 1974:4). According to the critics, mass action is not democratic because it does not

accommodate the views of the elite in a give-and-take spirit but tends to upset the whole system. It also slows down industrialization as people demand more say. However, this study argues that the underlying assumption by the elitist democrats that people are like an amorphous mass without distinct social differences and interest in particular institutions is wrong. Masses comprise people of different classes and social distinctions with vested interests in varying institutions of the political system (Seshadri, 1974:5). They are therefore not idly available for perverse mobilization by the crafty dictators. After all, political participation by masses ensures dispersal of power among various interest groups that come to the bargaining table and evolve a consensus based on mutually complementary interests (Seshadri, 1974:5). In addition, mass action is effective in upsetting unpopular systems in order to establish one that benefits the majority.

Another criticism is that crowds are powerful at destroying and not creating a civilization (Le Bon, 1952) because they are hedonistic and only work when whipped. They should therefore not be given too much room to participate except in elections where the elite will be elected to spearhead civilization. Although this view has some leverage, the current study further argues that in spite of the fact that not all people participate, experience has shown that when crucial issues are thrown to the fore, participation of the masses always takes place (Seshadri, 1974:3). Furthermore, since elections are organized and controlled by the elite in the government (Langton, 1978:16), without adequate, active and meaningful engagement of the masses in inter-elections political participation, there is no guarantee that public policies made by such elites will benefit the majority of the public. What is crucial, therefore, is to provide information to the masses for effective political participation- hence effective civic education.

2.2 Democracy Consolidation

A number of authors have defined the concept of democracy consolidation. Linz and Stepan (1996:15) define a consolidated democracy as “a political regime in which democracy as a complex system of institutions, rules and patterned incentives and disincentives has become, in a phrase, ‘the only game in town.’” Although this definition appreciates the institutional complexity of the composition of a consolidated democracy, it does presuppose that there is a world-case of a perfectly consolidated democracy. This weakness is covered by the definition by John Higley and Richard Gunther (1992:3) who define a consolidated democracy as a regime that meets all the procedural criteria of democracy and in which all politically significant groups accept the established political institutions and adhere to the democratic rules of the game. The importance of this definition is that it depicts a consolidated democracy as an ideal that does not have a real-world case since every society has some groups that do not obey the democratic rules of the game and fully acknowledge the legitimacy of the political institutions and principles under which they live (Ayee, 1999:333). This implies that no society is perfect. Civic education can therefore be instituted in order to facilitate improvements.

There is need to operationalize Higley and Gunther’s definition for utility in this study. ‘Procedural criteria of democracy’ entails free and fair elections in an atmosphere of various freedoms including the freedom to form, join and contest in parties, and the freedom to mobilize people and form associations around an interest. ‘Politically significant groups’ are those whose activities may affect the political system. Examples are political parties, ethnic groups, and civil society organizations including *cultural associations*. ‘Political institutions’ include elections, electoral

commission, political parties, parliament, presidency and local government. 'Democratic rules of the game' entails subjecting governmental and nongovernmental forces, and habituating them to the resolution of conflicts within the bounds of specific laws, procedures and institutions sanctioned by the democratic process (Linz and Stepan, 1996:14-33).

However, in all human societies, there are informal institutions constituted by conventions, norms, values and accepted ways of doing things (Leftwich, 2006). These are imbedded in the traditional social practices and culture which can be binding. Leftwich emphasizes that institutions, whether formal or informal, are durable social rules and procedures which structure the social, economic and political relations, and the interactions of those affected by them. In addition, in relation to formal institutions, informal ones can be substitutive, competing, complementary or accommodating (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004:728). In this light, overemphasis on formal institutions risks missing much of what drives political behaviour and can hinder efforts to explain important political phenomena (Weyland, 2002:57-85). This underlies the importance of understanding cultural leadership, practices and associations like grave diggers (*adzukulu*), rites of passage (*chinamwali, kumeta*), funeral rites (*mwambo wa maliro*) and chieftaincy (*ufumu*). In fact, expert opinion survey in Malawi indicates that traditional leaders have both direct and indirect influence on elections at local level by influencing their subjects on who to vote for in elections (Patel et al:2007:72)

On the other hand, Beetham (1994: 160-161) considers a democracy consolidated when "it is capable of withstanding pressures or shocks without abandoning the electoral process or the political freedoms on which it depends, including those of dissent and opposition." This will require a depth of institutionalisation reaching

beyond the electoral process itself (Whitehead in Beetham, 1994:161). This conception of consolidated democracy does not just look at the longevity of democracy but also what it has been able to endure for the continuity of democratic culture. This conception agrees with one by Lamounier (1988:1) who contends that democratic consolidation is a “process through which democratic forms come to be valued in themselves even against adverse substantive outcomes.” Although these definitions have the strength in their belief in the predictability of the process but not the outcomes of electoral processes, they still have a weakness of presupposed possibility of a real-world case of a consolidated democracy.

This justifies why for purposes of this study, the definition promulgated by John Higley and Richard Gunther as articulated earlier on has been adopted. It creates room for political participation and civic education as important factors in democracy consolidation. This conveniently includes civil society groups, which have an impact on political landscape of any democratic polity.

All the conceptions discussed earlier emphasize on regular elections as the central feature of democracy consolidation, and indeed they are. However, studies have shown that in some countries, regular elections have not meant democracy consolidation. This has been the case with what Diamond (2002:23) calls ‘hybrid regimes’ which combine both authoritarian and democratic elements like regular elections and abuse of formal democratic rules. Diamond says that in hybrid regimes, voters do not exercise real power of choosing their representatives because there are repression of the opposition, weak competition and informal disenfranchisement of some sections of the society. In fact Carothers (2002) argues that some hybrid regimes are in a ‘gray zone’ because they are neither democratizing nor sliding back into authoritarianism. They are stuck in transition. Carothers further explains that feckless

pluralism and dominant power politics are inherent features of such regimes. Feckless pluralism has positive features like significant amounts of political freedom, regular elections and alternation of power. Problems are that participation doesn't extend beyond voting, political elites from all major party groupings are perceived as corrupt, self-interested and ineffective; alternation in power doesn't solve political problems and the state remains weak (Carothers, 2002:10). Dominant power politics characterize countries that have limited but real political space, one political grouping (party, president) dominating the system in such a way that there seems to be little prospect for alternation in power and there is misuse of state resources for party ends. There are dubious elections, citizens' disengagement from politics and opposition have low credibility (ibid: 11-13). Using Carothers' typology of hybrid regimes, it is easy to see that Malawi falls under feckless pluralism where participation does not go beyond voting, political elites from major parties are perceived as corrupt (Tsoka, 2002) and where alternation of power does not solve political problems.

2.3 Civic Education

Different authors have defined civic education in different ways. For instance, Boyer (1985:105) defines civic education as the "instilling of national loyalty or patriotism." The implication of this definition is that the instilling of any ideologies, doctrines and ideas in the name of nationhood constitutes civic education. The problems are that this does not spell out channels of instilling the national loyalty and it insinuates that education should result in a particular attitude and not necessarily in increased competence. McGrath (1983:58) defines civic education as the "civic understanding of rights and obligations as well as developing civic skills." Perhaps the major contribution of this definition is that it does not just uphold the

understanding of rights and obligations, but it extends to the development of civic skills. Pratte (1988:304) defines it as “developing virtuous citizens who have a deep-felt sense of public responsibility – who view their good as human beings as being coextensive with the good of the human community.” Much as the definition is broad in its scope by covering the community at large, it does not say what kind of regime (democratic or authoritarian) the public lives under.

A definition by Mwalubunju (2007:279) as “an interactive process which strives to stimulate and enlighten people on their entitlements in a democratic society on matters of Government and governance, and effective participation in civic and political life” is more useful to this study because it does not just emphasize the interactive nature of the process, but goes further to state the kind of society the process is expected to build. Its consideration of people’s participation in civic and political life goes a long way in its utility as far as this study is concerned.

Civic education is important for a number of reasons. First, it can be a “vehicle for a renewed democratic life of active, participatory citizenship fuelled by a vibrant virtuous civic culture” (Pratte, 1988:303). This means that civic education can be used to carry messages on democracy and citizenship that if internalized, can transform people into citizens not averse to public participation. This is believed to have the potential of having a lively citizenry full of virtue. In other words, civic education can contribute significantly to democracy consolidation. Secondly, studies have shown that civic education has impact on the individual’s level of engagement with the political system (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993; Verba, Schlozman and Brady, 1995). These studies found that active mobilization efforts by parties, secondary groups and social networks stimulate individual political behaviour. Another importance of civic education is that it empowers vulnerable groups in society so that they are able to

claim their rights and accept their responsibilities in order to influence Government policies (Mwalubunju, 2007:279). Such vulnerable groups in society can be women, people with disabilities or people with HIV or AIDS. In a participatory democracy, the more the vulnerable groups are empowered to defend their political and economic rights, the more a polity can be said to be consolidating its democracy. Yet another importance of civic education is that it moulds a “diverse, active and independent civil society that articulates the interests of citizens and holds Government accountable” (Carothers, 1999:87).

In Malawi, a study by Englund (2003:196) in which he wanted to assess whether civic education empowered the people at grassroots level, he noted that civic education programmes merely adopted the rhetoric of ‘community participation’ but in actual sense, they depicted the community itself as the source of its problems and the civic education providers failed to identify with the impoverished people they encountered during the field trips. Because of this, Englund argues, although the providers of civic education were, in private, critics of Malawi’s economic and political ills, they rarely translated this criticism into a genuine dialogue with the targets of their civic education. In the end, according to him, civic education disempowered the people. This thesis argues though that with the methodology² Englund used to determine whether civic education empowered the people, it is not logical to arrive at this conclusion. Without going back to the people sometime after the research to find out if the civic education messages were utilised or not, such a conclusion is hollow. This is why methodologically, this work finds out from the people what the civic education providers imparted on political participation and how

² Harri Englund (2003) collected data for his work *Does Civic Education Disempower? ‘A View from the Grassroots’* by accompanying officers from the National Initiative for Civic Education on several civic education trips. His analysis of the messages and the methods of imparting them (see page 198) led him to conclude that civic education disempowered the people.

the people used the message. The important thing that he notes is that civic education is carried out between elections as well (Englund, 2003:198) and this is crucial to the study because it makes it worthwhile to assess the messages that people get.

2.3.1 Models of Civic Education

This subsection will look at the traditional and lifetime learning models of civic education. The discussion will show why the lifetime learning model has been picked to guide the study in collaboration with the participationist theory of democracy.

2.3.1.1 Traditional Model of Civic Education

This is a model which states that change to democratic political culture should occur very slowly, primarily in response to structural factors such as economic modernization (Lipset, 1959), generational replacement and socializational processes (Almond and Verba, 1963; Inglehart, 1990; Dalton, 1994), or the long-term experience of citizens with rotations of power and a responsible opposition structure among the countries' political parties (Weil, 1993). Methodologically, there is no direct intervention to change political culture. Instead, improving the economy and social welfare of the people and replacing the old generation of leaders with the younger ones brings about democratic political culture. This means that one can expect to see signs of democratic political culture after a long time because a number of factors in the society have to change first. It is expected that as the economy develops, groups of old leaders are replaced by the younger generation socialized by the 'international culture' through new technologies and information. Thus when people get used to changes of the ruling elites helped by constructive opposition groups, then democracy will be consolidated.

