

**IS CONSTITUENCY SERVICE A VIABLE STRATEGY FOR RE ELECTION OF
A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT IN MALAWI?**

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By

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DECLARATION

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

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFORD	Alliance for Democracy
CCP	Chipani Cha Pfuko
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CS	Constituency Service
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FPTP	First Past The Post
IPU	International Parliamentary Union
LDF	Local Development Fund
MAFUNDE	Malawi Forum for National Development
MEC	Malawi Electoral Commission
MCP	Malawi Congress Party
MMP	Maravi Party
MP	Member of Parliament
NDA	National Democratic Alliance
NDI Affairs	National Democratic Institute for International
PAS	Political and Administrative Studies
PPM	People's Progressive Movement
PR	Proportional Representation
RP	Republican Party
SMC	Single Member Constituencies
UDF	United Democratic Front
VIP	Very Important Persons

DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this piece of work to my late parents Jackson Lyson Neba and Esinele Neba (nee Banda), May Their Soul Rest In Peace. Secondly, to my family members wife, three sons and one daughter who had to endure my long absence from family responsibilities and to you all, I can only praise the Lord that I am back to my original position.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the extent to which Constituency Service (CS) is a viable strategy for re-election of a Member of Parliament (MP) in Malawi. The study was informed by observation that some members of Parliament in Malawi get re-elected when on many occasions many fail to retain their seats even after showing interest to be re-elected or retained. While literature around the region, not only in Malawi but other countries in Africa at large, point to constituency service as a cause for re-election, the study was interested to confirm if indeed constituency service stands the test of time beyond other electoral strategies for Members of Parliament. While the study was more qualitative in its analysis both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection were employed in order to get the opinions of the key informants who were the MPs themselves.

The general findings point to the fact that beyond constituency service there are several other factors affecting the “would be strategies” in support of re-election bid. Among those that kept on coming include; party loyalty, place of residence for the MP; the behavior of the incumbent and handouts rating highly. The Manifesto of the party or individual and the education levels of the aspirant MP were also mentioned but scored lowly.

The overall finding is that while constituency service is an important strategy in case of Malawi, it alone does not guarantee re-election, rather, with a combination of all others strategies. The study safely concludes that there is no straight formulae an MP can use as a key strategy to secure re-election.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and Background of the Study

This study investigated the extent to which Constituency Service (CS) is a viable strategy for re-election of a Member of Parliament (MP) in Malawi. Like many other democracies, the MPs core functions are those that have traditionally been accepted in all Parliaments world over. Lindberg (2011) defined them as the kind of roles with which legislators are most closely associated in the established democracies, which include executive oversight, or the scrutiny of legislation, or the making of public policy, or constituency representation. According to Lindberg (2010), a few countries in Africa, such as Ghana, it is noted that CS does not form part of the formal functions of the MPs in most jurisdictions. This too, is the case with Malawi. Lindberg (2010), defined CS as the provision of public or collective goods to constituents such as boreholes, clinics, roads and bridges, schools, police units and many more other smaller scale development projects.

While CS is regarded as an informal function, it is increasingly an important role for an MP especially in Africa and other developing countries. Barkan (2010) stated that most studies have concentrated on emphasizing collective and institutional role of legislators than the activities of the individual's legislators. He further alluded to, that studies in the past tend to have taken relatively narrow view of the legislative process, which stresses how legislatures contribute to making of public policy - rather than looking at other activities and functions their members perform. Beyond the formal functions of an MP in Malawi, CS is as entrenched as a major function of an MP that many scholars understand CS constituting the fourth among the principle tasks of the legislature (Barkan, 2008).

A study by Kachule (2011) found out that many MPs ask questions for constituency services in Parliament for their own political survival for people to vote for them again, after five years. Re-election is an incentive for asking for questions for constituency service in Parliament (pg.86). It is against this background that this study draws huge interest to explore the extent to which CS is a viable strategy or tool for the re-election of a Member of Parliament.

It is observed that MPs in Malawi and elsewhere are dominantly involved into the provision of different kinds of constituency services. While CS is neither a statutory role of an MP, the practice, in the context of Malawi in particular and Africa in general, is that CS remains one of the key roles of an MP. As Barkan (2010) stated, although legislatures may make decisions collectively, but the position taken by individual legislators especially in developing countries are invariably perceived in terms of their impact on the constituents they represent. It is in this regard that MPs delve themselves into provision of CS as individual MPs, outside the formal and statutory framework of their roles as legislators. The more reason the kind of services MPs provide to their constituents differ from one constituency to the other.

My understanding of constituency service is that these are small-scale development projects, meant to support the communities' social welfare services at community level and within the confines of a constituency in case of the boundaries where an MP represents. They are generic and include provision of boreholes, school blocks, feeder roads and bridges, other infrastructures such as youth and sports centres and their activities there in, school fees, funeral support, food ration and several other small-scale community needs. They differ from one constituency to another, and are contextually relevant. Constituency services are also at the discretion of an individual MP on how priorities are identified and implemented. The value on paper of CS is to improve living standards of the people through the provision of these forms of basic social services, but the underlying motive often would be to win the electorates support. In Malawi, the Constituency is further demarcated into two smaller areas which are called Wards and each represented by a Ward Councilor.

While there is goodwill aimed at improving the living standards of people and partly alleviating the peoples' poverty through such a service, the CS has extended to provision of private goods which has been likened to clientelism. The purpose for which has been equated to buying favors from voters.

It is not uncommon in Malawi that MPs, and in all the cycles of elections, are involved in the provision of CS especially during the campaign periods where there is a surge of such services. While their level of support decreases after results are announced in an election year, members having put into office, MPs continue providing such services, albeit at a smaller scale during the electoral off-season. Interviews carried out on the relationship between the MPs with their constituents, the MPs stated that their formal responsibility was to service their constituency because there is a reciprocal relationship between the elected and their voters on one hand. And on the other, voters were of the view that effective representation means initiating development and facilitating local initiatives for concrete outcomes such as better schools and health services, improved water supply, new roads, bridges; and many more services (Patel & Tostensen, 2013 in Patel & Savanna, 2013).

In Malawi, provision of such services to communities do not form part of the formal and statutory functions of an MP. However, the behavior of voters and their representatives, lean towards CS as one of the core functions of an MP as is the case with Constituency Development Fund (CDF) According to Balkan & Mattes, 2014, CSSR working paper 337, CDF is a fund that has been created by African MPs as a response to constant and intense constituent pressure to deliver both private (such as jobs or cash handouts for school fees, health dispensary bills) and public goods (such as development projects to build schools, roads, and health clinics)- In Malawi, Decentralization Act (2010) legitimizes the involvement of MPs in provision of CS. As it stands now, the MPs are legitimate administrators of the CDF and inversely through their involvement, formalizes Constituency Service.

Lindberg (2010), added that in addition to CS, MPs across Africa are also involved in provision of clientelistic goods to their constituents. Malawi is not an exception and these include; payment of school fees for the needy such as orphans, settling of hospital bills, provision of food ration for the needy and lean period of food shortages in families,

brokering of jobs, footing of part funeral expenses, allowances as cash handouts covering into the whole range of groups of people in constituencies and many more. These goods paid to 'clients' are personal benefits in nature. This is again outside the confines of formal functions of an MP. This, however, does not depart from what the constituents expect from their MPs.

While the formal duties of an MP are clear, Lindberg (2010) noted that in theory, democratically elected office holders should be held accountable by voters in their performance of these formal democratic duties. These are the same basic functions that the institution of Parliament, of which Members of Parliament represent, stand central to any political system (Kachule, 2011).

1.2 Problem Statement

Studies in Malawi and elsewhere converge on the idea that Constituency Service is a relevant strategy given that there is high demand for CS by voters and in such a context, if one invests in CS, he/she is likely to be voted into office.

The demand for CS may not have come from a vacuum, rather, some factors could precipitate this. First, the electoral system that Malawi follows, could contribute largely to this demand for constituency service. It must be acknowledged that First Past The Post enables high level of competition among the competing candidates. This system as opposed to proportional representation, allows as many candidates as possible to compete, hence the race is tight. Candidates compete on policies through their party and personal manifestos. In addition, in the countries where the law does not stop handouts, candidates splash out handouts especially during campaign periods. Malawi passed a law prohibiting handouts (s.41, Political Parties Act, 2018). The second factor is the level of poverty which is high, not only in Malawi but in other developing nations.. The demand for constituency service is in quest to address the social and individual needs, especially during the campaign period when voters take advantage of candidates' vulnerability to be voted into office. Voters make unrealistic demands at both community and personal levels.

In a number of studies that have carried out extensive interviews with Members of Parliament in different countries in Africa, it is alleged that CS is closely and more linked to guaranteeing an incumbent's re-election (Patel & Svasand, 2007).

The Afrobarometer survey (2009) pointed out that African politics is quite commonly characterized as clientelistic where the voter and patrons create a relationship that is mutually beneficial

From the literature on informal roles and kinds of services, including the various demands that constituents make on their representatives, it is noted that the demands range from public facilities to private needs. Lindberg (2010), in a study ranking the demands by constituents confirmed that constituency services both in private and public goods rank higher than representation, oversight and law making which were least considered as important to voters in Ghana. This is similar to many other countries both in Africa and other developing regions. In Malawi, the Afrobarometer Survey (Round 4) stated that 5% and 2% of the respondents were in favour of MPs performing the law making and oversight roles respectively. This can easily tell that the public opted largely for constituency service as prescribed roles of MPs. This clearly demonstrates that the public's perception of an MP is to perform duties related to constituency services in order for the MPs to be relevant with the people they serve. This is in a way the ideal meaning of representation in the Africa context.

For instance, Kachule (2011), stated that during a political debate organized by the Malawi Electoral Commission, all the five candidates contesting in an election in Machinga South East constituency highlighted their ability to bring various development projects to their constituency once voted into power as the reason why constituents should vote for them. In a study, (Patel & Tostensen, 2013) established that MPs themselves pointed out that servicing the constituency was probably the 'best' method of re-election and were mindful that the constituents were often seen as the 'employers' of the MPs or the MPs as 'servants' of the constituents. It can be deduced that MPs seeking re-election may find it extremely difficult to ignore services their clients are demanding. Kachule (2010), also corroborated on this in a study on Participation of MPs During Question Time in Parliament in Malawi, "I ask questions in parliament on constituency issues for my own political survival, because

I want people to vote for me again after five years”. This view is also shared in Tanzanian Parliament where MPs Question hour is seen as the MPs prime opportunity to prove to their constituents that they are working hard to promote their [voters] interests. This has become popular among the MPs and the population at large (Wang, 2005 in Sequa, 2003). The paper further observed that an MP being a rational actor would not deviate from the interests of the constituents for re-election (p. 14).

In this regard this study wants to investigate this apparent disconnect between the supply and the demand side of democracy, by the electorate from their representatives. This is what Bratton, et al. (2005) describe as a ‘representation gap’ – defined as the dearth of formal connectedness between political officials and their constituents. Naturally in the context of Malawi and Africa in general, theory as in democratic norms is not divorced from practice and MPs find themselves playing other equally important roles outside what Parliament prescribes.

From the above, literature it is very clearly spelt that if an MP wants re-election, there must be visibility between the supply of services to the constituents and the seemingly public pronouncements of raising the issues of the constituency in Parliament. However, studies have not clearly demonstrated that the more the constituency service the higher are the chances for re-election. In other words, from the literature reviewed there is scattered empirical evidence that directly supports this relationship between the incumbents increased level of CS and re-election. With this nature of high involvement of MPs provision of CS in Malawi, this study therefore, interrogated the extent to which indeed CS is a viable strategy for re-election of an MP.

