

YOUTH AND PARTY POLITICS IN MALAWI

M.A. (POLITICAL SCIENCE) THESIS

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UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI

CHANCELLOR COLLEGE

DECEMBER, 2021



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M.A. (Political Science) Thesis

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

UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI

CHANCELLOR COLLEGE

December, 2021

DECLARATION

I, declare that the thesis has been composed by myself and that the work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification. I confirm that the work submitted is my own, except where work that has formed part of jointly-authored publications has been included.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all political party leaders that are striving to create a conducive political space for young people to be engaged in a meaningful way in party politics in Malawi.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It was not easy to come up with this thesis, this work would not have been possible without the help of many important people. Especially, I would like to thank all members of staff in the Political and Administrative Studies Department at Chancellor College for their unwavering support throughout my study. I also would like to acknowledge and appreciate Mr. Gift Sambo and Dr. Augustin Magolowondo for guiding, challenging and encouraging me, their enthusiasm greatly fuelled my excitement for this project.

I would also like to thank Professor Happy Mickson Kayuni for being available all the time with advice and encouragement. I am grateful to my family for their support throughout this sometimes difficult process, it was not easy. In particular, I am thankful for my classmates for working together in so many ways.

Finally, I thank the Lord for demonstrating his grace and faithfulness by allowing me to achieve this goal.

ABSTRACT

The study examined the status of youth participation in political parties in Malawi and the focus was on the political party policies that enhance youth participation, the motivations of the youth in joining political parties, challenges that the youth face in political parties and youth career prospects in Malawi's party politics. It used the qualitative methods of collecting data and these included interviews with political party senior officials, youth wing leaders and members. It further reviewed relevant documents.

The study found that political parties in Malawi have no strategies and policies that seek to enhance youth participation. It further established that all political parties have constitutions but has failed to state the mandate of the youth within the political parties. And it was noted that while Malawi ratified the African Youth Charter in 2006 and subsequent adoption of the National Youth Policy in 2013 that have defined youth, political parties have failed to define youth in their constitution.

The study identified the existence of more than one youth structure in political parties that are not been recognised by the party constitutions and most of these groups are popular and active in urban areas while the youth wings that are recognised by the political party constitutions are predominantly rural-based and are the ones that are used as foot soldiers, particularly during the political activities.

The study suggests that if this situation is not addressed, youths will continue to be used by politicians to promote their narrow interests and not to build the capacity of the youth to take leadership positions in the party.

ACRONYMNS

AFORD	Alliance for Democracy
ANC	African National Congress
ANCYL	African Congress National Youth League
AU	African Union
AYC	African Youth Charter
CDP	Christian Democratic Party
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party
CEDAW Women	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
KII	Key Informant Interviews
MEC	Malawi Electoral Commission
MCP	Malawi Congress Party
MP	Member of Parliament
MTG	Mighty Tambala Graduates
MYP	Malawi Young Pioneers
NEC	National Executive Committee
NGC	National Governing Council
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NYC	National Youth Service

PP	Peoples Party (PP)
SG	Secretary Generals
UDF	United Democratic Front
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UTM	United Transformation Movement
USA	United States
YD	Young Democrats
YEDF	Youth Enterprise Development Fund

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides background information to the study; it provides a context of the study with a focus on youth and party politics in Malawi. Thereafter, it discusses the study objectives. The chapter concludes by justifying the study highlighting its significance in the political development of Malawi.

1.2 Background to the study

According to the World Bank (2017), the world's population was 7.4 billion as of 2017 – more than half of which were aged between 20 and 44. The median age of the world population was 29-30 years, meaning that most of the people alive were yet to reach the age of 30. Malawi has a youthful population, according to the Malawi government; estimates from the National Statistics Organisation (2019) held that 60% of the 18.63 million people in Malawi are youth. According to the UNDP (2012), Malawi's population was projected to continue growing quickly as the current large generation of children and adolescents grow up and get to have children of their own. Even if fertility rates decrease, the size of the youth population is projected to increase to 9.3 million by 2025 and to 13.9 million by 2050, guaranteeing that Malawi will have a large youth population for the next 40 to 50 years. Malawi just like other African countries in Africa faces a growing “youth bulge” that is disproportionately burdened by un- and underemployment, capturing the votes of this demographic is becoming more important than ever before (Resnick et al 2011).

Further, the ILO (2020) estimates that the youth unemployment rate in Malawi is at 7.55 percent; education has been affected because the school enrolment shows that there are early school drop-outs in most parts of the country with only 35 .

percent of pupils that enroll in primary education completing the cycle; as a consequence of this, enrolment into secondary education decreases to no more than 18 percent. The quality of education has further been lamented to be poor, resulting in a large share of students without functional literacy and numeracy skills (OECD 2019). This scenario places most young people at the mercy of politicians for their survival, politicians take advantage of the situation to use the youth in the way they want disguising that they are promoting youth participation in politics. Urdal (2006) also finds that youth bulges lead to a higher propensity for political violence because high unemployment creates low opportunity costs for this group.