Clearly, the traditional view is less attractive in this study because it is pessimistic especially about change of political attitudes in the short-run. It clearly shows that with this model, outcomes of civic education like inter-election political participation by the rural people would be entrenched after a long time. This means that actions like demonstrations, petitions to elected representatives, demanding accountability from members of parliament and initiating political and development agendas may be expected after a long time. A lot of resources are spent on the programs of civic education and sponsors of such projects would want to see results in the shortest possible time. Most developing countries would also want to enjoy fruits of a consolidated democracy not after a very long period of time of democratisation.

2.3.1.2 Lifetime Learning Model

The lifetime learning model was posited by Rose and Mishler (1994) and it stipulates that attitudes learned early in life are continuously updated as these “early attitudes and beliefs are reinforced or challenged by subsequent experiences” (Rose and Mishler, 1994:434). This view is very useful for this discussion because it potentially allows civic education as a short-term experiential effect on the individual’s overall orientation to democratic politics. In practice, the model purports political mobilization through secondary groups. People form associations around issues of group interest. Then democracy educators train these groups on participatory acts every time there is need for new information. Participatory teaching methods (see 1.4) are used frequently to change values, attitudes and perceptions that feed into political participation (Finkel, 2002:997-998). This is why the study investigates, among others, people’s perceptions, attitudes and values towards political

participation, elected political leaders and democracy educators (see Appendices 1,2 and 3).

Some studies have shown that immediate variables such as individual's perceptions of current economic conditions, assessment of governmental competence, and experiences with governmental authority can affect orientations such as support for democratic values, social and institutional trust, and political efficacy (Brehm and Rahn, 1997; Dalton, 1994; Evans and Whitefield, 1995). Recent political participation research provides even more optimism that civic education may have a significant impact specifically on the individual's level of engagement with the political system. Following Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) and Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) much work has emphasized clearly the role of active mobilization efforts by parties, secondary groups and social networks in stimulating individual political behaviour, with such effects being at least as important in democratising as in more democratic contexts (Booth and Richard, 1998; Bratton, 1999).

In its espousal of civic education, this research proposal has adopted the lifetime learning model particularly for its utility in showing the relevance of civic education in the business of changing political attitudes in a short time after doses of civic education 'treatment.' Another justification for adopting this model is that it fits nicely into the participationist democratic theory that aims at promoting the intellectual capacities of the people through provision of information and allowing them to test the ideas through participatory acts. Clearly, the testing of these ideas does not only have to happen in an election year but even when elections are not near. Therefore, community based organizations that ensure that elected political representatives are responsive to the wishes of the electorate all the time they are in office are necessary to have consolidation of democracy at the local level.

2.4 Effects of Civic Education on Political Participation

One of the aims of any society that adopts democracy as a system of government is to introduce and sustain a participant political culture, which is different from the old undemocratic system of government characterised by either a parochial or subject political culture. This entails inculcating a new set of values, attitudes and behaviours in line with participatory democracy by using the lifetime learning model of civic education. It is this fact that piles significance on the role of civic education on political participation as the discussion below shows.

Effects of civic education on political participation may happen in three forms namely *direct, indirect and conditional forms* (Finkel: 2002:997-998). Finkel explains that *direct effects* of civic education are those that happen due to exposure to both participatory appeals contained in the civic education curriculum and potentially powerful cues emanating from the behaviour of group leaders and other group members. On the other hand, *indirect effects* are experienced when civic education affects other aspects that subsequently affect political participation. For example, research has confirmed that the group-based civic education of voluntary associations powerfully affects orientations of trust, political efficacy and civic skills, which in turn affects political participation (Booth and Richard, 1998; Bratton, 1999; Pollack, 1982). *Conditional effects* of civic education on political participation are experienced due to differences of impacts of the group-based training arising from individuals' differences in specific civic education experiences, demographic or political characteristics. For example, it has been found that active group membership has greater political mobilization effects than passive group involvement (Leighly, 1996; Mc Adam and Paulsen, 1993; Pollack, 1982). Although the three types of effects

differ from one another in the way they impact on political participation, it is clear that there is an inherent belief that civic education influences participation.

Civic education is envisaged to greatly help in democracy consolidation by affecting political participation directly, indirectly or conditionally as articulated below. First, civic education transfers to the people a renewed democratic life of active and participatory citizenship (Pratte, 1988:303). This is done by inculcating new values, attitudes and information on democracy using participatory methods. The implication of this is that in line with the lifetime learning model of civic education, the new knowledge acquired changes the political orientation of the people (Rose and Mishler, 1994:434). Thus the changed mindset of the people predisposes them to participate in public and political life, as they will understand this as their duty.

Secondly, active civic education methods often result in increased level of political participation since people's level of engagement with the political system is also elevated. For example, it was found that if civic education providers used active mobilization methods, individual political behaviour was also stimulated (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993; Verba, Scholzman and Brady, 1995). The implication of this is that when passive methods are used to deliver civic education, people's level of engagement with the political system is low as they are generally passive too. This implication is important as it calls for participatory methods of civic education like role-playing and drama. The point here is that people often replicate what they experience as it is what they are familiar with.

In addition to the above, the frequency of the civic education 'treatment' affects the likelihood of people remembering what they learned and putting it in action. As argued by Mill (in Katz, 1997:69), "a political act, to be done only once in a few years and for which nothing in the daily habits of the citizen has prepared him, leaves his

intellect and moral dispositions very much as it found them”. This means that not only must civic education be frequent, the opportunities to put the knowledge to practical use must be frequent as well. Thus people must not be civic-educated during election periods only, but also during the inter-elections period. In the same vein, they must express themselves during the inter-elections period like demanding accountability from political representatives and initiating ideas to be put on the development and political agenda.

Another effect of civic education on political participation is that it develops the intellectual capacities of the people thereby causing them to seek out information and have opportunities and the incentive to test and improve their ideas (Katz, 1997:68). This is true because they ultimately would have to reach decisions and live with the consequences. In a society where a lot of people seek out information and opportunities to test their political and developmental ideas, civic education becomes one channel of conveying such information while elected political representatives become the means of testing such ideas. This interaction happens as the people who are informed strive to influence the political and developmental agenda of their elected representative, knowing that they have a duty to determine and pursue development and political goals that they need.

The fifth effect of civic education on political participation is that it can provide the people with messages relevant to the kind of political life they want to live and the kind of polity they want to have. For example, if political participation is defined in terms of mainly taking part in the electoral processes in order to choose leaders, one should expect to have an elitist democracy because people’s participation will be reduced (Gibson and Duch, 1991:192) as it will only be confined to the election period. On the other hand, if messages put more emphasis on participation as people’s

engagement with the political system in the planning, decision-making and implementation stages of the plans to achieve the intended good, citizens will then embrace collective responsibility for failures and achievements of their societies as they attain participatory democracy (Wolf, 1949: 130). This is true because most of the people will have taken part in all the stages of the developmental and political agenda. Since these plans are made and implemented all the time regardless of the electoral calendar, it means that civic education should carry messages that clearly articulate why and how people should engage with the political system during the inter-elections period and the election period as well in order to entrench a participant political culture.

2.5 Conclusion

The chapter has reviewed available literature in order to show gaps that this research work set out to fill. It has therefore discussed literature on democracy consolidation, political participation and civic education. In order to provide the context in which the study is couched, the chapter has laid out the theoretical framework. In this regard, effects of civic education on political participation have been explored and some selected theories of democracy and civic education have been discussed to show why the participationist democracy theory and the lifetime learning model of civic education guide the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a systematic description of the research design, methods and procedures followed in order to address the problem identified by the study. It shows that the research is qualitative because the researcher has striven to understand meanings, beliefs, and experiences of people (Wisker, 2001:137) with civic education, inter-elections political participation and the ongoing process of democracy consolidation in Malawi. The research is designed to trace the process of civic education from civic education providers to beneficiaries of civic education. Qualitative research design, just like quantitative design, is good for studying and analysing a situation in depth in order to collect detailed data.

3.1 Units of Analysis

The major focus of this study is *civic education* because it is the major channel for the impartation of democratic messages from civic education providers to the people. In this regard, the study analyzes the *messages* of democracy (content) as taught by the democracy educators and as internalized by the people in the rural villages. This includes sources of their information too. Also, the *methods* employed for teaching democracy are analyzed, including materials and facilities used to convey democratic messages. Under methodology, the frequency of the civic education is also examined as it has an impact on retention of messages (Katz, 1997:67).

Since rural communities are the major targets of civic education in Malawi owing to high population figures and lower literacy levels than in urban areas (GOM, 2008),

the study has regarded *rural villagers* as a unit of analysis. This is guided by the participationist democracy theory which emphasizes the popular participation of people in public life. Thus the study takes interest in the people's recounting of participatory acts in order to assess whether such acts were as a result of the civic education received (i.e. outcomes of civic education).

Another unit of analysis comprises *civic education providers*. These are community based organizations (CBOs), NGOs, and NICE. They have been identified as a unit of analysis because they are presumed to be the sources of the messages on democracy consolidation. This choice of unit of analysis has been guided by the lifetime learning model of civic education that provides for deliberate interventions in people's way of life (Mishler, 1994:434). Therefore, civic education is conducted by these democracy educators to instil and entrench a participant political culture. Again, this model is accommodated by the participationist democratic theory that advocates the development of people's intellectual capacity through civic education (Katz, 1997:68).

The last unit of analysis is *the chiefs or village headmen* (used interchangeably in this study) because these act as gatekeepers (i.e. they have the authority and power to grant or withhold permission for NGOs to carry out their activities in their areas).

3.2 Sampling and Data Collection Methods

The sampling of rural communities was determined by considering the four Traditional Authorities that Dedza District has (GOM, 2008:24). Two were *purposively sampled* to ensure representativeness to the population of Dedza District. In this light, TA Kamenya Gwaza was chosen because civic education on political participation was conducted since the onset of democracy in 1994. On the other hand,

TA Kasumbu was identified because there was no civic education on the same. This was designed in order to determine if availability or absence of inter-elections political participation could be attributed to messages and activities of civic education providers. Dedza was chosen because of its proximity to where the researcher resides as one way of reducing costs. This approach directed the researcher to purportedly information-rich areas in accordance with the objectives of the study. However, the actual four villages to be visited were *randomly* picked by writing names of the villages from each of the two traditional areas separately on small papers and putting them in a bag and getting two without looking. The rationale for this procedure was to ensure credibility of the findings.

3.2.1 Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussion (FGD) is a discussion that puts together 6-12 people from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest to the researcher and this discussion is guided by a moderator who introduces topics for discussion and helps the group to participate in a lively and natural discussion among themselves (Kadzandira, 2007:8). Factors like gender, age and socioeconomic status are also used to differentiate participants in FGDs. Focus Group Discussions were important in this study because they helped in the joint construction of meaning by participants especially when participants crosschecked each other. They became necessary in this study because “the wellspring of politics flows from the attitudes and behaviours of the ordinary citizen” (Dalton, 2000:912). Thus this method is ideal for capturing local communities’ political attitudes, experiences, perceptions, behaviors and nonverbal reactions too.

Although the FGD method can be a good way to capture the responses of a small group of people, it has its own problems. First, just like any other social group, it can easily dissolve into social discussion and go off the point (Wisker, 2001:176). Some participants can also just mimic what other good speakers have said instead of speaking their true mind. This means that the researcher or group moderator has to be skilled at managing group dynamics so that unwanted behaviors can craftily be discouraged and wanted behaviors encouraged without directly offending the participants (Kadzandira, 2007:8-27). Thus setting of group rules before the discussions begin is important. The second challenge with the method is that it is expensive especially with regard to acquisition of recording equipment, transportation and accommodation of research personnel. Thirdly, it is highly involving because the researcher needs to train research assistants, seek discussion venues, and synthesize data from various FGDS to have true opinion of people's behaviour in a particular area. In spite of these challenges, the current study minimized the problems by using research assistants who were experienced, borrowing recording equipment from friends, reducing the focus of the study to one district and employing people resident in the study sites for purposes of contacting and organizing FGD participants.