1.3 Aim of the study

The aim of the study was to investigate the extent to which constituency service is a viable strategy or tool for re-election of an MP in Malawi.

1.3.1 Specific objectives

- a) To establish the effectiveness of CS as a strategy for re-election in Malawi
- b) To identify other strategies that contribute to MPs re-election in Malawi

1.3.2 Research questions

- ✓ Is constituency service an effective strategy for re-election of an MP in Malawi?
- ✓ Are there any other strategies that MPs use in order to be re-elected?
- ✓ How effective are these other strategies for re-election in Malawi?

1.4 Justification and Significance of the study

The study acknowledges literature that point out to the role of MPs paying particular attention to providing constituency services outside the cardinal duties of law making, oversight and representation. Literature further acknowledges that providing constituency service as an informal activity, should not be regarded as an outlier functions of an MP. Actually, literature gives out reasons as to why MPs are so involved in providing constituency service, citing that it is the only way they can secure re-election. The question of ‘representativeness’ and its meaning in the context of modern democracy has been fused with informality in African politics what other scholars have defined “Hybridity of Politics,” (Cammack, 2007). The notion of representation in the context of Africa is likened to a representative as “Head of the family” (Lindberg, 2010) where the representative assumes the role of carrying the burden of ferrying for the needs of the constituents.

This being the case, the significance of the study is three fold. First, the study, expects to contribute towards continued debate on whether constituency service is a viable strategy for re-election of an MP in Malawi. Second, that there is an assertion by MPs themselves as confirmed by various literature (Lindberg, 2010; Kachule, 2011; Patel & Tostensen, 2013) that constituency service enhances re-election.

While acknowledging that a number of scholars have written on CS as a means employed by MPs to enhance their re-election citing as a key strategy, no amount of scientific research in Malawi has ever been undertaken to ascertain the extent to which CS is a viable tool for re-election. In fact, most are reports other than specific scientific studies on this subject matter, hence this study has been significant to add on to existing body of knowledge in areas of electoral strategies for re-election of Members of Parliament.

In conclusion, the chapter focused on the background of the study, motivated by the gaps in electoral strategies employed by MPs to get reelected with an interest on probing more on CS. The chapter highlighted the problem in the study challenging and wanting to ascertain the assertion that CS is a viable strategy for reelection.

1.5 Conclusion

The chapter has given out the background and an overview of the study, how the study area was conceived and inspired to undertake this study. The definition of constituency service in the study was articulated both from the international and regional perspectives but more importantly the chapter emphasized how CS has been understood domestically. The basic literature review in the chapter, in support of the definition of constituency service as a research issue, was expounded. The problem statement has been presented too in the chapter. It has highlighted the main goal (objective) of the study and its specific objectives supported by the research questions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This section reviewed literature that is related to various concepts that aid the understanding of electoral strategies which Members of Parliament employ in order to secure re-election into their office. In particular, the literature brings the conceptual understanding of constituency service as a viable strategy to secure re-election for another term of office. The section noted roles of parliament outlined above, have been formalized in almost all democratic parliaments. Considering that there is complexity in understanding representation as earlier alluded to, it is not surprising that a number of schools of thought and theories have been developed towards a better understanding of the actual concept of political representation. It is however not the intention of this study to analyze what various scholars on the subject topic of representation have advanced. The study rather only focused on those areas that relate to the concept of representation as it relates to the role of the MP and the electoral strategies that MPs use publicly or subtly. Furthermore, the study engaged on the other roles outside Parliament that MPs are active in, with a particular reference to constituency service.

The section further interrogated the theoretical frameworks that underpin the constituency service as the individual role which were viewed equally important, that Members of Parliament perform.

2.2 Constituency Service

Constituency service is an important non-legislative activity of any Member of Parliament anywhere else especially in electoral systems that follow delegate model of representation using FPTP form of electing their leaders. Malawi is one example of such a system where Members of Parliament are closely attached to the constituents. Constituency service is defined as the provision of goods and services to the constituents by the representative as

part of the response mechanisms for the needs of the constituents in form of public or private goods (Lindberg, 2010). It must be noted too that constituency service is varied from one product to another and one region to another and involves several activities. De Vries et al. (2016) observed that for representative democracy to work, “legislators need to be responsive to the concerns of citizens. One way in which this can be achieved is through constituency service and continued to state that two factors drive constituency service: extrinsic and intrinsic motivations”. It is within this contexts of motivations that the representative has to continually keep in touch with what could be termed as public relation with his/her constituents. The practice of constituent relations involves communicating with constituents, learning about their concerns and, as possible and where appropriate, helping to solve their problems. In ideal democracies, there is however a distinction in how constituency services is delivered between developing and the developed democracies. In countries with advanced democracies such as Belgium constituency service delivery is delivered through holding surgeries, home meetings with constituents, meeting with local and economic action groups, managing case work, responding to mail, sending out newsletters etc. (Pilet & Brack, 2016).

Constituency service is a concept that members of parliament have utilized globally for a number of reasons. Crisp and Simoneau (2018) argued that Electoral incentives are the primary explanation suggested for the amount of constituency service carried out by representatives. Studies have indicated that through constituency service, the member of parliament earns personal votes due to the individual’s attributes or activities. It is this connection between constituency service and the personal vote that brings constituency service into the conceptual frame as the re-election tool for sitting members of parliament.

Much of the existing literature proposes that the nature of constituency service makes it a prime strategy for enhancing a legislator’s personal reputation (Crisp & Simoneau, 2018). Crisp and Simoneau (2018) in their study concluded that constituency service provision was much greater in Ireland and that the Irish parliamentarians were much more likely to think that their re-election prospects were a function of the constituency service they provided. An interesting dimension about Constituency service, which appeals to the developing context like Malawi is that vulnerability increases attention to constituency

service, where an MP is regarded as a faithful constituent servant. In the literature reviewed, there is much less work done on accessing the consequences of constituency service, which this study attempted to do, than there is on identifying its determinants.

The discussion on constituency service is bordered on the relationship between parliamentarians and the citizens they represent. In developing countries like Malawi, the notion of constituency service is embedded within the broader expectation of MPs as development agents for their constituencies.

During the Parliamentary Workshop, organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago in Port-of-Spain (2012), it came out that

MPs have multiple responsibilities: to their family, constituents, party, to parliament and sometimes also as a Minister. Dealing with public expectations places a great burden on MPs' time, energy and finances. Yet MPs believe that they have a strong political interest in responding positively to requests. They hope to gain electoral benefits by doing so, and fear electoral sanction if they do not.

In many countries, constituency work is considered by MPs as well as by scholars as a complete part of the parliamentary mandate (Poyet, 2013). Questions on why MPs are interested or undertake constituency services remain debatable, in view of their legislated functions and mandates. Brack and Pilet (2016) observe that the way representative (MPs) and votes (the electorates) communicate with each other remains under-researched. However, it seems clear that elected representatives are expected to be involved with constituents and to be present in the community and should follow the opinions of their constituents (Andre' et al, 2013c; van Haute & Depauw, 2010). Nevertheless, whether constituency service would be a tool for re-election of members of parliament remains to be explored.

2.3 Representation and Elections

Representation in a democracy has been a complex issue especially considering its meaning and application. While there are many scholars that have defined what representation [political] is, there is general agreement that Pitkin (1967) provided as

simplest and easy to understand definition, where she said, “to represent” is simply to “make present again”, in other words, political representation is the activity of making citizens' voices, opinions, and perspectives “present” in the public policy making processes. While the study will not exhaust the various definitions to political representation, the bottom line of representation lies in its origin, that the people transfer their authority to govern to the elected officials who in turn, transact business on behalf of those that elected them’.

Representation can be understood from many angles, one of which is the electoral system a country adopts to choosing its leaders, be it in local or national elections. Globally, there are two dominant electoral systems and these are the First Past The Post (FPTP) [which has already been defined earlier on in this study] and the Proportional Representation (PR). The PR system has a number of features to define it which include, First, a country is considered one single constituency for elections and hence no delimitation of election boundary, second; candidates do not contest elections as individuals, but as party candidates appearing on a prepared list, third; after elections members of parliament are accountable to the party rather than to the voters (Matlosa, 2000)

A comparative analysis study between FPTP and PR alludes that FPTP is designed to be closer to the electorates than the PR system and therefore, MPs are more linked to their constituents than PR system (Warioba, 2011). Other than the closeness of the systems to the electorates, Rehfeld (2011, cited Rehfeld, 2009), identified decision making as one of the distinct features between the two systems. Due to closeness of the FPTP system to the voters, the system is reputed for promoting accountability of MPs to their electorates and that electorates feel more represented than the PR system. It is said that in the PR system, voters cannot allocate who to contact for their needs (Matlosa, 2000; Warioba, 2011; Patel & Tostensen, 2013). Through this attachment of voters to their representative, that the MP is regarded as ‘Head of the family’ [of the Constituency]. In the words of Lindberg (2010);

...that the clientelistic relationship between MP and constituents stems from the tendency to regard the office of MP as infused with traditional notions of ‘head of family’. The MP thus has the responsibility to take care of, support, and help when necessary, his or her ‘family’. The moral obligation of an MP couched in these terms, as a person with an obligation to listen to the concerns of members of the family or group, and help in ways he or she can, is very strong, echoing Hyden’s (1983, 2006) ‘economy of affection’.

The thinking is in line with what Chabal and Daloz (1999) stated on representation in Africa, “the legitimacy of the representative is thus a function of the extent to which he/she embodies the identities and characteristics of the community”. It is in the same context that Chabal and Daloz continued to argue that the African notion of representation is communal or collective centered, and instrumental in that it entails the active furtherance and defense of communal interests. It henceforth deviates from the western liberal democratic conceptualization of representation, which traditionally embodies the obligation of legislating on behalf of the common good, as well as acting in the interest of all the citizens an MP represents (p. 55).

The question of members of parliament providing for constituency services in Africa cannot be overemphasized knowing that it is institutionalized in informal settings. The understanding of representation in the context of Africa is that representation equals carrying on the shoulders all the issues both at individual and collective level and provide solutions thereof. For instance, a Member of Parliament in Egypt, running for re-election in 2005, complained that voters in his constituency did not pay any attention to his parliamentary record, but were calling upon him to deliver jobs or to act as a mediator between individual voters and various agencies of the state bureaucracy. ‘You don’t belong to yourself, people are calling you incessantly and if you don’t help them, they won’t vote for you’ (Koehler, 2008). There is however, inadequate literature where members of parliament in Africa have challenged the notion of [them] carrying the communal, let alone individual burden of constituency service. Implicitly, all it may mean is, if they want to survive for long, they need to embrace those particular roles. Barkan (2010), however, said legislatures by definition are representative institutions, the members of which are elected not only to serve the national interests, but the interest of subnational, territorial, or group constituencies.

It is, however, important to know that the informal relations as characterized above, are part of the demands the representatives have to deal with outside their formal roles. This is in line with the African notion of representation. Chabal and Daloz (1999) stated that representation quite literally entails the active improvement of the material conditions of

the community represented. It can be argued on the same lines that the behavior of MPs acting beyond traditional roles of parliament is partly determined by the system in which African politics is defined and played.