This is why youth participation discourse has become important in both the local and international arena. Countries have agreed to come up with frameworks that will guide youth participation in a form of international treaties and protocols, some of the countries including Malawi have adopted and localized these instruments. Zeldin et al 2014) noted that focus on youth participation has been framed as an issue of social justice, a platform for positive development, a medium for the active citizenry, a human right, and a strategy for nation-building.

Considering the recognition of the fact that the youth have the potential in the political arena, the United Nations developed its first-ever Youth Strategy (2014–2017)¹, called “Empowered Youth, Sustainable Future”, in line with the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Youth (2013) which calls on young generations to become more involved and more committed in development processes. Further, the UNDP launched a Youth Global Programme for Sustainable Development and Peace – Youth-GPS (2016 – 2020) which focused on civic engagement and political participation to respond to the concerns young people have expressed in global, regional and national forums and the growing demand at all levels for cutting-edge and strategic support in youth programming in all development contexts.

¹ Development Programme (UNDP) developed its first-ever Youth Strategy (2014–2017),

In the context of Africa, the African Union Constitutive Act and the African Union Commission underscores the importance of youth participation and involvement in the development of the continent. Indeed, Africa's renaissance cannot be realized if adequate investment is not made in the youth who constitute about 40 percent of the African population². Malawi is a signatory to the African Youth Charter (2006) which has underlined the rights, duties and freedoms of youth.

In addition, other important instruments in the region have been developed to guide the work of youth in the continent and these include the Commonwealth African Plan of Action For Youth Empowerment (APAYE) 2019-2023 this considers the multispectral nature of youth empowerment, different stakeholders operating at continental, regional, national and local levels need to be engaged and supported to deliver on their mandates and contributions to Youth programming by putting in place country policies and programmes aligned to APAYE and to mobilize public-private partnerships to deliver on youth programmes.³ Malawi is a party to the African Union Agenda 2063, the African Youth Decade Plan of Action (DPoA, 2009-2018), the SADC Youth Protocols and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the 2013 Addis Ababa Declaration on Population, and 12 Development in Africa Beyond 2014 among others.

Malawi is in the process of reviewing the National Youth Policy which will be aligned to the international frameworks under which the country is a signatory, the policy is a guideline from which programmes and services can be developed to facilitate meaningful participation and involvement of the youth in the overall national development efforts⁴. Political parties in Malawi to show commitment towards these instruments have aligned their work to such instruments.

In terms of the political setup, Malawi is a multiparty democracy with over 40 registered political parties. Of these political parties, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), Malawi Congress Party (MCP), Peoples Party (PP), United Democratic Front (UDF), and

² The African Youth Charter 2006

³ African Plan Of Action For Youth Empowerment 2019-2023 (APAYE)

⁴ Malawi National Youth Policy (2013)

the United Transformation Movement (UTM)⁵ are considered the major political parties with significant representation in the National Assembly.

This study specifically focuses on the youth and the party politics in Malawi. It is the case that the major political parties in Malawi have youth wings within their structures which are an integral part of political parties because they prepare future leaders of the political parties. According to Svåsand and Khembo (2007), the party youth organizations build the parties by providing future leaders and sustaining institutions of party organizations beyond the life span of the founding members. Besides, the youth wings of political parties provide opportunities to the youth and help to recruit members into the political parties. On this, Hooghe, et al (2004) note that youth sections of political parties do not just participate in political action; they provide training opportunities for their members.

1.2.1 Research Context

As already indicated, Malawi has a youthful population. The 2013 Malawi National Youth Policy categorizes young people as all those between the ages of 10 to 35 with the acknowledgment that ‘the definition is quite flexible’ (Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Culture, 2013). According to the Malawi government, estimates from the National Statistics Organisation (2019), held that 60 percent of the 18.63 million people in Malawi are youth. In the 2019 Tripartite Elections, the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) registered 6.9 million voters of which 54 percent were between the ages of 18 and 34 (MEC 2019) this shows that the youth represent an increasingly important electoral constituency in the country.

In terms of general political participation in Malawi, Chapter IV subsection 40 of the Constitution of Malawi provides for political rights, highlighting that “every person shall have the right to form, to join, to participate in the activities of, and to recruit members for, a political party; campaign for a political party or cause, to participate in peaceful political activity intended to influence the composition and policies of the Government; and free to

⁵ CIA World Factbook <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/315.html> - This page was last updated on December 7, 2019

make political choices”. Also, the Malawi National Youth Policy (2013) encourages the youth to meaningfully participate in social, economic, and political life.

This study, therefore, examines the status of youth participation in political parties in Malawi; it further explores the party policies that enhance youth participation, discusses the motivations of the youth in joining political parties, the challenges that the youth face in political parties and the youth career prospects in Malawi’s party politics.

1.2.2 A broader context: youth participation elsewhere

In Europe and America, political parties that are well established have succeeded to achieve their objectives by recruiting more youths and by electing a leader who is perceived to be more authentic and appealing to the youth. In the case of Europe, Mycock and Tonge (2011) observe that the democratic engagement had risen when political parties sought to address steep declines in levels of civic and civil activism and the preparedness of young people; Sloam and Henn (2019) in agreement makes reference to other well-known European democracies such as France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden where political parties actively involved young people.