Participants in FGDs were identified through systematic random sampling in order to enhance credibility of the findings. These were identified through sampling of households each of which contributed a participant. Thus in each village, when sampling boys and girls, men or women, the first house was randomly identified but the rest were identified by picking the third house from the previous one using a fixed interval. In total, there were twelve focus groups separately comprising men, women and youth of over sixteen years of age. The rationale for the separations was to allow

free participation. Each group comprised ten people, totalling up to one hundred and twenty participants.

During the discussions, the moderator made sure that every participant contributed by mentioning his or her name when a question was asked. Discussion points were crafted to obtain collective information on how and what the people learnt on political participation. The moderator presented the question to be discussed at a time and every discussant contributed to the proceedings. Then the next question and so on. Also, what they did with the knowledge was discussed. The discussions also generated information on whether the people belonged to associations where they would be expected to collectively express themselves and politically participate in the entrenchment of democratic culture. FGDs also brought out sources of information (civic education providers) on political participation in a democratic dispensation. Proceedings of FGDs were recorded on tape and later transcribed for analysis.

3.2.2 Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews were also carried out in order to collect data. Chiefs, CSO or Civic Education Officers of NGOs and the District Civic Education Officer for NICE were interviewed. Chiefs provided information on which civic education providers were operating in their villages. They also recounted their experiences on political participation. Representatives of CSOs and NICE were interviewed to find out methods of learning employed and what challenges they encountered. Identification of the interviewees was purposive in order to get rich information in

accordance with the objectives of the study. For details of the questions in the interview and FGD guides, see Appendices 1, 2 and 3.

3.2.3 Secondary Data

Secondary data sources were sought to get information from the NGOs like Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) and Malawi CARER, Young Politicians Union (YPU) and National Initiative for Civic Education. Reports and manuals of civic education by NGOs and NICE were sought to solicit data. Relevant information in this regard was the nature of messages on democracy consolidation, the methods of teaching employed and challenges faced.

3.3 Data Analysis

The data analysis techniques used in the research are qualitative in nature. The data were analysed manually to determine the messages on political participation imparted during civic education and ascertain if such messages had elements of inter-election political participation. The methods, outcomes, and lessons drawn from civic education have largely been determined through the perceptions, attitudes and experiences of the villagers during focus group discussions. In-depth interviews of providers of civic education helped in establishing a link with political behaviour of the villagers as a way of analysing the process of civic education. In order to achieve the above, the data were rigorously subjected to content, process and cultural analyses.

3.3.1 Content Analysis

To fully understand the information gathered, the researcher employed *content analysis* technique whereby efforts were made to recognize any patterns that were emerging and subsequently helped in making informed conclusions. This is basically a method that allows the researcher to derive meaning from seemingly random information by recognizing certain patterns in the recurrence of words or themes (Read and Marsh, 2002:235). For example, if people in various FGDs said that they were taught by CSOs to go and register and vote, the meaning is that the people were only taught about electoral participation. Thus data from the FGDs, secondary sources and interviews were analysed to recognize the patterns of words and themes.

3.3.2 Process Tracing

Process tracing technique was also used to analyse the dynamics or processes of message dissemination from the YPU, CCJP, Malawi CARER and NICE to the local people. Also known as *implementation evaluation*, process analysis technique aims at evaluating whether a policy or program has been implemented as designed (Mouton, 2001:158). In the study, this helped to assess whether the processes leading to them affected the outcomes of civic education. For an appreciation of the content, strategies, methods and the process of civic education programs mounted by NICE and CSOs, see 3.2.

3.3.3 Cultural Analysis

The researcher also used *cultural analysis* to understand habits rooted in cultural norms. Cultural analysis involves taking an inventory of words and defining key phrases, terms and practices that are special to the people in the setting of the study. This is germane because behaviour and wording are culturally inflected (Wisker, 2001:166). For example, in the Chewa culture where the study was done, refusal to speak against their Member of Parliament during focus group discussions was reminiscent of their cultural orientation which labels those who publicly speak against elders as ‘uncultured’.

3.4 Limitations of the Study

This being a qualitative research, much of the meaning of the data has depended on interpretation by the researcher’s understanding. Since he was more or less a key instrument in the research, his limitations are likely to manifest in the analysis of data. This is particularly true because qualitative researchers believe that “all research is essentially biased by each researcher’s individual perceptions” (Krauss, 2005:760). However, the research has endeavoured to attach meaning to the data patterns basing on reasonable interpretation backed in some respects by theoretical underpinnings. Triangulation of data from interviews, focus group discussions and secondary data has also been employed to strengthen the credibility of the findings. This has been done by analysing messages, methods and tools used, and civic education outcomes from the data collection methods.

Another limitation is that the study has only covered four villages due to scarcity of resources. This limitation, though, has been significantly minimized by identification of information-rich cases so as to increase the credibility of the samples.

As the data were collected in MCP strongholds, it could be that other areas in Malawi with more party competition could display different findings on civic education outcomes. Therefore, for national generalization of the findings, there is need to carry out a national survey.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the research design, methods and procedures use by the researcher to collect data for aimed at meeting the objectives of the study. Limitations of the study have also been acknowledged.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSES

4.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes research findings of the study through triangulation of data from the focus group discussions, in-depth interviews of chiefs, NGOs and National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE), and secondary data from the NGOs and NICE. This is accomplished by presenting a brief background to the communities under study, the CSOs that are present in the communities under study, the CSOs' activities as regards civic education on political participation, outcomes or effects of civic education and lastly lessons drawn from the civic education experience of the people. The findings affirm the hypothesis that civic education has not resulted in effective inter-elections political participation. However, they disprove the hypothesis that methods of learning employed did not have any effect on political participation.

4.1 Brief Background to the Communities under Study

The study takes place in the four villages of Tandalale, Mamadi, Kantande and Chilibuno under the Traditional Authorities Kasumbu and Kamenya – Gwaza in Dedza District. While TA Kasumbu is near Dedza Town, TA Kamenya – Gwaza is along the main road to the south of Dedza Boma eclipsing Bembeke Trading Centre. TA Kasumbu has a population of 71, 128 people. On the other hand, TA Kamenya – Gwaza has a population of 28, 237 people (GOM, 2008: 3 and 24). The areas under

study are dominated by people of Chewa culture although there are traces of the Yao tribe and other ethnic groups especially around trading centres. The Chewa culture is dominated by the masquerade dance which is a traditional practice used to inculcate norms, provide entertainment and signify cultural dignity during funerals. The major religion is Christianity followed by Islam. The major occupation of the communities is farming, comprising crop production and animal husbandry followed by small scale trading.

Politically, the communities under study have been under the stewardship of one Member of Parliament and Malawi Congress Party since 1961, a party that resisted change to democracy in 1994 but lost. Even when Ward Councilors were in place (before the year 2000), all the Councilors belonged to Malawi Congress Party. Although other parties like United Democratic Front, National Democratic Alliance, Alliance for Democracy and some independents contested in the parliamentary elections, the MCP has always emerged the winner. During the period covered by the study (1994 to 2008), the Member of Parliament for the areas under study has been Leader of Opposition in Parliament. Although he has contested in presidential elections a number of times, he has not emerged winner.

4.2 Brief Overview of CSOs Present

The study sites have had a number of civil society organizations operating in them in good governance and democracy. These are Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP), Malawi Centre for Advice, Research and Education on Rights (Malawi CARER), National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) and Young Politicians Union (YPU). A brief background of each organization is given below.

4.2.1 Malawi CARER

The Malawi Centre for Advice, Research and Education on Rights (Malawi CARER) was formed in 1995 by a human rights activist after release from her twelve year imprisonment by the former Government of Malawi with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The major aim of Malawi CARER is to increase knowledge about rights in the Malawi Constitution and improve access to justice. In this regard, the organization tackles labour issues, women's rights that mainly deal with matters of property grabbing by way of teaching people their constitutional rights and mediating in disputes. In terms of governance, CARER strategically teaches people about political participation when elections are a year ahead. The NGO takes a rights-based approach where by people are taught that participating in elections is the people's opportunity to put in office representatives of their choice. In this vein, women are particularly encouraged to contest in elections apart from voting. To accomplish its objectives, Malawi CARER distributes booklets, stages drama in communities, and disseminates information through the lecture method.

Structurally, the organization has at its District Head Office a Paralegal Officer who is responsible for civic education and handling cases of rights abuse at District level. In communities, there are trained volunteers known as community-based educators (CBEs) who provide free legal advice. This strategy is intended to prevent disputes by teaching about the law in informal conversations. At the village level, Malawi CARER teaches chiefs the constitution and human rights so that they are able to handle disputes in accordance with the constitution. The role of the people is to report matters of rights abuse to the CBEs for mediation and seek advice on citizens' rights.

4.2.2 Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace

The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) is a faith-based NGO established in 1992 but officially launched in 1998. In addition to dealing with issues of HIV and AIDS and sustainable environment, the major objective of CCJP is to promote social justice leading to a greater awareness of human rights and consequent duties. In this light, it helps people to form a critical conscience that empowers them to challenge and overcome unjust situations. When elections are near, it carries out advocacy work in effective governance and participation and civic education at grassroots level. Methods like distribution of leaflets and T-shirts, lecturing and drama are used to impart information. Thus CCJP's vision is to realize a Malawian society in which human rights, rule of law, good governance, principles and values of democracy are observed based on the gospel and fundamental teachings of the Catholic Church.

The CCJP structure has a Bishop at the diocesan head as the legal holder of the organization. Below him is the Executive Committee of Commissioners which is the advisory body of the Commission and the overseer of the implementation of all projects and activities. Reporting to the Executive Committee of Commissioners is the Secretariat headed by the Coordinator whose major function is to develop strategic plans and coordinate resources aimed at achieving the Commission's objectives. At the community level but based in the Catholic Church structure are Animators whose major role is providing capacity building to community based educators (CBEs) and handling cases in partnership with traditional leaders. Animators also report cases of human rights violations to the Secretariat. On the other hand, CBEs – who are volunteers from different faiths and aspects of the society – are involved with raising human rights awareness in their communities.

4.2.3 National Initiative for Civic Education

The National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) is a Government of Malawi project funded by the European Union (EU). It was officially launched on 6th February 1999, just prior to the country's second multiparty general elections. As its objective, NICE aims at strengthening the democratic process and increasing good governance in Malawi by providing civic education on a permanent basis. This permanent character was particularly stressed because the perceptions of most Malawians concerning leadership were believed to be based on the parochial culture entrenched during the one party era, hence requiring a longer-term intervention to instil levels of knowledge, attitude and behaviour required for a proper functioning of a democratic system of government. Citizenship education is divided into the pre-election stage that covers voter education, and the post-election stage that covers development issues (See 1.4). NICE employs methods like lecturing, training workshops, public debates, rallies, drama and distribution of booklets to disseminate information.

The organization structure of NICE at District level has the District Civic Education Officer as the head. Parallel to him is the District Advisory Forum, a body comprising various stakeholders at District level like the Police, religious leaders, human rights bodies, business persons and many more. Below the District Civic Education Officer is the Area Civic Education Coordinator who is based at the constituency level. Reporting to the Area Civic Education Coordinator is the Zone Coordinator who handles civic education matters at Ward level. At the village level are Para-civic Educators who carry out civic education on democracy and other subjects as directed by the Zone Coordinator. The people's role is to report to the Para-civic educators any issues of public concern.