Literature is plentiful that in Africa, neo-patrimonialism and clientelism have taken a centre stage to determine one's political life. They shape the game of politics in what is called 'hybridization', meaning that formal and informal rules live side by side. Cammack, et al (2007, in Bratton & van de Walle, 1997), described hybrid political systems in which the customs and patterns of neo-patrimonialism co-exist with, and suffuse, rational legal institutions. Weber, (1980) likened patrimonialism as connoting that a patron in a certain social and political order bestows gifts from own resources on followers in order to secure their loyalty and support and that clients, in turn, obtain material benefits and protection. In a neopatrimonial system, patrons typically are office-holders in state institutions who misuse public funds or office in order to stay in power (Soest, 2006).

2.4 Democracy and representation

The original intent of democracy was that citizens themselves had to personally take part in decision making on issues that affect them. This was what was known as direct democracy otherwise referred to as 'participatory democracy' (Heywood, 2004). This form of democracy has not survived because societies have become so large and complex, making it practically impossible for each citizen to directly transact business by oneself, hence the adoption of indirect democracy also known as 'representative democracy'. Representative democracy is where citizens participate in government by electing public officials to make government decisions for them (Jana et al, 1987). According to Castiglione and Warren (2005, cited Pitkin, 1967), representation put broadly, takes in two major dimensions distinguished by "formalistic" and "substantive" understanding of political representation. There are however, divergent views on the actual definition and concept of political representation in a democracy, suffice to state that representative democracy has created a relationship between the voters and their representative.

This relationship is widely understood as principal-agent, where the principal shall be the voters or the governed and agent being a representative or the governor. In further trying to perfect or understand this representation, models of representation have been developed. The mostly studied and used are, *delegate* and *trustees* models of political representation. Aten (2009) said that the delegate model of representation is that idea where the politicians should act as the mouthpiece of their constituents and make policy in accordance with the wishes of the electorate. These models are not an end to themselves, rather they provide guidance on how citizens would like to be represented. This is addressed in electoral systems of most of jurisdictions (elaborated more earlier on). One school of thought that need to be underlined, however, is that representation in contemporary Africa does not fit easily within the Western model where the notion of individual and legitimacy are so distinct (Chabal & Daloz, 1999, p. 54). Arguably, there is a huge debate around the understanding of democracy in the western world compared to that of Africa and other developing world where the notion of culture and tradition occupy a larger space in defining political behavior of actors. The bond that is created between the representative and the represented in the African context to a greater extent undermines ones' legitimacy if western rules of democracy are to be applied wholesomely. This too has an impact on elections.

2.5 The Case of Constituency Development Fund

Constituency Development Fund has become an important fund in most Parliaments in developing nations to support various forms of community initiated projects including Malawi. Cammack et al., (2000, (in Nakamura & Johnson, 2003; Chweya & Geek, 2006) referred to Constituency Development Fund as sums of money given by government to MPs and are found in various underdeveloped countries, such as Kenya, the Solomon Islands, India and Papua New Guinea. A Constituency Development Fund (CDF) is a government budget allocation mechanism that channels a specific portion of the national budget to the constituencies of Members of Parliament (MPs) to finance development projects (Tsubura, 2013). Tsubura continued to state that this method of distributing money via MPs to the local level has been defended as another way to promote decentralisation

and local decision-making and to foster infrastructural and business development at the grassroots level. The facility also provides MPs with a method of promoting development activities in their constituencies directly, which appeals to MPs who see this as a way of winning votes. Others have defined Constituency Development Fund as a government financial plan on allocation mechanism that guide specific sector of nationalized budget to constituencies of MPs to fund confined small-scale development scheme such as construction of health clinics, water supply systems and school facilities (Chesang et al., 2013 in International Budget Partnership 2010). Most countries in Africa and Asia (developing countries) have adopted CDF as ideal mechanism to channel government funding in order to finance development projects as way of improving living standards of rural communities (mainly) in order to reduce poverty. They are convinced that the easy way for resources to reach grassroots communities is through the CDF. CDF is a unique fund in that MPs are vested with a measure of authority in the assortment of projects, a role that can be considered a new form of public service by MPs. Chessang (2011), further observed that CDF is not just a means of transferring public finances from central to confined governments, but a premeditated tool for a redistributive game by politicians; MPs use the funds to act in response to the development needs of their constituencies, nurture their personal votes and improve their chances of re-election.

This is noted that the original intent to improve the welfare of the rural communities is not in the state the CDF has achieved in many of the developing countries. A snap highlight of the CDF in few selected countries indicate that the fund has had a number of varying challenges that the intended purposes for the fund were highly compromised. For instance, in India ever since its conception, the fund has been constantly criticized on the grounds of erosion of separation of powers between the executive and the legislative (as provided for in the Constitution of India), dilution of the powers of the Panchayats (local governments), and mismanagement and misuse of funds, while in the Philippines, the fund has alternatively been known as the “pork barrel”, which has been used as a derogatory term used to describe government spending that is intended to enrich constituents of a politician in return for campaign contributions or votes.

In Kenya, the fund provided avenue for the MPs to indulge in corruption, and misuse of Funds/Ghost projects and also accused of amassing wealth and campaign money through ghost projects.

Finally, in Malawi as Chiweza (2010) observed that there is generally a lot of resentment towards the CDF and it is widely perceived by communities, chiefs, and other actors as not promoting participatory decentralized decision making but only serving the needs and partisan interests of the MP and loyal party members and not the entire community. From the above revelations it can be deduced that the MPs with CDF, promote their own agenda other than interests of the wider community they serve.

The table below depicts a sample of countries that have since adopted CDF as a form of community projects financing.

Table 1: Sample countries with Constituency Developing Fund (CDF)

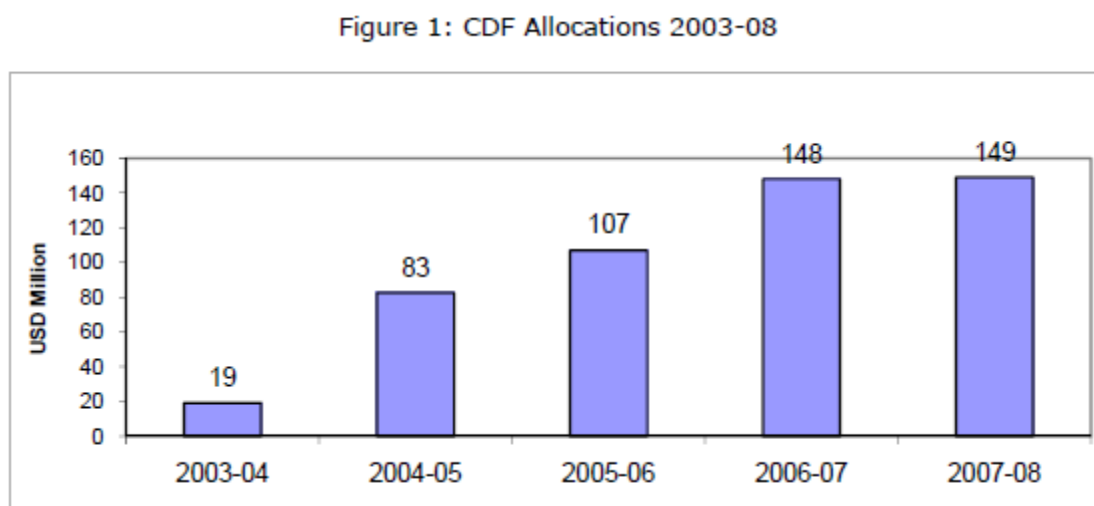
No	Country	Start Year
1	Phillipines	1930
2	USA	1984
3	Papua New Guinea	1989
4	India	1993
5	Ghana	1994
6	Zambia	1995
7	Kenya	2003
8	Malawi	2006
9	Tanzania	2009

Source: Researchers own compilation (2017)

The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) in Malawi received its first allocation of MK2 million in the 2006/2007 fiscal year (Cammack, et al, 2007). The current budget of 2017/18 fiscal year has an allocation of MK22 million per constituency (2017/18 Budget). This means over the period of ten years, the annual allocation has moved from initial MK2

million when it was first introduced to MK22 million currently. It is observed that any adjustment upwards, receives a lot of support from MPs. This is similar to MPs in Kenya where the same fund has seen steady increase in each subsequent fiscal year as is on the next page.

Figure 1: CDF Allocations in Kenya for 2003-08



Source: Roxana Gutiérrez Romero (2009)

According to Chiweza (2010), the Malawi's CDF has no guidelines for implementation and operates under the discretion of the Member of Parliament for the constituency. In other words, there is no law regulating the fund. Due to this arrangement, Chiweza continued to state that the fund is widely perceived by communities, chiefs, and other actors as not promoting participatory decentralised decision making but only serving the needs and partisan interests of the MP and loyal party members and not the entire community. From the above, it can clearly be argued that the Member of Parliament has discretionally powers over the fund, and would be selective in choice of projects. It is observed that lack of community involvement in choices of projects defeats the purpose for which decentralization was adopted.

On the other hand, according to Cammack (2010), the CDF undermines the principle of separation of powers, which does not give MP's power to implement development. This can also be equated to someone who singlehandedly proposes, decides on it, implements and monitors the same. This breeds a number of missing links, subjecting the fund to abuse. The CDF is development fund for small scale constituency development and through Decentralization Act, falls under the domain of members of the District Council. As the current law stands, Members of Parliament through a Decentralization Act, are members of the Council (s.5, 2010). It can justifiably be stated that constituency service as the law stands, is a role MPs can play over and above other sources of funding that MPs may source publicly or privately.

While the role of MPs in Constituency Development Fund is under contest in light of Councilors in place in Malawi, where the law recognizes them as full council members, having full voting rights, it can be opined that MPs by doing so are not operating from a vacuum. They only see delivery of projects as their own political survival in CDF supported projects.

The MPs in Malawi and elsewhere, where CDF is operational, feel it's the only fund that constituents can easily access development. As in Kenya CDF was established with the goal of fighting poverty at the grassroots level (Romero 2009). This is a justification as to why this fund in many countries is massively supported without even proper guidelines, lack of involvement of beneficiaries on decision making and selective application of

development project in the constituency. But political theorists of rational choice, state that politicians are calculative actors and for any decisions they make, it is said, there is utility maximization (Hodgeson, 2012).

There is no clear separation of role functions between formal and informal, when MPs in Malawi are transacting their official business at constituency level especially now that councilors are in place. This could be one reason why representation at that level overlaps at some point on development project with those of Councilors. No wonder therefore that voters in some instances demand from their elected officials (MPs in particular), private goods with a clear conscious that their elected representatives ought to do that in return for the votes. For instance, constituents demand from their MP to consider paying for school fees for their children, even when all parents are alive. Comparing the two in practice as the Afrobarometer (2013) observed, constituency service support is closer to the MP and voters themselves than oversight and lawmaking. Lindberg (2011) said that activities of executive oversight, for example, are mostly not recorded in any formal sense in new democracies apart from questions on the floor of the house. This makes it difficult for the constituents to appreciate the ripple effects of the contribution oversight role would make to the peoples' well-being.

This demand for constituency service in both private and public goods support is also compounded by lack of legislation to provide guidance on separation of duties among actors in constituency development. This could be more reason the MPs give a lot of handouts to clients for private benefit and continue to support projects in their constituencies especially during the campaigns using personal resources. This is confirmed in a study conducted by National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) (2005), which highlighted that constituents request various forms of assistance ranging from footballs for schools to community development projects to helping with funeral costs. The study further quoted respondents who claimed that the UDF started the practice of giving substantial gifts during campaigns, which created expectations among voters that now must be met by all, seeking political support. Although this gift giving and support to development projects start during the campaign for new comers, the trend continues between elections. This development by MPs involvement and dominance in constituency

service is entrenched in the systems as part of the norm, and the more reason MPs hardly divorce themselves from this tradition of handouts. This is in agreement with what Helmke and Levitsky (2003), while admitting that the mainstream comparative research on political institutions focuses primarily on formal rules, were also quick to point out that in many contexts informal institutions ranging from bureaucratic and legislative norms to clientelism and patrimonialism shape even more strongly political behavior and outcomes.