4.2.4 Young Politicians Union

The Young Politicians Union (YPU) is an association of young people who came together to discuss political matters regarding how the youths aged between thirteen and twenty can positively contribute to the political development of their areas as one way of consolidating democracy. The association was started in 2008 by NICE after observing that the youths had been engaging in violent acts during political campaign rallies. It was therefore decided that civic-educating the youths on matters of coexistence among people of different political affiliations would promote violence-free political rallies. YPU uses drama and lecturing methods of civic education and poems, dances and songs are the tools used to emphasize the messages.

To achieve the goal of political coexistence, the association is made up of youths of all political parties like United Democratic Front, Democratic Progressive Party, Malawi Congress Party and other parties. It mainly operates when elections are near. The YPU operates at Constituency level with input from NICE regarding issues to conduct civic education on and how to do it.

4.3 Civic Education as conducted by CSOs

This subsection looks at activities of civic education providers which constitute the independent variable of the study. In this regard and in accordance with objectives of the study, it discusses the kind of messages on political participation that the rural people internalized from the civic education providers and the methods of learning that were utilized to impart the messages to the people. To logically ascertain the kind of messages imparted during civic education, the study examines people's perceptions of political participation and how civic education providers define political participation.

4.3.1 People's Perceptions of Political Participation

An effective democracy requires an informed and virtuous citizenry (Pratte, 1988: 303). This means that the kind of information that the people internalise is crucial, as it determines whether the citizens will be virtuous or not. Since a participationist democratic society should emphasize the popular participation of people in public life where the great masses of the people are regularly, actively, and intimately involved in the making and implementation of public policies (Katz, 1997:67), one would expect the civic education providers to equally emphasize messages that politically empower people to be intimately and regularly active in their pursuit of goals. Such messages would have to ensure that people have the control of what goes on the political and developmental agenda of their member of parliament or councillor (in the case of local governance) and adequate opportunity to express their preferences about the final outcome during decision-making regardless of whether elections are around the corner or not. This would be achieved if people were made to understand political participation as instrumental action aimed at letting them realize their political and developmental goals. In this vein, expected participatory acts in the inter-elections period are among others, petitions to the elected representatives or government, peaceful demonstrations, press releases, demanding accountability from elected political representatives and initiating political and development agendas for them.

This study found that people perceived political participation as taking part in the electoral process through party membership and in development projects without considerations of party affiliation. Table 3 below clearly shows that except women in Tandalale and Mamadi villages who internalised political participation in terms of development only, people generally understood political participation as being

involved in voter registration, contesting in elections, voting, accepting results and doing development work without considering the party one belongs to.

Table 3: People's Perceptions of Political Participation at TA Kasumbu

TA Kasumbu				
	Mamadi Village	<i>Information Sources</i>	Tandalale Village	<i>Information Sources</i>
Boys and Girls	1. Taking part in party affairs 2. Taking part in development work 3. Choosing political leaders	Radios, School, peers	1. Doing development work led by the ruling party 2. Identifying a leader 3. Serving a political party	Social studies in school, Radios, friends, posters
Women	1. People staying together amicably 2. Doing development work together	Ancestors	1. Working together without bickering 2. Cooperation during development work	Parents
Men	1. Cooperating with the chief on development and culture 2. Attending political party rallies 3. Doing what the chief says without any misgivings	Parents, radios, political parties	1. Being attentive to what the chief says 2. Doing community works without party consideration. 3. Following the ruling party without questioning	Radio, Chief, president's rally

(Summary of people's understanding of political participation from focus group discussions)

Table 3 and Table 4 are basically catalogues of people's perceptions of political participation in the four villages under the two Traditional Authorities Kasumbu and Kamenya Gwaza respectively. They show sources of their cognition of what political participation means.

Table 4: People's Perceptions of Political Participation at TA Kamenya Gwaza

TA Kamenya Gwaza				
	Kantande Village	<i>Information Sources</i>	Chilibuno Village	<i>Information Sources</i>
Boys and Girls	1. Belongingness to a party 2. Taking part in development matters 3. Attending political rallies 4. Taking part in group activities 5. Voting	Radios, NICE, Party rallies, YPU, CCJP, chief	1. Taking part in group activities 2. Taking part in development projects 3. Voting 4. Attending party activities	NICE, Party rallies, Youth Club, Catholic Church, chief
Women	1. Doing anything commanded by the chief 2. Joining other women in assisting the sick 3. Doing development projects together	Radios, Party rallies, friends	1. Respecting the chief by cooperating with him on development projects 2. Taking part in what other women are doing 3. Doing development work together	Rallies by different parties, radios, acquaintances
Men	1. Taking part in development work 2. Attending political rallies 3. Attending development meetings 4. Contesting and voting in elections 5. Cooperating with government on development	NICE, Public Affairs Committee, CCJP, Malawi CARER	1. Patronizing political rallies 2. Taking part in development work 3. Voting 4. Abiding by laws of Malawi. 5. Supporting a political party	Malawi Carer, NICE, CCJP, Public Affairs Committee

(Summary of people's understanding of political participation from focus group discussions)

Whilst people from TA Kasumbu on Table 3 never had civic education and only knew the meaning of political participation through radios, schools, peers, parents and political parties, those from TA Kamenya Gwaza on Table 4 had civic education by NICE, YPU, CCJP, PAC and Malawi CARER in addition to the other sources mentioned earlier.

Their perceptions of political participation differ. As shown by Table 3, some people at TA Kasumbu perceive political participation as following the ruling party without questioning. This finding shows the resilience of the passive political culture from the one party era. Furthermore, at TA Kasumbu where all participants said they

had attended no civic education, most men and women diverted the discussions to matters to do with distribution of free gifts like party clothes and sugar from charitable organizations when asked what they knew about political participation. Others complained that they were not participating in politics because their friends did not distribute fairly the gifts given by Red Cross. Thus their participation in political matters was conditional on receiving gifts. This attitude probably hinges on patrimonial tendencies entrenched during the period Bakili Muluzi was Malawi's president. On the other hand, most people from TA Kamenya Gwaza perceive participation as forming groups to advance their cause, see Table 4. Perhaps this can be attributed to the civic education efforts of the NGOs that led to the formation of Young Politicians Union established to curb electoral violence. In spite of these differences, the findings reveal that in both places, people perceive political participation as cooperating with the chief on matters of culture and development without party considerations during the inter-elections periods. These matters of 'culture' cited by people in both areas comprise an array of traditional associations and practices. The people mentioned burial groups (*adzukulu*), initiation rites (*kumeta*), funerals, clearing graveyards, and weddings. These informal institutions are autonomous and are sustained through obedience and loyalty to the traditional leaders since disobedience attracts punishment. The political significance of these traditional practices is that they may act as arenas for the discussion of political ideas, articulation of values on politics, circulation of alternative views and expression of dissent. Their presence may signal an active civil society founded, to some extent, on mistrust of the state. On the other hand, their resilience epitomizes the conflict between informal and formal rules of the political game.

In addition, during the FGDs, the researcher expected vibrant participation by participants owing to the fact that people attended civic education sessions even in the inter-elections periods (Englund, 2003:198). Although every participant was asked to contribute to the proceedings, some simply mimicked those they considered to be more knowledgeable than them. For example, when asked whether they considered their village politically active, most would quite easily say ‘yes’ but fail to explain what constituted political activity until someone mentioned an activity like voting or attending party rallies and they would all agree with him or her. However, the people understand that during the electoral periods, it is their duty to choose political leaders by registering, voting and accepting results. In their understanding, the inter-elections period is for development and the election period is for political participation.

These findings anchor the argument that the messages provided by institutions of the civil society help in the entrenchment of feckless pluralism since political participation does not go beyond voting (Carothers, 2002:10). Critical analysis shows that the messages mainly aim at making the people easy to govern and not empowered to meaningfully and actively engage in the political processes in the inter-elections periods.

4.3.2 Political Participation Messages Imparted by Civic Education Providers

The study further found that various civic education providers imparted different messages on political participation to the people. As clearly shown by Table 5 below, the definitions of political participation vary in terms of focus. Apart from CCJP, which was unable to offer a definition of ‘political participation’, the rest understand the term in accordance with their orientations. For example, Malawi Carer takes a human rights approach to political participation. As far as they are concerned,

democracy would be deemed consolidated if no elements of discrimination based on gender, race, creed, status and religion are used to determine who takes part in political affairs. In practical terms, they teach people to demand development through

TABLE 5: Definitions of Political Participation by CSOs and NICE

	CATHOLIC COMMISSION FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE	MALAWI CARER	YOUNG POLITICIANS' UNION	NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR CIVIC EDUCATION
Definition of political participation	-	Society taking part in political issues regardless of gender, race, status, creed and religion	Teaching young people how to take part in voting	Taking part in public life whereby the public must contribute to whatever concerns them

their Member of Parliament and Councillor as espoused by the constitution of Malawi through the right to development³. This paper argues that a legalistic approach is narrow because it fosters one to view the self and other merely in terms of what is publicly constituted. This is so because it is always wrapped up in formal and abstract distinctions and characterization (Divala, 2007:41). On the other hand, Young Politicians Union (an association which was formed by NICE and started in February, 2008) only focuses on the electoral process in empowering the youths with electoral information consistent with the new democratic dispensation where a number of political parties and independents contest in elections. The main drive is to foster a harmonious and tolerant political atmosphere for the operations of different political parties and views. Although the conceptualization of political participation by these organizations depicts an instrumentalist approach (see Table 2), the purpose of the

³ Report on Civic Education conducted on 18/09/2006 by Malawi Carer office in Dedza. The purpose of the exercise was to deepen awareness amongst the communities on good governance in democracy which ought to start at the local level through the Village Development Committee

civic education by YPU conforms to the dimension that views political participation as interaction for their motives are peaceful coexistence, justice and information among members (Scaff, 1975:455). The definition by NICE shows the scope of issues that they cover concerning the public life. They conduct civic education on various issues of HIV/AIDS, human rights, development, democracy and many more.

Though the definitions exude the belief in the civic duty of the people, they fall short of explicitly linking participation to the need to influence and control the political and developmental agenda of elected representatives and the implementation of the outcomes of the decision-making process (Verba, 1967:53). Thus these civic education providers do not place much emphasis on imparting messages on political participation as instrumental action towards achievement of their societal goals. They rather view political participation as interaction comprising a “set of activities and relationships concerned with maintaining a consociational community characterised by sharing of equality, law and justice among members” (Scaff, 1975:450). But apart from ‘taking part’ in public or political matters affecting them, the people need to also ‘initiate’ such issues and follow them through to their finalisation. This means imparting messages that go beyond voting but towards giving the people the capacity to actively form and sustain local organizations or associations through which the local people can express themselves on matters of politics and development. Thus the people must be able to make demands to their elected officials and government to provide their community needs and be able to bring such officials to account for their actions.

The study also found that the messages of civic education providers emphasize on the formal way of participating politically through the established local government structures and the Member of Parliament. The problem with this approach is that it

heavily relies on the full constitution of the District Assembly and that the MP regularly consults and meets with his/her constituents. But given the fact that local government elections have not been conducted since the year 2000, the District Assembly is not fully constituted. Although one can argue that Village Development Committees are there to ensure participation at the local level, this study found that the VDCs rarely meet and that political issues are never discussed there. VDCs are perceived as development forums and not political ones.