What is emerging from the discussion is the refusal of traditional political systems to transform into modern political systems in full, which will demand elected officials to operate within essential political codes in accordance with democratic tenets. Although there is no empirical evidence that MPs spend a lot of time on constituency service than on law making and oversight roles in Malawi, ideally the opposite should be the case. In contrast, while the MPs in developed democracies such as UK, France, Ireland and Canada to mention but a few, MPs also spend substantive amount of time, and others more than half of their time in serving the constituency needs. Their motive for doing so is not electoral. Gallanger (2009) stated “In Britain, MPs do this not primarily for electoral motives – in fact, those who regard it as unimportant to their re-election prospects actually do more of it than those who regard it as electorally important”.

2.6 Malawi’s Electoral System

Since colonial period, through Malawi’s independence in 1964, to date, the First Past the Post (FPTP) electoral system has not changed. The system has been used for the Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Council Elections. On the basis of direct, universal and equal suffrage, people in Malawi, directly elect their representatives (s. 80 (1), the Malawi Constitution, 1994).

First Past the Post system of elections, is closely linked to delegate model of political representation, on the basis that the officials are directly elected by the citizens themselves. This has an implication on the accountability between the elected officials and the voters. This is the more reason that Patel and Tostensen (2013) argued that the primary emphasis put on MPs relationship with their constituencies probably stem in large measure from the

first-past-the-post electoral system in Single Member Constituencies (SMC) that Malawi adopted and has ever since used the same.

So far, literature in Malawi, including the Constitution, does not point out whether an MP is a delegate or a trustee. There is high perception that behavior of Members of Parliament is both delegate and trustee. However, the First Past the Post electoral system is largely viewed and tilting towards the delegate model of representation. Maltose and Patel (2006) agrees that FPTP is reputed for linking MPs directly to constituencies and it is for this reason that at least in theory, considered strong on accountability of MPs to the electorate since MPs contest elections as individuals representing their constituencies.

As part of strengthening the parliament link with voters, the Malawi Parliament, in its strategic plan (2010-2015), intended to establish Parliamentary Constituency Offices in its 193 constituencies, the purpose of which was to enhance MPs interaction with their voters on the functions of Parliament. It can be argued that the Malawi Parliament was of the view that the constituency office would enable their direct and easy access of the constituents to their MPs. This is what Pitkin (1967, in Castiglione & Warren, 2005), stated in defining representation where she emphasized on the ‘authority’ in the first place by the principal and the ‘accountability’ in return by the agent. In the same context, voters having directly elected their representative, feel empowered to demand accountability whether formal or informal. This can only happen effectively where there is direct link between the voters and the elected. First Past The Post as a system just facilitates this kind of linkage. This is opposed to Party list where the whole country is considered as one single constituency for the election hence there is no need for the delimitation of election boundaries and therefore voters’ choice is not bound by geographically confined electoral zones, but rather it is driven by their opinions/inclinations regarding ideologies and manifestoes of contesting parties. Second, candidates do not contest elections as individuals, but as party candidates appearing on a prepared list with its third feature that after election, members of parliament are accountable to the party rather than voters (Matlosa , 2000).

2.7 Theoretical framework

2.7.1 The Rational Choice Theory Defined

According to Levin and Milgrom (2004), rational choice is defined to mean the process of determining options that are available and then choosing the most preferred one according to some consistent criterion. This is the theory that holds that choices that a person makes tend to maximize total utility where utility is also referred to as reinforcement in behavior psychology (Hernstein, 1990). In other words, Sato (2013) proclaimed that rational choice theory assumes that an actor chooses an alternative that he/she believes brings about a social outcome that optimizes his/her preference under subjectively conceived constraints. Rational Choice theory can further be understood from many perspectives ranging from economics, politics, anthropology and many other disciplines. For the purpose of this study, using the consumer point of view, the rational choice theory is likened to a consumer where he/she has a transitive preference and seeks to maximize the utility that she/he derives from those preferences. In other words, rational choice theory is premised on rules of logic and the ability to verify actions and choice (Maganga 2011 cited Koetze, 2004). According to Maganga (2011), there are various assumptions about rational choice, which include the following:

- a) That decision makers have a complete understanding and knowledge of the value preferences of their followers or constituencies, and of the relative weights or importance of such preference;
- b) That decision makers are aware of all available decision options – all options must be taken into consideration to ensure that the best option is chosen; if some options were excluded or were not considered in the process the outcome will not necessarily guarantee the maximum benefits;
- c) That decision makers are informed about all the possible consequences (advantages and disadvantages) of each of the options: it is not sufficient to be only aware of all options, but the relative advantages and disadvantages of each of them should be known to him or her;

Furthermore, Marsh et al, (1998) states that rational choice theory assumes that individuals are self-interested, and all have the rational capacity, time and emotional detachment necessary to choose a best course of action, no matter how complex the choice.

Each candidate has several options to select from as a strategy to win elections and inevitably each one chooses what is perceived as a preferred strategy to be elected. However, the study's interest was for those that are already in office seeking re-election. In this case the rational choice theory was used to analyze their strategies which most of them used when seeking the said re-election.

In the context under discussion, CS has been so popular among the Members of Parliament not only in Malawi but beyond the borders. Most of them have touted that CS has been the only way development is closer to the people, a feeling that the MPs were seemingly engaging their constituents in providing the needs to uplift the status of the people they represent. An analysis of the projects under constituency development fund largely public goods provision in Malawi, one gets the picture that constituency development fund is the only avenue they can easily convince the electorates they have delivered. There is a perception that for the reelection to take place the constituents would like to see tangible infrastructure such as school blocks, teachers' houses, bridges, boreholes on one hand; and on the other hand; the private support to individuals and families or groups such as funeral costs in and transportation, school fees for the needy children such as orphans, hospital bills, provision of private ambulance services, the actual cash handouts etc.

Unfortunately, incumbents (MPs) may not always have the necessary facts on hand to know for certain the outcome or consequences of their actions because their choices may be based on the assumption that all they may have done and intend to do has maximum utility.

The support in constituency service by MPs to their constituents is assumed that the more they do on projects or service delivery in general, the more popular they are. This could not be far from the pressure exerted on CDF. On the other hand, there is high spending on personal resources as handouts by most MPs. By spending so much, especially at the peak of the campaign year may be their best option of the many options on the table. The thinking is that they are doing well to the constituents, whose results would be in their favor. Unfortunately, the results in Malawi have not tended to follow the pattern of such thinking. The expected reward after so much investment into the campaign has been varied.

The incumbency turn over in Malawi's elections is very high, for instance, of the 187 who contested for the 2004 Parliamentary elections, only fifty- nine retained their seats (Chijere-Chirwa, 2009).

The challenge with the rational choice theory though is that the maximum utility is not observable. Therefore, much of the investment can be made into the campaign particularly in offering handouts to voters thinking one can get the votes. While it has worked in other instances on the contrary it has been different result altogether in other areas.

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2.8 Conclusion

The chapter has reviewed the literature on constituency service by way of defining the concept in much more detail with literature relating to electoral strategies in particular areas to do with electoral system Malawi follows and the impact thereof. Of interest, how this concept of CS has been understood at international and regional levels while linking to what Malawi understands, looking at constituency service as an important aspect of the role of an MP in view of traditional prescribed roles.

The chapter has brought in the case study of Constituency Development Fund (CDF) to aid in explaining how most countries such as Kenya, Ghana and Malawi to mention but a few have used CDF to explain how MPs use the fund as springboard for CS. The chapter further reviewed literature on cross range of concepts that helped to explain some relationships with re-election and these included representation and elections, Malawi's Electoral System and Democracy and representation. Finally, the chapter engaged on the theoretical framework that guided the study and rational choice resonated well in understanding the topic under study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. However, the results were analysed largely using qualitative approach on the basis that most of it were the opinions of the respondents. There was an extent where the research employed quantitative because of the nature of the objectives. This chapter highlights rationale for the study, how the sampling was done and reasons thereof. It continues to identify the population, its sample and the methods that were used. Finally, the chapter explains the data collection tools, the data that was collected which also includes the analysis. The chapter in its last two sections ends by mentioning the ethical considerations that were employed and the limitations of the study. While recognizing the use of quantitative approach, the overall analysis was qualitative hence qualitative study.

3.2 Research Design

Firstly, the area under studied was relatively new; and empirically, not much has been written in Malawi to establish factors that contribute to re-election of a Member of Parliament, let alone identifying the extent to which constituency service is a viable factor for re-election. The study acknowledged few studies in the region that have attempted to empirically equate constituency service as a prerequisite to re-election, however, their findings do not conclusively state the constituency service as a cause for re-election. Most studies have covered perceptions that claim constituency service as a factor that can be claimed for one's reelection. Against all this, this study was grounded on constituency service in Malawi. This is in recognition that no study has so far tested this factor, a key area Malawians and other nationals may want to understand further.

Considering that the study seeks to explore the feelings, opinions and conduct of the people on the subject under discussion, furthermore that the study seeks to access deeper understanding of the respondents on issues that are being explored, it was imperative that qualitative method of data collection be used. This was the kind of study that recognized the attributes of respondents that under any circumstance cannot use quantitative method to understand it. The thinking for qualitative approach to this subject was well supported by Cresswell (2003) who said that if a concept or phenomenon needs to be understood because little research has been done on it, then it merits a qualitative approach. He further said that qualitative research is exploratory and is useful when the researcher does not know the important variables to examine. In other words, Atieno (2009) said if the purpose is to learn from the participants in a setting or a process the way they experience it, the meanings they put on it, and how they interpret what they experience, the researcher needs methods that will allow for discovery and do justice to their perceptions and the complexity of their interpretations. While studies have been undertaken in areas of identifying factors leading to high incumbent turn- over, the factors have not been isolated and studied if indeed failure for re-election by incumbents would be attributed and singled out to those factors and inversely if those factors were a cause for re-election. This study therefore delves into an area that has not been exploited and indeed quite new in Malawi.

3.3 Study Population

This study generated data that helped to understand factors leading to re-election with a special interest in investigating whether constituency service is a viable strategy for the re-election of an MP. Therefore, the study's population unit sampled two categories of Members of Parliament (both serving and those that lost in one of the past elections) and the voters in some constituencies as the main players.

3.4 Sample and sampling methods

The study used purposive sampling since the number of members of Parliament that were re-elected was known and considering that there is high turn- over in the Malawi Parliament, the number was relatively small and all were selected. A minimum of three

terms of office between 1999- 2014 and currently serving were considered as primary target. However, those that have served more than three terms were also highly considered. There were twenty-six sitting MPs that were selected but the study reached to twenty-two MPs. The rest of the MPs could not grant the interview due to own reasons beyond the researchers control even after securing appointments. Considering that all the MPs that fell in the sample size the FGDs also were selected from the list of MPs that were selected. However, only 6 FGDs were selected randomly sampled. This was also considered on the basis that a research of this nature may not have sufficed funding the field trips of data collection due to cost implications.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

3.5.1 Focus Group Discussions

The study used Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) for the voters. Freitas *et al* defined a FGD as a type of in-depth interview accomplished in a group whose meetings present characteristics defined with respect to the proposal, size, composition and interview procedures. The study used Area Development Committees (ADCs) as the entry point for FGDs in the constituencies. The ADC helped in identifying participants to the discussions. The ADC was identified as a formally recognized structure for development in the constituencies and the researcher drew an assumption that the ADC was a group that was party heterogeneous committee as a development arm of the constituency. It would therefore select people not based on party affiliations. Each FGD was composed of 7-10 members from the constituencies that had their MP serve a minimum of two terms. They were three groups of men and women and the youth who were selected on the basis that they had voted a minimum of two elections in any of the three previous elections between 1999-2014. In total there were 18 FGDs drawn from 6 constituencies across the country. The Constituencies were chosen on convenience basis to the researcher. A sample of 8 members of parliament that served between the same period but lost re-election in either of the elections.