Although Sen (1999: 4) argues that democratic freedom and development are intrinsically connected, in a society that has been under a dictatorship for three decades, people tend to suppress their political feelings during the development forums. The absence of a political representative at the local level denies the people the opportunity to advance political ideas. In addition to this, the study has established that the MP of the constituency does not frequently hold rallies to consult the people on various political and developmental issues. This scenario clearly shows that messages on political participation have to emphasize on formation of independent organizations or associations at the local level through which people can express themselves in many ways like writing petitions, demanding accountability from the elected representatives, demonstration marches and press statements. The understanding here is that people should still have the capacity to organize and express themselves to get what they need whether the District Assembly structures and party machinery are functional or not. This development would breed a virtuous and participant political culture (which is the hallmark of a consolidated democracy) because early attitudes and beliefs would be changed (Rose and Mishler, 1994:434) as people's intellectual capacities improve to enable them engage in the inter-elections political participation.

These findings agree with the assertion by Divala (2007: 32-44) that the teaching of democracy in Malawi is premised on representative and constitutional democracy and not on participatory and deliberative democracy because it only dwells on the basics of a democratic society. Messages on democracy taught tend to lean towards elite representative democracy because their emphasis on the people's involvement in the electoral process place them in a position whereby the elite use their votes merely as a means to achieving power and political resources. It is messages on democracy that emphasize on active participatory and deliberative processes that can breed a society of people with public virtue.

4.3.3 Civic Education Methods used by Civic Education Providers

Pratte (1988:303) asserts that an effective democracy requires an informed and virtuous citizenry. He further posits that civic education can be a vehicle for a renewed democratic life of active, participatory citizenship fuelled by a vibrant, virtuous civic culture. This vehicle can deliver if civic education is conducted frequently using active and participatory methodologies like role-playing, dramatization and group problem-solving (Finkel, 2002:1017). He further found that political participation increased significantly if people belonged to other participatory secondary groups.

This study found that the methods used were largely ineffective for inter-elections political participation. As shown by Table 6 below, although some participatory methods were used like drama, public debates, training workshops and question-answer – most of which were used by NICE, the rest were predominantly methods that required the people to listen to the message and not necessarily participate in the process. Further to this, the drama method was mostly applied to exemplify the

registration and voting processes and not inter-elections political participatory activities like demonstration marches, press statements, petitions, demanding accountability from the elected representatives and initiating political ideas. Although civic education providers recognized the importance of political accountability by elected representatives and their failure to consult their constituents, they failed to translate this knowledge into meaningful strategies that could enable people to express themselves. Instead, they simply advised the people to use the power of their vote during elections by voting for a person who would deliver what they wanted.

As propounded by Mill (in Katz, 1997:69), if a political act is done only once in a few years and for which nothing in the daily habits has prepared him, it leaves his intellect and moral dispositions very much as it found them. This means that the civic education ‘treatment’ needs to be administered frequently throughout the period between elections if people are to significantly act in accordance with the message. In the current study, it was found that civic education on political participation was not done frequently enough to translate into significant changes in the political activities during the inter-election period. With reference to Table 6 above, CCJP conducted civic education only twice in nine months before the polling day, Malawi Carer did it only for a week during an election year while YPU did not have a specific frequency to be guided by, other than to do it when elections were imminent. NICE did not also have a specific frequency on political participation as they focused on ‘democracy and governance in general⁴.’ The civic education providers attributed their infrequent civic education to resource constraints since their financiers did not provide funds for inter-elections political participation but elections. This is why civic education was done close to elections to ensure high voter turnout during elections.

⁴ The District Civic Education Officer of Dedza said this during an interview. He meant that they did not teach the people in depth about various forms of political participation beyond taking part in elections. Beyond the electoral process, NICE taught people abstract meanings of democracy.

In addition, the study found that some methods were not properly employed, targeting was a problem and that proper impact assessment was lacking. For example, Malawi Carer said that they give booklets to those who answer questions correctly during civic education and those who ask questions, apparently to motivate them. The catch with this approach is that slow learners and shy people are left without reference material when they want to understand. With regard to targeting problems, the research found that in order to reach the people, NICE trained chiefs with the belief that they would in turn train the villagers. This, however, did not happen because people would also demand some allowances that presumably, the chiefs received from NICE. This may explain why people might not have learned certain aspects of democracy and yet NICE claimed to have trained the people. NICE does not have impact assessment mechanism for political participation. When asked what direct effects their civic education on political participation had on people's lives, the District Civic Education Officer replied that he did not know as it was not the role of NICE to assess impact. In this light, NICE did not go back to assess the impact of their civic education exercise. This scenario makes it difficult for NICE to justify its relevance as far as effective and meaningful political participation is concerned.

Furthermore, the study found that although some civic education providers had community-based representatives in order to easily reach out to the people, these representatives remained dormant in the inter-elections period but only surfaced during election periods. For example, Malawi Carer had community-based educators (CBEs) and CCJP has animators (who were principally members of local Catholic Churches). Their inactivity when elections were far away (for four years) and their resurgence during an election period (for one year) was indirectly telling the people that the inter-elections period was not for political activity. If these community-based

civic educators actively indulged in the provision of civic education on political participation using participatory methods and on a frequent basis throughout the years regardless of the proximity of elections, their communities would have citizens with greater civic knowledge who are less likely to be mistrustful of, or alienated from, public life (Brahm, 2006:1). This would be a desirable development because those with greater civic knowledge are more active participants in the political process (Carpini and Keeter in Brahm, 2006:1), a process far beyond voting.

4.4 Outcomes of Messages on Political Participation

Englund (2003:192) notes that when Malawi democratised, civic education became a major activity for many NGOs and projects that sought to consolidate democracy and human rights. As discussed earlier on, this meant inculcating a participant culture where people would internalise democratic values that would empower them to among other things, engage in political affairs of their society not only through voting, but other activities in the inter-elections period like signing

TABLE 6: Civic Education Methodology by CSOs and NICE

	CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION			PROJECT
	CCJP	Malawi Carer	Young Politicians Union (YPU)	National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE)
Frequency of CE on political participation	Twice in 9 months before elections	Once during an election year for one week	No particular frequency. Done when elections are imminent	No focused CE on political participation but democracy and governance in general
Methods of CE on political participation	Leaflets, lecturing, Question-Answer, T-shirts	Lecturing, Question-Answer, Drama, leaflets	Poems, songs, lecturing, drama	Training workshops, lecturing, rallies, public debates, drama, booklets, question-answer
Determination of impact of CE messages	1. Increased turnout during registration and voting 2. Reduced political violence 3. Reduction of the selling of registration certificates	1. When people voice out their views on politics 2. Increased number of women contestants and voters 3. Increased number of issues reported to the District Assembly	1. More people patronizing political rallies 2. More youths voting 3. No political violence during rallies using masquerades (nyau) 4. People of different parties doing development projects together	1. Formation of citizen forums (to discuss human rights issues)
Frequency of performance appraisal of the CE project	Once every month when CE begins (for 9 months)	Once every year	No appraisal	After five years, before another phase
Expected time for results of CE	After voter registration and elections	After elections	Not specific	4 months

petitions against and demanding accountability from political representatives, protest matches, press statements and many more. These activities are outcomes of civic education that signify a deepened democracy and instil a sense of ‘moving from electoral democracy to democracy as a way of life’ (Reimers, 2007:2) if done actively and frequently. In this regard, this subsection discusses effects or outcomes of civic education which constitute the dependent variable of the study.

First, the findings have confirmed the assertion that new knowledge acquired changes the political orientation of the people (Rose and Mishler, 1994:434). For example, the study has found that civic education on political participation has resulted in people joining political parties and taking part in the electoral processes (see Table 7). Thus unlike during the one party era, people now choose parties and candidates of their preference. This was a big departure from the political climate during Dr Banda’s single-party rule when the Special Branch of Police kidnapped and killed opposition politicians (Meinhardt and Patel, 2003:5). However, the study further finds that political participation in the inter-elections period is negligible and people still fear political reprisals. Table 7 below shows that people of Kantande Village fear to speak against their Member of Parliament although they attended civic education on democracy. The women of Mamadi Village (who did not attend any civic education) completely shun any political activity in the inter-elections period but turn up to vote during elections. This lack of interest in inter-elections political engagement by women in Mamadi Village also extends to inactivity in public life as evidenced by lack of associations like Red Cross, Orphan Care, Aids Club, Self-Help Groups and Agriculture Clubs which are available in villages under Kamenya Gwaza where civic education had been conducted. Although civic education did not take

place in the villages under Kasumbu Traditional Authority, focus group discussions in all the villages revealed that people joined different parties of their choice and participated through voting. Whilst people under TA Kamenya Gwaza attributed their participation to the civic education they had received, those under TA Kasumbu mentioned school¹, radios and political parties as sources of their knowledge. This finding confirms the findings by Chinsinga (2006:26) that institutions of civil society indeed provide civic and voter education albeit with many weaknesses.

As Table 7 further shows, although people attested to the fact that they joined parties of their choice like Malawi Congress Party, National Democratic Alliance, United Democratic Front and Democratic Progressive Party after getting the messages either from civic education providers or other institutions of civil society, they also lamented that the parties only conducted rallies in election periods in order to garner support during elections. This renders political parties irrelevant as vehicles of political participation in the inter-elections period, and reduces the people to mere pawns to be used by the political elites in their competitive political game of which their (the people's) votes are the means to power. In fact people complained about their MP's failure to conduct meetings in the inter-elections periods as shown by the excerpt in Case Study 1 below, depicting the plea by the young generation. Probably the press statement by the young generation from TA Kamenya Gwaza (where civic education took place) calling for the resignation of their MP before 2014 elections (Malawi News: 2008, Nov 29-Dec 5) is a by-product of the tension created by this lack of regular interaction between the MP and the constituents. The behaviour of the young generation clearly shows that the party has no adequate 'open and equitable political opportunity structure' (Friedman and Hochstetler, 2002:26) within which

¹ Schools offer Social Studies as a subject which teaches pupils about democracy and social responsibilities of good citizens

matters can transparently be deliberated and resolved. On the other hand, the boldness of the action by the youths is a promising development as it gives hope that perhaps frequent civic education delivered using participatory methods and clearly outlining opportunities for expression can go a long way in entrenching a participant political culture.

The study also discovered that the culture of fear and apathy towards open political discussion was still persistent especially among the older generation (men and women) who still considered commenting on the performance of their MP as dangerous for fear that some people would report to the party functionaries who might somehow punish the ‘free talker’ (see Table 7). This perhaps reflects badly on the civic education methodology which does not empower the people to formulate or seek out effective avenues for political expression. Thus people often replicate what they are familiar with. This is perhaps made more germane by another revelation that some party (MCP) members were even meeting and discussing political matters in secret.

Although this perpetuation of lack of transparency and ‘freedom’ to talk freely against the party affirms the assertion by Tsoka (2002:3) that Malawians are not yet participants but subjects, this study further posits that the situation came about not necessarily due to the short period that Malawi has been under democracy as he puts as an explanation for the situation, but that the messages on political participation and methodologies of civic education used have favoured representative other than participatory democracy. For instance, NICE divides its civic education framework into pre-election and post-election phases. While the pre-election stage emphasizes on voter education, the post-election phase concentrates on non-political issues. Faiti (1999) corroborates this when he mentions HIV/AIDS, environment, gender, health,

Table 7: Outcomes of Civic Education in Dedza

	TA Kasumbu		TA Kamenya Gwaza	
	<u>Mamadi VH</u>	<u>Tandalale VH</u>	Kantande GVH	<u>Chilibuno VH</u>
Civic Education Conducted	None	None	Yes	Yes
CBOs formed for political participation	None	None	None	Young Politicians Union (YPU)
Non political local organizations	VDC	VDC	VDC, Red Cross Society, Orphan Care, Tipewe Aids Club	VDC, Agricultural Club, Self-Help
Demands for accountability from MP	None	None	No. MP rarely attends ADC meetings	None.
Initiation of ideas and projects for MP's action	None	None	Yes. Boreholes and school block. Youths asking the MP to resign to give way to younger generation	Yes, on fertilizer coupons., YPU advising the MP to resign before 2014 so that the young generation can govern
Other outcomes of civic education	1. Women shunning politics 2. People vote during elections 3. Cooperation during MASAF projects	1. Some boys and girls joined different parties apart from the MCP 2. People vote	1. Fear to speak against MP 2. Some MCP members meet in private 3. Most people are politically inactive because their MP does not conduct rallies after elections	1. People joining political parties of their choice like DPP, UDF, NDA, MCP 2. Cooperation during development projects without political wrangles, 3. Working together during funerals without party considerations 4. No violence during political rallies 5. Frustration because their MP has not delivered

Case Study 1: Responsiveness of MP to constituents' needs

Tafuna kutengerapo mwayi kuti ngati kuli kotheka mukatiperekereko uthenga kwa a MP athu kuti azidzapangitsa misonkhano kuno kuti tiziwauza mavuto a kudera kwathu kuno. Amangobwera kuno nthawi ya chisankho basi, akasankhidwa zii.

(May you consider conveying our message to our Member of Parliament that he should be conducting rallies here so that we tell him the problems facing this area? He only comes during the election period and does not come after he is elected.)

A plea by boys and girls under Group Village Headwoman Kantande after an FGD

youth empowerment, poverty and food security as issues NICE concentrates on during the post-election period. The implication of this to the people is that the post-election period is for development and not politics. Since the periods between elections are longer than the election periods, people remember those activities that frequently happen for a longer period (Mill in Katz, 1997:69). This explains why people understand political participation more as taking part in development without party considerations than as taking part in the electoral process. It is also further explained by the increased number of community-based organizations dealing in other developmental aspects as opposed to one CBO established to champion people's political concerns. This clearly shows that democracy has not taken root as a 'way of life' (Reimers, 2007:2) where people actively engage in the public and political processes throughout their lives other than only during the election period.

Another outcome that this study found is that at Kamenya Gwaza where civic education was confirmed to have taken place, some people felt powerless due to the removal of Section 64 of the Constitution of Malawi that had provided for recall of a Member of Parliament who failed to live up to the expectations of his/her constituents. See Case Study 2 below in which one of the men was responding to the question whether they considered their village politically active or not. This clearly

shows that some people take participation as instrumental action towards achievement of certain good. When such participation fails to get the intended goal, they become passive and disengage from the political process. Therefore, the removal of Section 64 from the Constitution of Malawi has contributed negatively to inter-elections political participation as it has deprived the electorate of political ‘power’ to control the behaviour of their elected representatives.

Case Study 2: Is your village politically active?

Kodi inu, tizilimbikira ndale bwanji pomwe olemkezeka athu akasankhidwa sabweranso kudzakambirana nafe zomwe tikufuna? Mukudziwa inu kuti popanda Section 64 sangasamale za ife. Tsono ife tizilimbikira bwanji za ndale ngati zili ndi phindu kwa ife?

(Why should we be politically active when our MP does not come to discuss with us concerning what we need? You know that without Section 64, he cannot care about us. So why should we be politically active as if there is some benefit for us?)

A response by one man during focus group discussions at Kamenya Gwaza

The messages by civic education providers should have included what people can do to reclaim their control back so that power can truly belong to the people.

Lastly, another outcome of civic education is that although people do initiate some development issues for the action of their elected representatives, they do not initiate political ideas and do not demand accountability on his political behaviour. This is in sharp contrast from the desired effect of developing the intellectual capacities of people which in turn cause them to seek out opportunities and incentives to test and improve their ideas (Katz, 1997:68). Table 7 above shows that people at Kamenya Gwaza initiated the sinking of boreholes and the construction of school block with assistance from Malawi Social Action Fund. The MP was only called upon to transport the materials for the projects. The issue of fertilizer coupons was tabled at an

Area Development Committee meeting where the MP (as a member) had come to brief them on his opposition to the Government's implementation of the inputs subsidy programme through Government officials and chiefs, and his preference to using farmer clubs which the then MCP government was using. This finding suggests that the approach of civic education providers fosters a developmentally active but politically passive citizenry. This confirms what Englund (2004:12) found that there is a consistent shift from being political to being apolitical, thereby divorcing politics from development.

4.5 Lessons from the civic education experience of the people

Having looked at the kind of messages on political participation internalised by the people, the methods of civic education employed by civic education providers and the outcomes of the civic education efforts, there is need to draw lessons from the experience of the people regarding civic education in order to better assess the efficacy of the civic education project and its impact on political participation among rural communities. Then the section will explore avenues for improvement as a contribution towards democracy consolidation.

The first lesson drawn from the civic education experience of the people is that civic education is crucial not only for regime change but consolidation of democracy because it leads to “developing virtuous citizens who have a deep-felt sense of public responsibility- who view their good as human beings as being coextensive with the good of the human community” (Pratte, 1988:304). As shown on Table 7 above, lack of civic education at TA Kasumbu may explain the lack of participant culture, as there are too few social structures through which to participate in public life. On the other hand, civic education at TA Kamenya Gwaza led to more participation through local

organizations like YPU, Tipewe Aids Club, Red Cross Society, Agriculture Club, Orphan Care, and Self-Help Association on top of the Village Development Committees.

The second lesson is that the political behaviour of the people is influenced to a large extent not only by the kind of messages they internalise, but the way or methods by which the messages are imparted. The finding that people perceive political participation as taking part in development projects without party considerations and taking part in the electoral process through a political party is a result of the civic education content and process (see Tables 5, 6 and 7). The civic education on political participation was done in election periods with emphasis on voter registration, voting and accepting results. The participatory method of drama was mainly used to simulate voting. If the same plus other methods like role playing, breaking into groups, problem-solving, playing games, dramatization and question-answer were used on a frequent basis in the whole inter-elections period to teach people about tenets of active participatory political activities, the communities would have ‘participants who would be expected to form the basis of an active civil society and hence the foundation of democracy’ (Klesner, 2003:30). This is particularly true because according to social psychology, a significant source of attitudinal and behavioural change is role-playing behaviour within groups as individuals come to adopt attitudes and cognitions that are consistent with the behaviours they are acting out (Zimbardo and Leippe, 1991:102-108). Thus the rural communities would have informed people with civic duty who actively mobilize themselves around common interests to form groups through which they express themselves and influence those in positions of decision-making to make favourable decisions.

The third lesson is that the entrenchment of the participant culture is to some extent dependent on the responsiveness of the elected to the demands of the electorate. A number of participants during focus group discussions expressed their reluctance to engage in active political participation because their MP was not conducting political meetings with the people to address issues he had promised during the campaign period. They therefore did not want to waste their time on something that would not benefit them. This condition, called political efficacy (Lawrence, 1981:336), relates to the extent to which one believes that a political action will help him/her meet his demands. In this study therefore, it follows that the removal of the recall provision from the Republican Constitution renders the efficacious individuals powerless to make demands to their elected representative through an open political action like demonstration march. As shown by Case Study 2 above, political efficacy is not a cause for nonparticipation but a condition for participation.

Another lesson to be drawn from the findings discussed earlier is that civic education on political participation tends to be more effective if conducted directly to masses of people by NGOs/Projects other than by traditional leaders. As discussed already, the strategy by NICE to train chiefs in the belief that they will in turn train their subjects has not paid dividends in the impartation of information and civic skills, for the people have largely remained untrained. Finkel (2002:1017) also decries the reality that it is only a few people who patronize civic education training on a frequent basis- a situation that reduces the number of well-informed participants. Although resource constraints have been the overriding reason for most of their challenges (Chirwa, 2000:104), this paper suggests that may be if NICE trained schoolteachers in the areas for purposes of civic-educating the masses, there could be better results than

training chiefs whose status is ascribed (and therefore have no prerequisite teaching skills) and not achieved.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed major findings of the study as guided by objectives of the research work. Some of the major findings discussed are that (a), people perceive political participation as taking part in elections, (b) democracy educators teach formal ways of political participation through the local government structures and the Member of Parliament, (c) methods of teaching used are predominantly nonparticipatory and inactive, (d) during the inter-elections period, people mostly engage in non-political issues of development and (e) people join political parties of their choice. In a nutshell, the findings have covered the content, process, effect and implications of civic education on political participation.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter draws out major conclusions from the findings discussed in this study vis-à-vis theoretical underpinnings and provides recommendations to the implications which act as a guide to policy makers, areas for further research to scholars and insight to the rural communities for better participatory organization. In addition, it recognizes weaknesses of the study and attempts to make suggestions regarding how subsequent research can improve on the methodology and come up with nationally generalizable results.

5.1 Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

The first conclusion that one can draw from the findings of the study is that most of the civic educators teach elitist representative democracy and not participatory democracy because their messages on political participation hinge on taking part in the electoral process to choose leaders through political parties of their choice. Therefore, in line with the plans of civic education providers, training sessions on political participation are conducted during an election period. These focus on such issues as voter registration, allowing parties to campaign freely, allowing people to attend such political activities without violence, voting and accepting election results. After elections, messages of participation have emphasized development issues like

HIV/AIDS, environment, poverty, food security and human rights. This has made people apolitical (Englund: 2004:12) especially during the inter-election periods, thereby divorcing politics from development. In turn, this has created a dichotomy between development and democracy as people view these issues as mutually exclusive. Since this trend has continued from the 1994 democratic transition up to date, people are largely apolitical as Mill (in Katz, 1997:69) argues that repeated political acts affect the political habits of people through their intellect and moral dispositions.

In view of the above, this study recommends that civic education providers should now move from teaching the elitist representative democracy (which is arguably basic democracy especially after transition) and an electoral democracy where individual leaders acquire formal political power through a competitive struggle for people's vote (Diamond: 1997:13) to a deliberative participatory democracy which is a deeper, more mature and meaningful democracy whose people are not 'passive, deferential and dependent subjects of external forces' but are 'agents, or democratic citizens with some degree of control over their lives or the wider polity' (Mattes and Bratton: 2007:196). Thus the democracy educationists should emphasize the importance of active participatory citizenship regardless of whether elections are around the corner or not. This entails inculcating an understanding that people will only get things done if they initiate the actions requisite to getting them, and that nothing good can happen if the people do nothing about their situation.

The second conclusion to be drawn from the analysis of the findings is that active and participatory learning techniques or methods by civic education providers are crucial in producing active and participant citizens. Having found that the method of drama helped the people to know exactly how they would vote, the study concludes

that if the learning methodology involves role-playing the behaviour required in real-life situations, chances of such people behaving as trained are high (Zimbardo and Leippe, 1991:102-108). This means that if during training the people participated in acting out how they would stage a protest march, mobilize themselves to form a group around a certain interest, how the group would tender a petition to government officials, make a press statement, solve problems, campaign for a party or politician, how they would as a group summon their elected representative, demand accountability of his/her behaviour and the like on a frequent basis without regard to how near elections were, people would significantly be active participants in the society and would have control of their lives politically and otherwise (Finkel: 2002:1012).