The study by targeting voters in FGDs opined that the voters had a clear understanding of what they wanted from a representative hence the Focus Group Discussions.

The study used both from the primary and secondary data sources.

3.5.2 Primary data

3.5.2.1 In-depth interviews

An In-depth interview is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation with an intent to explore new issues in depth (Neal & Boyce, 2006).

This was very important as it formed the bedrock of operationalizing the objectives under study. In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants, the MPs themselves including other groups such as the academia. The idea was to ground the study in intensive interaction with a view to have an in depth understanding of the subject under study. In doing so, both the central and the supporting objectives were addressed. In all cases open ended questions were used to allow follow ups to various responses where need arose.

3.5.2.2 Secondary data

The Hansard and other Parliamentary records were constantly reviewed especially with a view to check the number of times an MP had been elected to Parliament. This had to be done before the research team went on the ground. It was preceded by a review of literature that indicated a list of MPs that had so far retained or lost their seats. The study focused between 1999-2014 elections. However those that were elected earlier than 1999 and were still serving at the time of research were also selected. In addition, a number of publications on electoral strategies were reviewed with a view to deepen the theories around electoral strategies. This included studies and reports both in Malawi around the region and beyond. Apart from appreciation of the concepts and theories a comparative analysis was also being drawn in countries especially with the similar level of democracies. In doing so objectives one and two were being addressed.

3.6 Data analysis

The data was collected in all its forms ranging from various forms of primary as well as secondary sources. Data collected came in form of both quantity and quality, the study chose content analysis as the large part of the data was qualitative. Content analysis which is known for its systematic technique in describing various forms of communication be it written or verbal was ideal to understand the content, identifying most important aspects of the content, and helped to present important aspects of the content clearly and effectively; and supported some arguments among many advantages. Content analysis was best placed for this purpose. This is in line with what Hsieh and Shannon (2005, cited Kondracki & Wellman, 2002) who observed that the goal of content analysis is to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study. In analyzing the data using content analysis, both the objectives were being addressed.

3.7 Ethical consideration

Prior to the commencement of the research, the University of Malawi through the Department of Political and Administrative Studies (PAS) issued me with a letter of Introduction to show to the authorities concerned and participants to the study the intent of the research so as to seek consent for participation. This is in line with any research involving human subjects required to show respect for ethical issues. Social science investigates complex issues which involve cultural, legal, economic, and political phenomena (Freed-Taylor, 1994). This complexity means that social science research must concern itself with “moral integrity” to ensure that research process and findings are “trustworthy” and valid (Mollet, J.A, cited Biber, 2005).

The study ensured that it was transparent in the conduct of the study by among others; explaining the purpose of the study to authorities and respondents which was the case to this study.

Second, that those involved as participants, had their consent sought well before the exercise commenced. Those that declined had their views respected and consideration of replacement were made. Names of those that participated remained anonymous and where

entry of names were made it was optional. Last but not least, that information has all along been treated with strict confidence. No impression of monetary payment was made for participation in the study to respondents.

3.8 Limitation of the study

There were two main players in the study from where in-depth information was to be generated, the MPs and their voters. The study had to follow where the respondents were based. While it was easy to fix appointments with the MPs taking advantage of the sitting of Parliament where all MPs were present under one roof, it was a challenge to visit their constituencies to get the voters voices on the subject as the cost was huge. This was due to the fact that the MPs that were in the frame run across the country which meant to travel across the country. This was unattainable being an academic study. While this was observed as a deficiency, the study increased the number of FGDs from two to three for each constituency in order to have a wider base of FGDs from the settled six constituencies. This resulted to covering eighteen as opposed to the original twelve.

Secondly, while the interest was to cover the twenty-six MPs that all fitted into the sample, four of them were not reached due to various reasons beyond the researchers control. The study ended up with twenty-two respondents (MPs). Largely the sample reached was satisfactory and that the absence of the four in the sample was insignificant, as the information obtained reached a saturation point. The issue of re-election as an outcome of a strategy is the wish of every other contestant and affects all incumbents in Malawi. Therefore, the sample of twenty-three, may seem too few a sample size to warrant generalization of the study. However, since not all studies aim at generalizing its findings, the sampled MPs and the six constituencies FGDs can be extrapolated as if they had been carried out at a national level.

In summary the chapter was grounded on the research design and the analysis protocols. This involved in how the data was collected, the tools, the analysis and the tabulation of the information.

3.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, the research design has been explained as mixed methods of qualitative and quantitative. On the design it was highlighted that much as the study used mixed methods the analysis was more of qualitative than quantitative but acknowledge the quantitative method as having added value. The chapter also identified the study population being Members of Parliament and the voters themselves through FGDs as being key to the study. It further highlighted the sample size and sampling methods with a focus on those MPs that have served a minimum of three terms of office with an inclusion of those that served two terms and one term but could no longer secure more mandate. The chapter has explained the data collection methods and the data analysis. Also in this chapter is the mention of ethical considerations. Finally, the study has acknowledged the limitations and this, the chapter has mentioned.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

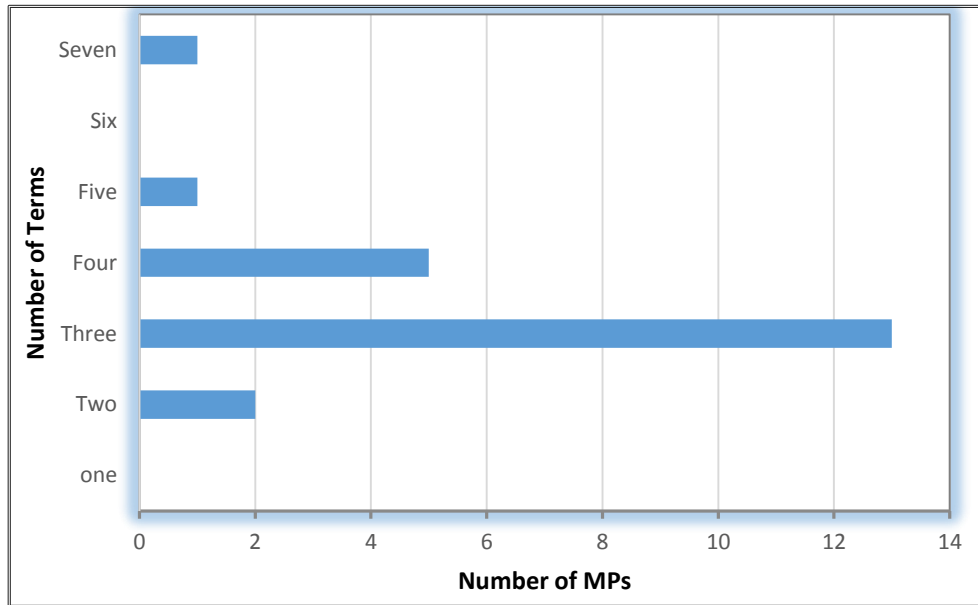
4.1 Introduction:

This chapter provides a detailed presentation of the results of the findings and their interpretation. This was in line and based on the study's objectives. The major focus was on assessment to which CS was a viable strategy for re-election. The results also discuss the other strategies that MP use for re-election beyond CS.

4.2 Strategies MP use for re-election

There are few isolated cases in Malawi where MPs voluntarily opt not to seek re-election. Actually since 1994 those that have stepped down, have done so under economic and other opportunities. For instance, Hon. Bently Namasasu was ready to contest in the by-elections of Lilongwe City South East Constituency in June 2017 but his party decided to dangle him with diplomatic post to Japan which he graciously accepted and withdrew from the contest. Otherwise the contingent of incumbent MPs when they lose primary elections opt to stand as independent candidates. The point being driven here is that while the MPs seek for re-election, they use a number of strategies in order to win the votes. It is however, noted that although the numbers that seek re-election is high the results have shown that there is high voter turn-over in Malawi. Dulani (2004), observed that imposition of candidates as in 2004 elections may be a cause to high turn-over as the majority of them were rejected by the voters. According to Malawi Electoral Commission Report (2014) this high turn-over (failure to retain seats) has continued with the 2014 Parliamentary results where only 53 out of the 193 Members of Parliament, were retained. The number of MPs re-elected is getting smaller by each general election.

Figure 2: Number of terms for sampled MPs that have served



Source : Researcher's own collection

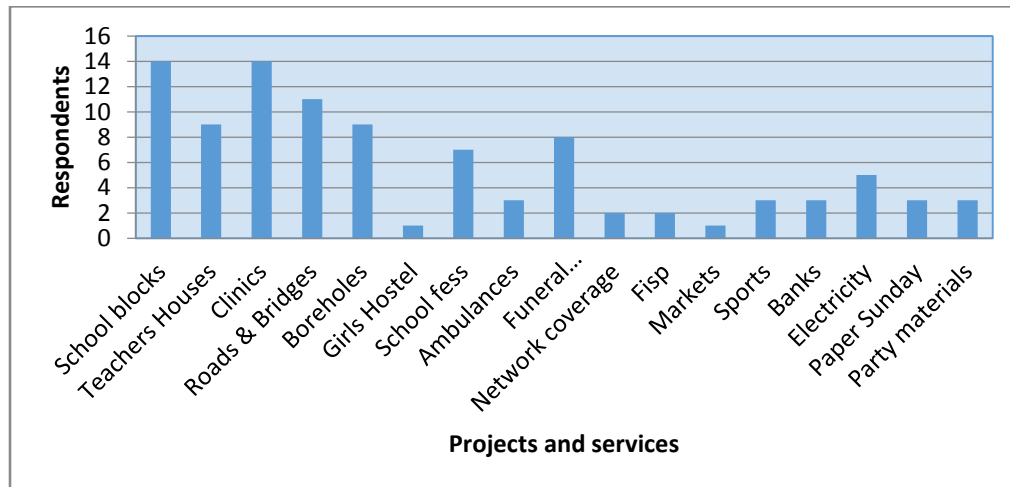
The question of whether they use straight jacket formulae, was part of this study which sought to find out the effectiveness of CS, a viable strategy for re-election. It was observed that respondent MPs mentioned a number of strategies that they use on seeking re-election with one of the longest serving MP stating that his campaign starts the next day election results have been announced (Hon. Abubaker M'baya, 2017)

The following are some of the findings on the results that related to objective one.

4.2.1 Deliver Development Projects and Other Services

One factor as a strategy for re-election that kept coming from the study findings and confirming the importance of constituency service was the ability for the incumbent MP to deliver projects to the constituents. In the study, 31.8% of the respondents were of the view that an MP should deliver development projects to the people in order to secure re- election. This came as no wonder as various development projects needed in the constituency were listed by all respondents when asked which development projects (services) were required in their respective constituencies. They all mentioned (not in order of priority), infrastructure in schools, health centres, electricity, roads and bridges, markets, boreholes including personnel and drugs in health centres. The list also included school fees to needy students in secondary schools and universities, food ration when there was hunger in the constituency, transportation of dead bodies and coffins as some of the needs.