With regard to the conclusion above, this study recommends that as civic education providers on democracy, NGOs and projects venturing in such a noble task should employ active participatory methods on a frequent basis in order to have a truly participant political culture. Thus the people should be taught group-mobilization skills that would enable them achieve group goals because group members are more politically active than non-members (Lane, 1959:185-195). This probably explains why people at Kamenya Gwaza Traditional Authority were slightly more politically active than those at TA Kasumbu as the former belonged to other groups like Self-Help, Agriculture Club, Red Cross Society, Tipewe Aids Club and many more. Although direct participation forms like demonstrations, boycotts, mass action and strikes are often under Government scrutiny in Malawi (Divala: 2007:35), this study further recommends sensitising the Government about the importance of such an approach in the process of democracy consolidation.

Thirdly, the study concludes that for the habituation of a participant political culture, civic education providers must not only focus on the electorate who are always in the majority, but the elected representatives and Government officials as well, who are in positions to either make decisions affecting the electorate or implement the decisions made. This conclusion arises from the finding that efficacious political participants turn into frustrated passive members of a community if they perceive or experience that their political action will not help them realize their goals. Therefore, having found that the failure of the Member of Parliament to conduct rallies after elections and respond to the political and development needs of the people demoralised the efficacious people from being politically active, the study posits that such people hold an instrumental approach to political action (Scaff, 1975:455). In this light, it is a challenge for the democracy educators to convince the frustrated efficacious people to engage in active political participation unless their perception of the responsiveness of their political representatives to their demands is changed.

The study recommends that when coming up with a civic education programme on political participation, the democracy educators should target the people and Government officials who are either the decision makers or implementers of decisions and projects/programmes. The rationale behind this is that the officials should not be surprised if they get certain demands from people through their local organizations or associations because ‘participation performs the crucial democratic function of keeping the government responsive to the needs of the citizens’ (Botwinick and Bachrach, 1983:365).

Another conclusion from the findings of this study is that most of the providers of civic education on democracy approach the subject of political participation with an

underlying liberal assumption that most men and women are basically non-political and that only rarely will they turn to politics to resolve their problems (Dahl, 1961:279). This assertion arises from the fact that the human rights' approach by Malawi Carer, CCJP and NICE entails advocacy of the fundamental basic rights and freedoms which tend to argue that people can best develop their capacities and personalities in the private sphere, and that politics should be utilized only as a last resort to maximize private gain (Botwinick and Bachrach, 1983:364). Thus maximization of liberties entails a minimalist state intervention in affairs of people and an elected representative only helps to make sure that the atmosphere for the private gain is perpetuated. In the liberal sense, as long as this atmosphere continues, there is no cause for political participation in the inter-election period but maximization of private gain. In other words, most men and women are non-political (Dahl, 1961:224). This partly explains why during the inter-elections period, civic educators emphasized on development issues and only turned to politics during election periods.

Regarding the conclusion above, the study recommends that civic educators should embrace a participationist approach where people are assumed to be intrinsically political as asserted by Aristotle (in Gewirth, 1965:10), 'man is by nature a political animal.' Based on this assumption and on the participationist democratic theory (Katz, 1997:67), civic education approach should emphasize the popular participation of people in public life where the great masses of the people are regularly, actively and intimately involved in the making and implementation of public policies. Although critics of popular participation believe that masses can be used by the ruling elites for totalitarian dictatorships or to establish 'garrison states' (Laswell, 1941:455-468), and that crowds are powerful for destruction and not for creating a civilization

(Le Bon, in Seshadri: 1974:5), this study argues that if the masses are regarded as comprising various groups of different interests who are actively and intimately pursuing their goals, they can not be used for destruction. This is particularly true because these masses have interests in certain institutions and cannot be available for a destructive act (Seshadri, 1974:5). This means that when masses comprise amorphous groups of heterogeneous men without interest in any institution, they can easily be used by elites for destructive acts. This is precisely why the study encourages intensive and frequent civic education on participatory democracy using active participatory learning methods so that the masses are well informed and well equipped to organize and mobilize themselves in pursuit of group goals.

Finally, the study has a limitation in that in its methodology and focus, it has not included people in the urban part of Dedza Town in order to have a comparative analysis of inter-elections political participation because as Verba and Nie (1972:186-191) and Lipset (1963:196-207) found out, people of a higher socioeconomic status engage in more participatory acts because they have a greater stake in the outcomes of politics and have greater interpersonal skills, awareness and exposure to communications and interaction. Thompson and Horton (1960:190-195) further add that such high socioeconomic status people enjoy greater access to participation channels. It is therefore important that for more conclusive results, more resources be mobilized to involve a wider sample comprising various strata of the population.

5.2 Conclusion

The chapter has discussed major conclusions drawn from the research findings. The implications of the conclusions drawn have also been analyzed. Based on these implications, recommendations have been suggested amidst the realization that the

research has its own shortfalls, notwithstanding. Thus all in all, the findings lead to confirmation of the hypothesis that civic education has not resulted in effective inter-elections political participation. They also support the hypothesis that the methods of learning employed had significant effect on political participation.

REFERENCES

- Africa Watch, (1990) *Where Silence Rules: The Suppression of Dissent in Malawi*, London, Washington & New York: Human Rights Watch
- Alford, R.R. and Scoble, H.M. (1968) "Sources of Local Political Involvement" *American Political Science Review* 62, December, 1192- 1206
- Almond, G. and Verba, S. (1963) *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes in Five Nations*, Princeton: Princeton University Press
- Almond, G.A., Dalton, R.J., Powell, G.B. and Strom, K. (2006) *Comparative Politics Today*, USA: Pearson Longman
- Aristotle, (1962) in Barker, E. (ed) *The Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Ayee, J.R.A. (1999) "The Transition from Military Rule to Constitutional Government and the Consolidation of Democratic Governance in Ghana," *Governance and Democratization in West Africa*, Dakar: CODESRIA
- Beetham, D. (1994) "Conditions for Democratic Consolidation," *Review of African Political Economy*, 60, 157-172
- Benavot, A. (1996) "Educational and Political Democratization: Cross-National and Longitudinal Findings" *Comparative Education Review* 40, 4:377-379
- Booth, J. and Richard, P. (1998) "Civil Society, Social Capital and Democratization in Central America" *Journal of Politics* 60, 3:780-801
- Botwinick, A. and Bachrach, P. (1983) "Democracy and Scarcity: Toward a Theory of Participatory Democracy" *International Political Science Review* 4, 3:361-373
- Boyer, E.L. (1983) *High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America*, New York: Harper and Row

- Brahm, E. (2006) "Civic Education" *Beyond Intractability* available at <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/civiceducation/> accessed on 12th September, 2007
- Branson, M.S. (2004) "The Case for Using Interactive Methods to Create Informed, Effective Citizens" *An Address to the Workshop Educating Youths for ActiveCitizenship* Available at www.civiced.org accessed on 17/11/09
- Bratton, M. (1999) "Political Participation in a New Democracy: Institutional Consideration form Zambia" *Comparative Political Studies* 32, 3:549-588
- Brehn, J. and Rahn, W. (1997) "Individual-Level Evidence for the Causes and Consequences of Social Capital" *American Journal of Political Science* 41, 3:999-1023
- Burton, M. et al., (1992) "Introduction: Elite Transformations and Democratic Regimes," in Higley, J. and Gunther, R. (eds) *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University
- Carothers, T. (1999) *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve*, Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
- Carothers, T. (2002) "The End of the Transition Paradigm" *Journal of Democracy* 13, 1:4-21
- Carpini, M.D. and Keeter, S. (1996) "What Americans Know About Politics and Why it Matters" *Democratic Citizenship in America*, New Haven:Yale University Press
- Chinsinga, B. (2005) "District Assemblies in a Fix: The Perils of the Politics of Capacity in the Political and Administrative Reforms in Malawi" *Development in Southern Africa* 22, 4

- Chinsinga, B. (2006) "Voter Apathy in Malawi: A Critical Appraisal," *Centre for Multiparty Democracy- Malawi*" Available at http://www.aceproject.org/ero-en/regions/africa/MW/voter_apathy_study_malawi.pdf (accessed on 16th November, 2007)
- Chinsinga, B. (2007) "Public Policy Making" in Patel, N. and Svasand, L. (eds) *Government and Politics in Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere Series
- Chirwa, W.C. (2000) "Civil Society in Malawi's Democratic Transition," *Malawi's Democratic Elections: Process, Problems, and Prospects*, Blantyre: CLAIM
- Chiweza, A.L. (2007) "Local Government" in Patel, N. and Svasand, L. (eds) *Government and Politics in Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere Series
- Dahl, R. (1961) *Who Governs*, New Haven: Yale University
- Dalton, R. (1994) "Communists and Democrats: Democratic Attitudes in the Two Germanies" *British Journal of Political Science* 24, 4:469-493
- Dalton, R. (2000) "Citizen Attitudes and Political Behavior" *Comparative Political Studies* 33, 6/7:912-940
- Dewey, J. (1927) *The Public and Its Problems*, Chicago: Swallow
- Diamond, L. (1999) *Developing Democracy: Towards Consolidation*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins
- Diamond, L. (2002) "Elections Without Democracy: Thinking About Hybrid Regimes" *Journal of Democracy* 13, 2: 20-35
- Diamond, L. (2003) "What Civil Society Can Do to Reform, Deepen and Improve

- Democracy," in *Civil Society, Social Capital, and Civil Engagement in Japan and The United States*, available at <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/State%2c+society+and+democratic+consolidation%3a+the+case+of+Cambodia-a0155789811> accessed on 5th November, 2007
- Divala, J.J. (2007) "Malawi's Approach to Democracy: Implications for the Teaching of Democratic Citizenship" *Citizenship Teaching and Learning* 3, 1:32-44
- Downs, A. (1957) *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, New York: Harper and Brothers
- Eckstein, H. (1988) "A Culturalist Theory of Political Change" *American Political Science Review* 82, 3:789-804
- Evans, G. and Whitefield, S. (1995) "The Politics and Economics of Democratic Commitment: Support for Democracy in Transitional Societies" *British Journal of Political Science* 25, 4:485-514
- Englund, H. (2003) "Does Civic Education Disempower? A View from 'the Grassroots'" in *From Freedom to Empowerment: Ten Years of Democratization in Malawi*, Balaka: Konrad Adenauer Foundation
- Englund, H. (2004) "Transnational Governance and the Participation of Youths: The Contribution of Civic Education to Disempowerment in Malawi" *Centre for Civic Society Research Report* 13, Durban
- Erdmann, G. (2004) "Party Research: Western European Bias and the 'African Labyrinth'" *Democratization* 11, 3:63-87
- Faiti, D. (1999) *GTZ- Democracy: History, Objectives and Vision of Malawi Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) in Malawi*, Lilongwe: NICE
- Finkel, S.E. (2002) "Civic Education and Mobilization of Political Participation in Developing Democracies" *The Journal of Politics* 64, 4:994-1020

- Friedman, E.J. and Hochstetler, K. (2002) "Assessing the Third Transition in Latin American Democratization: Representational Regimes and Civil Society in Argentina and Brazil" *Comparative Politics* 35, 1:21-42
- Gewirth, A. (1965) *Political Philosophy*, London: Macmillan
- Gibson, J.L. and Duch, R.M. (1991) "Elitist Theory and Political Tolerance in Western Europe" *Political Behavior* 3, 3:191-212
- Government of Malawi-German Program for Democracy and Decentralization, (2005) *Guidebook on Decentralization and Local Government in Malawi*, Balaka: Montfort Media
- Government of Malawi, (2008) *2008 Population and Housing Census: Preliminary Report*, Zomba: National Statistical Office
- Helmke, G. and Levitsky, S. (2004) "Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics: A Research Agenda" *Perspectives on Politics* 2, 4:725-740
- Higley, J. and Gunther, R. (1992) *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- HRRC (Human Rights Resource Centre/ Danish Centre for Human Rights), (1999) *Human Rights Needs Assessment Survey in Malawi*, Lilongwe: HRRC
- Immink, B. and Chigona, G. (2004) "Between Apathy and Participation: The Role of Civil Society and Faith Communities" in *The Power of the Vote: Malawi's 2004 Parliamentary and Presidential Elections*, Zomba: Kachere Series
- Inglehart, R. (1990) *Culture Shift*, Princeton: Princeton University Press