Figure 3: The Nature of Projects and Services on demand in the Constituency Service



Source: Researcher's own collection

The figure above indicates the various types of projects and services that constituents request their MPs to provide them with. While development projects and other constituency services were accounted for as a re-election strategy, the notable projects that were mentioned by respondents included school blocks and clinics [buildings] at 63.6% followed by roads and bridges; teachers' houses and boreholes at 50% and 40%

respectively. Other services included funeral support (coffin purchase) and school fees at 36.4% and 31.8% respectively. At 5% and less included the rest of the needs as covered in the figure above.

The findings also revealed that those with sound education did not support the idea of purchasing coffins for bereaved families citing that, as the family responsibility. Instead most MPs in this category opt to offer condolence with small amount of cash (not even adequate to buy a coffin).

In large amounts, the findings skew towards hardware projects which tend to fall outside the core mandate of an MP. Apparently none of the MPs core mandate was mentioned by any respondent let alone the FGDs. Except for one FGD where the group sounded satisfied with their MP making some contributions in Parliament. They however, did not follow what specific matter the MP was contributing on. The delivering of projects to the constituents by the MP was not strange phenomenon as all the studies converge and tend to agree that in the 'eyes of citizens' especially in developing countries such as those in Africa, the citizens perceive role of an MP to deliver development projects. It is not surprising that in a study on Parliamentary Question Time (Kachule, 2011) found that MPs philosophy behind question time was that it was a period for requesting development projects that were lacking in their constituencies and that the primary motivation for MPs to ask questions in Parliament was essentially to be seen that they are representing the interests of their constituents often in belief of gaining re-election in return.

This is in line with the choice theory assumption that those seeking for the office are aware of the needs of their voters and find solace in seemingly wanting to be heard that the voters were well represented when it comes to question time in Parliament.

To the constituents, it is called proper representation where it shall mean improving material well-being of people (Barkan, 2010). This is also in line with the broader expectation of the constituents where constituents' opinions are divorced from that of

Parliamentarians as presented below in a report by the International Parliamentary Union (IPU) below.

Figure 4: Which is the most important role of parliamentarians?



Source: International Parliamentary Union (IPU).

Members of Parliament operate from an informed position on constituency service, however, much as they could differ with their voters on what exactly they were supposed to be doing, they could not act contrary to the wishes of their voters. This could be one reason they use own resources to help their constituents. For instance, an FGD highlighted the following:

“Our MP has already provided school fees to needy students across the constituency without discrimination and covers the whole constituency. He is excellent at hand-outs particularly in support of funeral and illness expenses. He is development conscious, consider this term alone, he has

been able to put up a Health Centre, an Admarc Depot and a Primary School Block using his own funds. His level of understanding for the constituency needs, is very high and generally he has love for his people in the constituency”.

FGD- Karonga

The researcher took exception of this magnitude of personal support with own resources. This gives an impression that MPs are under intense pressure to deliver on projects in the constituency so as to be seen to be responding to needs of the constituents in a bid to secure re-election. This could also be the explanation to the budget increase for the allocation of CDF every other year in Malawi. The MPs themselves allege that this is the only fund for development that is close to the people, can deliver instantly and empowers the people as they make own decisions on what they need at a given time.

This is also supported by Balkan (2014) who shared this view on CDF despite the criticism that the fund operates without proper rules and procedures:

“It would conclude from this that CDFs or their approximations have been created by African MPs as a response to constant and intense constituent pressure “to deliver” both private (such as jobs or cash hand-outs for school fees, health dispensary bills) and public goods (such as development projects to build schools, roads, and health clinics) and thus increase their prospects for re-election. Even in one-party dominant party systems, MPs still have good reasons to worry about re-election. On average, between half to two thirds of incumbent MPs lose their seats in African elections, often through party primaries as much as in the general election. Stated simply, these MPs view CDFs as a critical element of their job security.”

Interestingly, it must be noted that CDF is not only happening in Malawi, a number of countries both in Africa and beyond in other developing continents have adopted the CDF

with an overwhelming support of various parliaments as seen from the yearly increases on its budget.

Reading between lines on MP and delivery of projects to the constituents, MPs are there in order to address the needs of the constituency and hence the delivery of development projects remain high on their responsibility agenda. Kachule (in Patel & Tostensen, 2007:95) said that MPs in Malawi basically are ‘service responsive’ vis-a vis their constituencies in a tangible sense, rather than ‘policy responsive’ in relation to general needs of the nation (p.103).

The study’s findings point to the fact that MPs are so much into service provision through delivery of different types of projects as demanded by the constituents. In so doing that they remain relevant with the expectation of their voters and furthermore in providing their voters with social and other developmental needs, satisfy their extrinsic and intrinsic motivations.

The following were findings under objective 2 included the following:

4.2.2 Behaviour of an incumbent MP

The study established that 45.5 % of the respondent MPs attributed re-election to the behaviour that an MP portrays with the constituents. In their view the respondents observed that re-election hinges; in part, on how one resonates in with the constituents. This was expounded to mean the respect an MP accords his/her constituents. One respondent made mention that in any given area, the majority of voters are poor and as such they need to be recognised by among others valuing their presence and proceed to greeting them. The point was constantly being driven that MPs need to be down to earth when they were in the constituency with their voters. Furthermore, that they do not draw distinction between themselves and the constituents in all manner. They gave so many examples including the following; that they mingle with the crowd during the funerals and share with them the floor they are sitting on even if Persons of Importance Treatment (VIP) is provided to them. When it comes to meals, join them in partaking with them the meals. This to the

constituents, means “being one of them, a down to earth person and one that spoke their language. In literal vernacular language, meant *kudzichepetsa* (humility), one of the attributes an MP should possess. In one of the FGDs the people had this to say:

“Our MP is very exemplary in behaviour. He respects all the people of all walks and makes himself available for traditional community functions such as weddings, chief’s installations and funeral ceremonies in the constituency. He actually takes lead in the financial support of these functions”, FGD – Lilongwe

A parallel was drawn by my respondents that other MPs are in a master and servant kind of relationship which was unhealthy for their survival. They made mention that MPs need to move with the people at all the times.

4.3.3 The Party Factor

The study also established that a reasonable number of respondents, mentioned that being loyal to the party and standing on a political party ballot during the polls is key to securing re-election. Of the 22 respondent 6 representing 27% said one has to be a member of a political party and stand on the party ticket in order to win election, including re-election. However, this only apply to few areas that one respondent described as ‘party conservative areas’ where some political parties have grown roots that hardly can be uprooted. This is the case with MCP and UDF dominant areas in central region and eastern region respectively. Few areas indeed remain stronghold of the two political parties to the extent that standing on another ticket or independent would be playing a gamble game. This scenario has stood the test of time although one respondent pointed out that of late, MCP has experienced penetration of other parties and independent candidates in areas that for long have MCP strongholds (Hon. Makala Ngozo, 2017) The case is also true with UDF. The following trend is a case in point.

Table 2: Voting Pattern- Distribution of Seats Following the 1994 Parliamentary Elections

Region	UDF	MCP	Aford	Independents	Totals
North	1	4	28	0	33
Centre	16	54	1	1	72
South	77	8	0	3	88
Totals	94	66	29	4	193

Source: Malawi Electoral Commission 1999 Parliamentary Election Results

Table 3: Distribution of seats following the 1999 Parliamentary Elections

Party /Year	UDF	MCP	Aford	Independents	Totals
1999	94	66	29	4	
2004	50	57	6	39	

Source - *The Power of the Vote: Malawi's 2004 Parliamentary and Presidential Elections*

Table 4: Candidates fielded and seats won at regional level in 2014

Party	Number of seats won
Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)	50
Malawi Congress Party (MCP)	48
Peoples Party (PP)	26
United Democratic Front (UDF)	14
Chipani Cha Pfuko	1
Aford	1
Independents	52
Total	192

Source: *The Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Elections in Malawi, May 2014, in: Africa Spectrum, 50, 1, 79-*

From the above it can clearly be stated that indeed the independents and other parties are steadily and increasingly making inroads into political party strongholds. In the 1999 Malawi Parliament had only 4 Independent MPs (Table 1.1). In the 2014 Elections, there were 52 Independent MPs who won on Independent ticket (Table 3.1). This result can safely be said that parties are fast losing grip of their command and that people are opting for Independents candidates. However, surprisingly, most of these independent MPs, renew their membership with their original parties once in Parliament. Few of them join Government benches on governing Party. Patel and Michael (2015) stated that the Malawian voter has shown low confidence in political parties by increasingly voting for independent parliamentary candidates. Therefore, the party factor is no longer holding, as a vehicle for re-election. It may also entail that political landscape is slowly changing where individual candidates are more appealing than party support.

This does not however, dismiss outright the belief other areas have on parties. Malawi has still remaining pocket of areas that are not moved on party loyalty and elections in and out, will still vote for the party candidate. Also worth noting is that there are smaller and new parties that have demonstrated ability to win seats in an election such as MAFUNDE, RP, PPM, NDA, and Chipani Cha Pfuko. Daniel Young (2014) observed that areas of strongholds compel members seeking office value competing more to win party nomination than switching to other parties who are non- strongholds.

4.3.4 Place of Residence

The place of residence for an incumbent MP including the new entrant as an aspirant, matters a great deal to the voters, the study found. There seem to be preference to have an MP resident in the boundaries of the constituency if not frequent visits to the constituency while skewing the discussion to almost saying, “The MP should be resident in the constituency, not only being resident but must have a house in the area he/she is representing the people”. Even the afrobarometer (2013) found that 95% of the MPs in

Malawi have a desire to be present in the constituency but only about 30% only are available.

This was one of the interesting findings of the study because of the reasons that the respondents especially the FGDs, advanced. One of the reasons stated that the MP has a responsibility to carry on his/her shoulders, the problems of the constituency and therefore access and availability are paramount. Should the MP stay far away from the constituents, how do the people who voted for him/her reach the person, was the question. They indicated that this person need to be available in the constituency. This opinion is well supported by the Afrobarometer survey (Round 3). When as much as 26% of Malawians were of the view that the Member of Parliament should spend visiting the community and its citizens all the time. The figure (26%) may be on lower side, however, respondents of 27% and 41% stated that the MP spend time once a week and once a month respectively. This gives us a picture that they almost want the MP all the time. This speaks well of availability of the MP in the constituency if one compares 2% and 3% who said it's not necessary for the MP to be in the constituency and 3% having said once a year is enough. In one of the FGD, participants had this to say:

“We want an MP who stays in the constituency and has a house where we are able to visit and dine with him etc. This is the case with our MP. He has a lodge in the constituency, stays here. When he comes back from Parliament, he invites leaders of various groups in the constituency including chiefs for parties and socializes with them. We want that kind of MP and certain we will vote him into office again come next elections”. FGD Karonga.

While most FGDs were emphatic about their MPs staying in the constituencies as their preference, MPs on the other hand thought making frequent visits was a balanced option considering that there were equally important duties elsewhere away from the constituencies. A section of the MPs did not find any challenge to stay in the constituency

considering that others first contested elections while resident in the constituency. On another note the study established that most MPs much as they suggested frequent visits are conspicuously missing for months after elections. They instead, communicate constituency issues through their self-appointed constituency party representatives. It was established further that the missing of MPs in the constituencies is running away from the demands placed on the MP by constituents. My own view is that the culture of handouts has permeated in Malawi and this is the case with other developing countries too. There is a feeling that the reason the constituents want their MP to be resident in the constituency is not development related, on the contrary that he/ she is easily accessible for personal benefit of various kinds. This is also true that the role of an MP has greatly been misunderstood by citizens where constituency service takes in a greater chunk of what citizens expect from their MP. One respondent said, “Malawi must be helped to improve its perception of an MP regarding their roles. Most of what an MP does is not supposed to be his/her role but other players (Hon. Frank Mwenifumbo, 2017).

These views about place of residence and that MPs ought to stay in the constituency are also shared in other studies too, for instance a report by International Parliamentary Union (IPU) captured a first term Member of Parliament from Malawi and this is what he had to say:

"It's about face time. Voters are not difficult people. If you promise it, do it! [Citizens] like when MPs go to their constituency to see their faces. MPs should always be with constituents, live in the constituency and be part and parcel of them. Whatever you do matters in elections. You can bring development but if they don't see you, then electors will not remember."

First-term MP, Malawi

Largely, the constituents would find it appealing to have their MPs within reach for obvious reasons that they can deliver their burden to them. On the contrary for those that do not stay in the constituency as their permanent residence opted to be making visits. On average, each visit that the MP makes to the constituency costs about US\$714 (Afrobarometer survey, 2013)

4.3.5 Handouts

Handouts in elections shall refer to vote buying which has been defined by Guardado and Wantchekon (2017) to mean a transaction whereby candidates distribute private goods such as cash and gifts in exchange for electoral support or higher. Brusco et al. (2004) defines vote-buying “as the proffering to voters of cash or (more commonly) minor consumption goods by political parties, in office or in opposition, in exchange for the recipient's vote.

Although standing at a lower rate level as a strategy in the study at 18%, my informants mentioned handouts as one strategy they use in order to woo votes both for first election and re-election as well. Apparently this was mentioned by constituencies that lie mostly in rural areas. When asked which of the services the constituents require from him as their MP, he was quick to point out that “handouts is one thing they frequently ask” (Hon. Alex Chitete, 2017) Comparing the rural to urban or semi urban areas as not favoring handouts, one can only deduce that rural communities may fall into liking handouts due to the levels of poverty being high, meaning that any small support given to them in form of handout is valued. The culture of handouts while practiced all over in developing countries on higher scale, in Malawi, it originated from the Dr. Bakili Muluzi who was the first multiparty President of Malawi in 1994. era where he publicly abolished what he termed as ‘Thangata’ (free labour) system in the one party era by Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda, declaring nothing was for free. This changed the perception of Malawians on free labour that they offered to the country, for instance during Youth Week which was a week in a year set aside when all Malawians had to dedicate their labour towards various development projects in their respective areas. The labour was offered for free.

Again in Kenya, where CDF was used as a source of handouts, a study revealed that wealth levels of an MP affected the intention to re-elect the incumbent MP. Specifically, the study found that the poor were more prone to wanting to keep their MP possibly in order to keep enjoying the benefits (Romero, 2009). A similar study in Kenya (Guardado, 2014 cited Kramon, 2009) found that swing voters and those with low incomes were more likely to be targeted for mobilization purposes. All in all, there is high perception by those that give out handouts for votes are convinced such a strategy make a difference. However, considering that casting votes in choosing electoral candidates in most if not all systems is secret, it is difficult to align beneficiaries of handouts to total amount of votes for a

candidate that dish out handouts. Guardado and Wantchekon (2017) observed that while there is ample evidence that candidates target certain voters with cash handouts, it is unclear whether these handouts actually result in greater turnout or higher vote shares in favour of the distributing candidate. Candidates have taken advantage of masses' lack of appreciation on what the MPs roles are. In the process most constituents especially in rural areas perceive the MP as there to provide for personal or family needs. The culture of handouts is also perpetuated by the MPs and other leaders themselves where cash is offered to their followers including the needy in the constituency. Handouts have made persons' perpetual expectant for handouts.

The recently enacted law in Malawi on political parties outlawing handouts is intended to curb such dependency. Other countries such as Zambia have this law in place. However, this ban is only during the electoral campaign period. While the contest on whether the handout generate the needed results rages on the fact remain the same that handouts are used as a strategy campaign in order to get in votes and those that practice are convinced. This is in line with the rational choice theory that by doing that they get their maximum satisfaction in doing so.

4.4 Conclusion

The chapter concludes by the main findings of the study and discussions thereof. The findings in the study included the following; that MPs need to deliver on projects if they want to be elected again for those that are office holders. This came out clear much as the development projects fall under a different office than that of the MPs. The voters look at the MP as one that is supposed to bring development projects. The chapter also mentions the other factor that affect the reelection and that is the Party factor where the regional divide has particular political parties dominant and voters tend to vote on the parties that are traditionally popular in a given area. Other strategies have been mentioned in the chapter and covered extensively and these include, the behavior of the MP particularly if he/she is one of them. Voters analyse and most are the opinion that an MP has to be exemplary and down to earth with them. In addition to this factor, others have been reelected because their place of residence is in the constituency they are standing for. Most voters want to see their representative available all the time in the constituency. Finally, on

the strategies, the culture of handouts counts in many communities in Malawi and others are voted into office due to their free will handout giving.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introductions

The chapter provides a summary of study findings and their implications. The study was looking at CS as a viable strategy for re-election. The study was further supported by the following objectives: (a) to establish the effectiveness of CS as a viable strategy for re-election in Malawi and; (b) to identify other strategies that contribute to MPs re-election in Malawi. The study defined constituency service as provision of public or collective goods to constituents such as boreholes, clinics, roads and bridges, schools, police units and many more other smaller scale development projects. Constituency service extends to private goods such as cash handouts for private bills that are private in nature that include school fees, medical fees, food ration, toiletries and many more others etc.

5.2 Constituency Service a Viable Strategy for Re-election of an MP?

In establishing constituency service as a viable strategy for re-election, the first objective was to find out the effectiveness of CS as a strategy that would enable an MP to securing re-election. The study managed to generate a number of strategies in its findings to that effect and these included the following; the delivery of development projects and other services; good behavior during the tenure of office; loyalty to the sponsoring party; place of residence; and handouts as main strategies. There were however, some strategies that scored lowly such as party/ individual manifesto; ones' education level; and family or personal legacy. These formed the basis for the findings for the study. The study confirmed that indeed constituency service is one strategy that is used by MPs in order to be re-elected. However, the major finding was that constituency service alone does not account for re-election. Respondents pointed out that a good chunk of what constituency service is, largely run by the CDF. Currently CDF in Malawi has a number of challenges in terms of the size of the fund versus the nature and amount of development needs for the constituency.

Chiweza & Munthali (2012) observed that, in addition, the fund suffers implementation challenges in the absence of proper and tight guidelines let alone its own law to guide its implementation and management that would help prevent leakage of funds. This situation is prone to abuse where funds at many times are used for unintended purposes. According to Chiweza & Munthali (2012), stated that most of the projects were not appraised thereby compromising on their quality and for those that appraisal was done, the study found that the appraisal was carried out long after the project had taken off. While the intent of the CDF is to provide people with development, most projects stall and remain unfinished. With such, it can be concluded that much as CDF is one vehicle that can enhance ones' chances for re-election, it may be dependent on how well CDF had been managed in a given constituency. The better the use where there are observable differences in the lives of constituents such available and accessible schools, clean water, clinics that are functional and other services e.t.c one may likely be re-elected. On the other flip side of the coin, if CDF is mismanaged, chances are slim to get another term of office. Other than CDF supported projects other members solicit development projects from private institutions but these were observed as insignificant to be used as a vehicle on fore-election.

As the study observed that good behavior contributed to the image of an MP, the good behavior is one attribute that others have been hailed as exemplary to the satisfaction of the constituents, but again this attribute although it scored highly compared to the rest of the other strategies, good behavior alone is not good enough as a factor/strategy that one would use it independently to secure re-election. It could be read from the feelings of the constituents during the FGD that most constituents are of the view that they would rather have an MP who is not on VIP treatment which is a good sign of a "well behaved MP" The good behavior is an internal attribute that may be difficult for self-appraisal on the part of the MP. Therefore, the good behavior need to be combined with other strategies to boost the re-election prospects. It is in the considered view of this study that the good behavior the MP portrays among his/her constituents need to be supported by other strategies in order to make a complete cycle of a winning strategy.

In addition to constituency service and the good behavior, the study also observes that loyalty to a political party that sponsored you and the party that has been fully established

in an area, which people render their full support is something that other have laid their back on. In central region where MCP is predominant, one is likely to get such statements as “even if you put the jacket and a symbol of a black cock, people will still vote for the jacket”. This means that what matters to them is the party as opposed to the person. In interpretation this means, the issue of behavior, or delivery of development projects, while they are equally important the reasons in electing the candidate is surpassed by the loyalty to the party. This, however, is only applicable to selected areas that are ‘tightly conservative’ to particular parties, mainly the MCP, UDF and DPP. Otherwise in a number of areas that have been known as party strongholds have been porous as seen and witnessed of the proliferation of independents candidates penetrating in the areas.

The study also showed that staying in the constituency permanently with ones’ residence located into the constituency enhances re-election. This is also varied when the MP has high visibility with regular visits into the constituency also enjoying better chances of re-election prospects. The study noted that Constituents want the physical presence and get in contact with their MP almost on frequent basis. This tallies with the findings that physically seeing their representative rub shoulders with them is a panacea to their constituency or personal problems. The MPs are aware about the impact their invisibility in the constituency can bring to their quest for re-election. It can actually cost heavily on their political career path. While this is true of all constituencies needing high interaction with their MPs, not all MPs do manage to frequent their constituencies, a fact that was bemoaned by the FGDs. However, MPs are aware of implications of visiting their constituencies on regular basis. The demand for resources to support the constituencies is very high. This aside, the availability of an MP in area on regular basis and those that can reside in the area they represent, is an additional value to re-election strategy. Like other strategies above, the residency or regular visits is not the only strategy one can use but a combination of others too, can bring the desired results of the re-election.

One of the weakest strategies, this study was able to establish was the strategy that handouts enhances prospects of ones’ re-election. It established that MPs confidently use the handouts under disguise that people are poor and they need to be helped, stating is the role of an MP to help the needy, the study learnt. Considering the levels of poverty in Malawi

being high, it could not be far from the truth that indeed the handouts make a difference in motivating people to vote for a candidate who is a free hand donor. However, the question of validating whether those that benefit from handout actually go and vote for that particular candidate remain hanging. In Malawi there is a saying too which says “*Landilani katunduyo, mukaona mmene mungachitire povota*” (receive the gifts but know what to do at the ballot). It’s not within the purview of this study to probe further on the relationship between the handout and the outcome of the vote, as to whether there is correlation or not, rather to confirm that the study established that other candidates use handouts as a way to sway votes in their favour. However, it remains unproven if this could be the strategy that can enable ones’ re-election in the absence of other strategies.

On a lower note as a strategy, the study found that education was a weapon the other candidates use to entice voters. The higher the candidate is educated, the better the chances to appear appealing to the constituents. The constituents become proud of having a highly educated MP. Other MPs get de-campaigned on the basis that they are uneducated. The assumption becomes that the more educated one is, the more understanding and the more the area will develop. However, these are mere opinions and assumptions. Malawi has lost in elections some of the well-educated MPs

The other strategies the study established but on lower note of the study, was the political legacy of the family. There are families in Malawi associated with politics from time immemorial such as the Muluzi, the Sangala, the Chihana and lately, the Mutharika whose parents have been members of Parliament before and so are the children or family members including Presidency. The current MPs from those families have used family legacy to get into office to some levels. The study can safely state that the sympathy vote to maintain the legacy worked for some MPs for their re-election.