- Kadzandira, J.M. (2007) *Qualitative Research Methods*, Zomba: Centre for Social Research
- Kasfir, N. (1998) "The Conventional Notion of Civil Society: A Critique" in Kasfir, N. (ed) *Civil Society and Democracy in Africa: Critical Perspectives*, London: Frank Cass and Company
- Katz, R. (1997) *Democracy and Elections*, New York: Oxford University Press
- Krauss, S.E. (2005) "Research Paradigms and Meaning Making: A Primer" *The Qualitative Report* 10, 4:758-770
- Lamounier, B. (1988) "Challenges to Democratic Transition in Brazil," paper presented at the *American Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, Washington, DC, September
- Lane, R.E. (1959) *Political Life: Why People Get Involved in Politics*, Illinois: The Free Press
- Langton, S. (1978) *Citizen Participation in America*, Lexington: D.C Heath
- Laswell, H.D. (1941) "The Garrison State" *The American Journal of Sociology* XLVI, 455-468
- Lawrence, D.G. (1981) "Toward an Attitudinal Theory of Political Participation" *Polity* 14, 2:332-346
- Le Bon, G. (1952) *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*: Ernest Ben
- Leftwich, A. (2006) "What are 'Institutions'?" *Improving Institutions* 1, 18th January
- Leighly, J. (1996) "Group Membership and the Mobilization of Political Participation" *Journal of Politics* 58, 2:447-463

- Levine, A. (1978) "A Conceptual Problem for Liberal Democracy" *The Journal of Philosophy* 75, 6:302-308
- Linz, J. and Stepan, A. (1996) *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, Baltimore: Johns-Hopkins University Press
- Lipset, S.M. (1959) "Some Social Requisites for Democracy" *American Political Science Review* 53, 1:69-105
- Lipset, S.M. (1963) *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics*, New York: Anchor Books
- Malawi CARER, (2001) *Human Rights in the Constitution of Malawi*, Limbe: Assemblies of God Literature Centre
- Marneffe, P. (1994) "Contractualism, Liberty, and Democracy" *Ethics* 104, 4:764-783
- Mattes, R. and Bratton, M. (2007) "Learning About Democracy in Africa: Awareness, Performance, and Experience" *American Journal of Political Science* 51, 1: 192-217
- McAdam, D. and Paulsen, R. (1993) "Specifying the Relationship between Social Ties and Activism" *American Journal Of Sociology* 99, 3:640-667
- McClosky, H. and Brill, A. (1983) *Dimensions of Tolerance: What Americans Think About Civil Liberties*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation
- McGrath, E. (1983) "The Bold Quest for Quality," *Time*, 10th October 1983:122
- Meinhardt, H. (2004) *Free at Last: Malawi's Democratic Transition*, Balaka: National Initiative for Civic Education

- Meinhardt, H. and Patel, N. (2003) "Malawi's process of democratic transition: An analysis of political developments between 1990 and 2003" *Democratic transition and consolidation in Africa*, Lilongwe: Konrad Adenauer Foundation
- Michels, R. (1961) *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy*, New York: The Free Press
- Mill, J.S. (1862) *Considerations on Representative Government*, New York: Unknown Publisher
- Moss, T., Patterson, G. and Walle, N. (2006) "An Aid- Institutions Paradox? A Review Essay on Aid Dependency and State Building in Sub- Saharan Africa," *Centre for Global Development* at <http://www.cgdev.org> (accessed on 5th November, 2007)
- Mouton, J. (2001) *How to succeed in your Master's and Doctoral Studies*, Pretoria: Van Schaik
- Mthinda, C. and Khaila, S. (2006) "Responsiveness and Accountability in Malawi," *Afrobarometer: Briefing Paper NO. 31*
- Mwalubunju, O. (2007) "Civil Society" in Patel, N. and Svasand, L. (eds) *Government and Politics in Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere Series
- Ntseane, P.G. and Youngman, F. (2002) "Leadership in Civil Society Organizations in Botswana," *Leadership, Civil Society and Democratization in Africa: Case Studies from Southern Africa*, Addis Ababa: Development Policy Management Forum
- Olsen, M.E. (1972) "Social Participation and Voting Turnout: A Multivariate Analysis" *American Sociological Review* 37, June: 333-817
- Patel, N., Tambulasi, R., Molande, B. and Mpesi, A. (2007) *Consolidating*

- Democratic Governance in Southern Africa: Malawi*, Johannesburg: EISA
- Pateman, C. (1970) *Participation and Democratic Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Politzer, A. (2003) "Malawi," *The Courier ACP-EU*, No. 201 at http://ec.europa.eu/development/body/publications/courier/courier201/pdf/en_059.pdf
(Accessed on 5th November, 2007)
- Pollack, P.H. (1982) "Organizations as Agents of Mobilization: How does Group Activity Affect Political Participation?" *American Journal of Political Science* 26, 3:485-503
- Pratte, R. (1988) "Civic Education in a Democracy" *Theory into Practice* 27, 4:303-308
- Read, M. and Marsh, D. (2002) "Combining Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods" in Marsh, D. and Stoker, G. (eds.) *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan
- Reimers, F. (2007) "Civic education when democracy is in flux: The impact of empirical research on policy and practice in Latin America" *Citizenship and Teacher Education* 3, 2:1-17
- Riker, W.A. and Ordeshook, P.C. (1973) *An Introduction to Positive Political Theory*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall
- Rogers, D.L., Burtena, G.L. and Barb, K.H. (1975) "Voluntary Association Membership and Political Participation: An Exploration of the Mobilization Hypothesis" in *The Sociological Quarterly* 16, 3:305-318
- Rose, R. and Mishler, W. (1994) "Mass Reaction to Regime Change in Eastern

- Europe: Polarization or Leaders and Laggards?" *British Journal of Political Science* 24, 2:159-182
- Rosenstone, S.J. and Hansen, J.M. (1993) *Mobilization, Participation and Democracy in America*, New York: Macmillan
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1973) *The Social Contract*, London: J.M. Dent and Son
- Sallach, D.L., Babchuk, N. and Booth, A. (1972) "Social Involvement and Political Activity: Another View" *Social Science Quarterly* 52, March: 802-879
- Scaff, L. (1975) "Two Concepts of Political Participation" *The Western Political Quarterly* 28, 3:447-462
- Sen, A. (1999) *Development As Freedom*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
- Seshadri, K. (1974) "Mass Political Participation and Democracy" *Social Scientist* 2, 11: 3-25
- Teacher Development Unit, (Undated) *Student Teachers Handbook* 3, Domasi: Malawi Institute of Education
- Tengatenga, J. (1998) "Singing, Dancing and Believing: Civic Education in Malawian Idiom" in K.R. Ross (ed.) *Faith at the Frontiers of Knowledge*, Blantyre: CLAIM
- Thompson, W. and Horton, J. (1960) "Political Alienation as a Force in Political Action" *Social Forces* 38, March: 190-195
- Tsoka, M.G. (2002) "Public Opinion and the Consolidation of Democracy in Malawi" in *Afrobarometer*, Paper No. 16
- Verba, S. (1967) "Democratic Participation" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 373, September: 53-78

- Verba, S., Schlozman, K.L. and Brady, H. (1995) *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press
- Verba, S. and Nie, N.H. (1972) *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*, New York: Harper and Row
- Walker, J.L. (1966) "A Critique of the Elitist Theory of Democracy" *The American Political Review* 60, 2:285-295
- Welch, S. (1975) "Dimensions of Political Participation in a Canadian Sample" *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 8, 4:553-559
- Weil, F.D. (1993) "The Development of Democratic Attitudes in Eastern and Western Germany in a Comparative Perspective" *Research on Democracy and Society* 1, 195-225
- Weyland, K. (2002) "Limitations of Rational-Choice Institutionalism for the Study of Latin American Politics" *Studies in Comparative International Development* 37, 1: 57-85
- Wisker, G. (2001) *The Postgraduate Research Handbook*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan
- Wolfe, J.D (1985) "A Defence of Participatory Democracy" *The Review of Politics* 47, 3:370-389
- Wolff, M. (1949) "Democracy Means Participation," *Journal of Educational Sociology* 23, 3:129-134
- Zimbardo, P.G. and Thomas, L. (1991) *The Psychology of Attitude Change and Social Influence*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press

NEWSPAPER

Chirombo, Richard (2008) “Achinyamata akufuna kukapereka kalata kwa a John Tembo”, *Malawi News*, November 29- December 5 2008, Dziwani za Chisankho 2009:5

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS FOR CHIEFS

1. Which organizations have been working in your village on matters of democracy?
2. Have the organizations also carried out civic education in your village?
3. What is your understanding of political participation?
4. Have the organizations carried out civic education on political participation?
5. How often have the organizations on democracy carried out such civic education on political participation?
6. Which methods were used to impart the messages on political participation?
7. Are you personally comfortable with the methods utilized? Explain.
8. What evidence do you have to show that villagers understood the messages on political participation?
9. Do people of this village belong to local organizations or associations through which they can politically express themselves? If yes, name them.
10. Which issues are generally discussed in these local organizations or associations?
11. Have you ever called on your MP to explain his behaviour in parliament? If yes, how many times?
12. Would you recall initiating projects for the MP to present in Parliament? If yes, which projects?
13. In your opinion, how has civic education contributed to your political lives as far as political participation is concerned?
14. In your opinion, how do you think civic education can better be delivered to realize more meaningful political participation?

APPENDIX 2: GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

1. What do you understand by political participation?
2. Would you give examples of political participation?
3. Who helped you know the meaning(s) of political participation?
4. Have you undergone civic education on political participation as a way of consolidating democracy?
5. Would you describe what activities the civic education providers employed to let you understand the meaning(s) of political participation?
6. For how long have the providers of civic education on political participation been operating in your village?
7. To what use did you put the knowledge of the meaning of political participation?
8. Do you belong to any association/organization through which you can express yourselves on matters of politics or development?
9. Do you remember asking your MP to explain how he conducted himself in parliament?
10. What projects did you initiate for the MP to take up for Parliament's consideration?
11. In what way(s) has the knowledge of information on political participation affected your political lives?

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CSOS AND NICE PROJECT

1. What made you choose TA Kamenya Gwaza and Kasumbu as areas for civic education?
2. How often have you carried out civic education on democracy in TA Kamenya Gwaza and Kasumbu areas?
3. How do you define political participation?
4. How often have you carried out civic education on political participation?
5. What methods do you employ to impart messages on political participation?
6. Why did you choose these particular methods?
7. What challenges do you encounter in the delivery of civic education on political participation?
8. How do you determine whether there is an impact or not of your civic education messages on political participation?
9. What do you think are the direct effects of civic education on the political lives of the people in the areas of TAs Kamenya Gwaza and Kasumbu?
10. What do you think can be done to achieve results in civic education on political participation?
11. In your understanding, what constitutes political participation?
12. How often does your organization carry out performance appraisal of the civic education project?
13. Progressively, what changes (if any) have been effected in implementation of civic education project based on previous appraisals?
14. Explain the implementation model of civic education that the Malawian model is based on.

15. Explain how the civic education implementation model being employed in Malawi performed elsewhere.
16. In your implementation plan, when do you expect to at least start achieving results of civic education?