5.3 Main Conclusion

The study established that constituency service while indeed is a viable strategy for re-election of an MP, it alone is not enough. There are a number of factors that constituents consider which incumbents may not use as a strategy which remain key to the campaign.

The political terrain at a given time also determines or swing towards the prevailing conditions. For instance, the way primary elections are managed in well-established parties, at times, are a fraud where parties have preference of candidates that may generally not be favored by voters who can take advantage of imposition of candidates to punish the party. On another note, the electoral system being followed also gives stiffer competition on candidates. For instance, FPTP where voters go for candidates as opposed to parties poses so many options to use for one to win elections, hence all these strategies. All in all, the study has given us the picture that there is no one strategy in Malawi that can wholesomely be put on the table as the main and key strategy to win a re-election. The study reveals multifaceted strategies that different candidates in different areas have employed for re-election. In other ways, there is no straight formulae for a re-election.

5.4 Study Implications

The major implication of the study findings is that constituency service as a viable strategy for re-election may be an overstatement to solely rely on it considering that its correlation with voter turn-out based on development projects and handouts may not be quantifiable, meaning to conclude that the amount of development projects and handouts given, can equal to number of votes one amasses. For instance, Romero (2009), established and found out that constituencies that provided for clean water received a nod for the MPs re-election as compared to those that built school blocks as one example of a variable. Therefore, the nature of the development projects that can be appreciated by the constituents must be put in high consideration. The empirical evidence elsewhere cannot even agree. For instance, in well developed countries there is a claim that that constituency service brings in electoral incentive for re-election on the contrary there is also a claim that there is no evidence of correlation.

Drop and Peskowitz (2012) said:

Previous empirical work has found mixed results on the relationship between constituency service and electoral margins (Fiorina 1981; Freeman and Richardson 1996; Johannes 1983). For example, Freeman and Richardson (1996) find no evidence of a statistically significant relationship between

electoral margins and casework, as measured by a survey of 310 legislators in four states. In contrast, in a comparative study of legislators in the United States and Great Britain, Cain, Ferejohn, and Fiorina (1987) argue that there is strong evidence that legislators alter their constituency service behavior in response to electoral incentives. In their words, “[r]epresentatives undertake constituency service with a variety of motives, but by their own testimony the electoral incentive is significant, especially for those in marginal districts” (1987, p. 213–14).

More often than not, MPs assume that people need particular projects when in fact the preference is elsewhere. In a similar manner, the handouts that other MPs tout as a strategy cannot guarantee that the persons receiving the handout in the course of the MPs tenure of office, would vote for the incumbent, let alone guarantee that the person would turn up for the vote. Where politics has been commercialized like in Malawi with a lot of handouts being flashed out during the peak of campaign, one may not be sure where the vote would go, as every candidate does the same.

The other implication for the study is that there is no law that regulates constituency service as such there is reasonable confusion on what the MP can do and what he cannot. Constituency service is “free for all”. This is against the situation where there are competing players on the ground, to mention the coming in of councilors. With decentralization framework in place, central government is supposed to pass on projects to the councils for Councils’ decision making and implementation. But that’s not the case where MPs are fully involved in decision making at council with CDF a case in point. If there was clear role regulation without usurping each other powers of various agencies in the governance structures, sanity in the councils would prevail.

5.5 Areas of further study

- a) In order to be more informed there is need to further look into the relationship between provision of constituency service and electoral incentives. This is an area that is built on assumptions and misleading
- b) The other interrogation area grounding some studies on finding out what exactly motivates the legislators between extrinsic and intrinsic factors to provide for Constituency Service. Is constituency service being promoted

to advance self-interest or indeed a human heart of helping the people find a better life.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: LIST OF SITTING MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (MP) INTERVIEWED

No.	Name of MP	Constituency represented	Date of interview	No. of terms
1	Hon. Lingson Belekanyama	Lilongwe Msinja North	19 th April, 2017	3
2	Hon. Frank Mwenifumbo	Karonga Central	12 th April, 2017	3
3	Hon. Roger Sithole	Kasungu North East	12 th April, 2017	3
4	Hon. Patricia Kalyati	Mulanje West	18 th May. 2017	4
5.	Hon. Charloes Mchacha	Thyolo West	17 th May, 2017	3
6	Hon. Vitus Dzoole Mwale	Lilongwe Msozi South	20 th June, 2017	4
7	Hon. Develius Zaipa	Mchinji South	11 th May, 2017	7
8	Hon. Abubaker Mbaya	Mangochi East	19 th April, 2017	5
9	Hon. Lilian Patel	Mangochi South	19 th April, 2017	4
10	Hon. Willard Gwengwe	Lilongwe South East	11 th May. 2017	3
11	Hon. Aaron Sangala	Blantyre Malabada	20 th April, 2017	3
12	Hon. Harry Thomson	Chikwawa North	09 th May, 2017	3

13	Hon. Makala Ngozo	Lilongwe Mpenu	09 th May. 2017	4
14	Hon. Rabson Chihau Shaba	Mzimba South East	12 th April, 2017	3
15	Hon. Richard Msowoya	Karonga Nyungwe	28 th June, 2017	2
16	Hon. Nkhosa Kamwendo	Ntchisi South	09 th May, 2017	3
17	Hon. Clement Chiwaya	Mangochi Central	11 th May, 2017	3
18	Hon. Felton Mulli	Phalombe Central	18 th May, 2017	3
19	Hon. Kaphamtengo Yona	Salima North	19 th May. 2017	4
20	Hon. John Chikalimba	Zomba Chagalume	11 th May. 2017	2
21	Hon. Alex Chitete	Mchinji North East	11 th May. 2017	3
22	Hon. Atupele Muluzi	Machinga North East	20 th June, 2017	3

ANNEX 2: LIST OF FORMER MPS INTERVIEWED

No	Name of MP	Constituency Last Served	Term Last Served
1.	Hon. Halima Daudi	Dowa South East	2009-2014
2.	Hon. Clement Stambuli	Nkhotakota Central	2009-2014
3.	Hon. Carrington Jimu	Kasungu Central	2004-2009
4.	Hon. John Bande	Blantyre City South	2009-2014
5.	Hon. Ulemu Chilapondwa	Ntchisi South	2009-2014
6.	Hon. Maureen Bondo	Lilongwe Kumachenga	2009-2014
7.	Hon. Benjamin Banda	Mzimba South	2004- 2009
8.	Hon. Moses Kunkuyu	Blantyre City South	2009- 2014

ANNEX 3: SURVEY TOOL FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (SITTING)

Section 1: Basic Information

Name of Respondent:

Gender of Respondent:

District of Origin:

Constituency:

Highest Level of Education:

Occupation at the time of First Election:

Source of Permanent

Income:

When did you first become an MP?

Are you a sitting MP? a) Yes b) No

Section 2: Core Questions for Sitting MPs

For how long (how many terms) have you been an MP?

Have you ever lost an election in between the time since you first became an MP? a) Yes
b) No

In your view, what would you consider to be the main reasons for which you were first elected as an MP for your constituency?

- a) _____

- b) _____

- c) _____

- d) _____

On what ticket did you stand for the first time when you were elected?

Have you ever changed tickets along the way? b) Yes b) No

If yes, what must have been the prompting reasons?

- a) _____

- b) _____

- c) _____

- d) _____

If along the way you have ever lost an election, what would you consider to be the key reasons for your loss?

- a) _____

- b) _____

- c) _____

- d) _____

Having realised your reasons for your loss in the above questions, what strategies did you put in place to ensure that you now retain your constituency?

- a) _____

- b) _____

- c) _____

- d) _____

In your view what would you consider to be the key services that constituents would require from an MP or prospective MP?

- a) _____

- b) _____

- c) _____

d) _____

Based on your reflection, which of these services did you prioritise in your campaign for re-election?

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

Again based on your reflection, which of these did you not prioritise when you lost along the way?

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

For one to be re-elected for another term of office, what strategies ought to be used?

a) - _____

b) _____

c) _____

Last Comments for all Respondents

We have come to an end our discussion. But you may have your last word. May I give you time.

ANNEX 4: SURVEY TOOL FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (FORMER)

Basic Information

Name of Respondent:

Gender of Respondent:

District of Origin:

Constituency:

Highest Level of Education:

Occupation at the time of First Election:

Source of Permanent Income

When did you first become an MP?

Are you a sitting MP? a) Yes b) No

Core Questions for former MPs

For how many terms did you serve as an MP?

When was it that you last served as an MP?

Based on your reflection, what would you consider to be the core reasons for ***winning*** your first election?

- a) _____

- b) _____

- c) _____

- d) _____

Based on your reflection, would you please give reasons for your loss?

- a) _____

- b) _____

- c) _____

- d) _____

In your view, would service provisions have any effect on the results of an election of an MP in your constituency? a) Yes b) No

If yes, what services would you consider to be key in your constituency?

- a) _____

- b) _____

- c) _____

- d) _____

Given another chance, what would you like to change in your campaign strategy?

- a) _____

- b) _____

- c) _____

- d) _____

For one to be re-elected for another term of office, what strategies ought to be used?

- d) - _____

- e) _____

Last Comments for all Respondents

We have come to an end our discussion. But you may have your last word. May I give you time.

ANNEX 5: QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (ADC, WOMEN AND YOUTH GROUP)

1. You have elected your Member of Parliament for more than two terms of office -
In general terms, what do you like about your MP?
2. In your view,
 - a) We learn that there are so many needs in this constituency, can you share with me these needs, and
 - b) From the above, what do you normally ask your MP to do for you and the constituency?
3. During the campaign and in between the elections what promises has your MP been making?
4. The MP has won your trust and confidence in the way he runs his office, what exactly has the MP been doing for this sustenance of trust?
5. As constituents what role do you play to keep him in office?
6. In your view, what do you look in an MP to keep on electing the same MP?
7. If given a chance to advise your MP, what advice would you give?
8. Lastly, if you have any last words to say on this discussion, this is your time.

End of discussion - Thank you all for your participation in these discussions

ANNEX 6: LIST OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

No	Constituency	Number of participants	Date	Member of Parliament
1.	Karonga Central	21 (3 groups)		Hon. Frank Mwenifumbo
2.	LilongweMsinja N	25 (3 groups)		Hon. Lingson Belekanyama
3.	Mchinji South	28 (3 groups)		Hon. Develius Zaipa
4.	Lilongwe Mpenu	24 (3groups)		Hon. Makala Ngozo
5.	Mulanje South	23 (3 groups)		Hon. Patricia Kalyati
6.	Mangochi East	23 (3 groups)		Hon. Abubaker Mbaya

ANNEX 7: VOTING PATTERN - DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS FOLLOWING THE
1994 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION

REGION	MCP	UDF	AFORD
North	0	0	33
Centre	51	14	3
South	5	71	0
TOTALS	56	85	36

Source: Compiled by researcher based on the Electoral Commission Report of 1994

ANNEX 8: VOTING PATTERN - DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS FOLLOWING THE
1999 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

REGION	MCP	UDF	AFORD
North	4	1	28
Centre	54	16	1
South	8	77	0
TOTALS	66	94	29

Source: Compiled by researcher based on the Electoral Commission Report of 1999

ANNEX 9: MALAWI PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION RESULTS 2009 PARTY
PERCENTAGE OF SEATS NUMBER OF SEATS

PARTY	PERCENTAGE OF SEATS	NUMBER OF SEATS
DPP	58.9	113
Independents	16.7	32
MCP	14.1	27
UDF	8.9	17
AFORD	0.52	1
MAFUNDE	0.52	1
MMP	0.52	1
TOTAL	100	192

Source: Chinsinga, In Electoral Commission Presidential and Parliamentary Report 2009