Sloam (2016) observes that in the United Kingdom (UK) young people were as interested in politics as their peers elsewhere in Europe, highlighting the engagement of young people with politics across Europe and especially the UK where Malawi politics mostly borrows from. The New Zealand Herald in 2017 also reported the success of the Labour Party in the country, tying it to a 7% increase in youth turnout and about two-thirds of 18–30-year-olds voting for Labour. The Herald also pointed out that the youth in Labour helped to propel 37-year-old Jacinda Ardern to the Prime Ministership at the head of a Labour-led coalition government. In the same year, the 31-year-old Sebastian Kurz of the conservative People’s Party (PP) was elected as Chancellor of Austria.

Similarly, Belgium witnessed youth participation in political parties become a priority which led to an increased level of resources provided to the youth wings; in commenting on this, Hooghe et al (2004) note that the Christian Democratic Party (CDP) invested a lot in their youth wing, as a result, two of their leaders, Wilfried Martens from 1981 and Jean-

Luc Dehaene from 1992 moved on to become Prime Minister of Belgium from the youth wings. Additionally, the Prime Minister that was elected in 1999 was chairman of the liberal youth section from 1979 to 1981.

Youth participation in political parties has also been noted to be on the rise in the United States of America (USA). Not only are the youths joining political parties, but they are also able to participate by influencing the policies and systems in their political parties. Brady, et al. (1995) notes that young people in the United States of America have often sought to bring about change at the local, city, or state level through, for example, initiatives to reduce the voting age in local and state elections. In recent years, Loader, Vremon and Xenos (2014) have argued how youths have used social media to participate in politics in the USA. They point to mobilizing and canvassing abilities of social media that the youth are exploring to participate in politics.

In Asia, the rise of youth participation is also evident where organizations are propagating for youth inclusion in political parties. Katharine et al (2016) observe that the youth in Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan are leading political movements and asserting their interests onto the national political agenda. Although this is the case, there is of course a challenge that is highlighted by Ng (2015) on political party participation in Asia, focusing on Hong Kong, where young people are said to be largely focusing on other forms of protests outside of political parties. This was evident in 2019 with the Hong Kong protests seeking to break away from China; it was the youths in the forefront. However, as political parties still drive the formal formulation of policies, some young people are choosing to join political parties in the Asian continent (Katharine et al., 2016).

In Africa, youth participation in politics has become an interesting feature especially owing to the age demographics on the continent. Casale and Resnick (2011) indicate that about ten years ago, 70% of the African population was comprised of people less than 29 years, compared to 34% in Europe. Mengistu (2017), specifically focusing on the participation of this age group in politics, observed that the youth are politically active populations of Africa; he further argued on the need for youth inclusion in the political aspects of Africa, asserting that it is very critical in a sense that it is great machinery to reinvent the

governance structure of Africa. An interesting observation on the interest of African youth in politics is made in an Afrobarometer study by Nkomo and Plooy (2015) which finds that a majority of African youth are interested in public affairs and discuss politics with those around them. Resnick and Casale (2011) have made a historical submission on the participation of African youth in politics recounting that since the colonial period, leaders have used young people through such structures as youth leagues and other associations to form strong attachments with this demographic and the wider society.

1.3 Problem Statement

The youth population continues to grow especially in developing countries such as Malawi. This growth in the youth population, also called the youth bulge, has witnessed a rise in political participation among young people and presents an opportunity for meaningful political engagement with the youth (Bryan, 2010).

However, studies on youth political engagement, young people are a generation apart when it comes to political attitudes and political participation rates. Empirical evidence demonstrates that not only do young people turn out in lower numbers to vote than do their older counterparts (Russell et al., 2002), but they have a distinct lack of interest in, have relatively weak commitments to political parties, and are less likely than older people to be members of political organizations (Kimberlee, 2002). While the focus of the studies above is on European and American young people and their politics, as shown in the section above, this problem is by no means limited to advanced democracies.

Sloam (2016) observes that youth engagement in different modes of political participation varies significantly across distinctive democracies, where individuals situated in established EU democracies are more likely to be politically active. Sloam further observes that youth are engaged more in politics through new types of political activities, as young people nowadays are very different from their parent's generation. Kitanova, (2020) further observes that the age of democracy has a crucial impact on young people's engagement in politics in different European Union countries as the levels of political participation are significantly lower in newly established democracies compared to advanced democracies. He noted that in countries such as Italy or any newly developed democracy, there is a lack

of opportunity to participate and there is a lack of existing norms in that society. Similar to the U.K. and the U.S., citizens in advanced democracies are motivated by the norms and political opportunities in their country to participate in politics.

In the context of Africa, youth are said to be a political force, Gyampo et al., (2019) observed that nothing evidenced this fact more in contemporary times than the Arab Spring and other movements of political contestation, resistance, or revolt led by young people in Burkina Faso, Senegal, Niger, Togo and South Africa, among other countries. However, they noted that young people's political activity is not a novel phenomenon; young people played a political role in pre-colonial African societies and, notably, were the vanguard of the pro-independence movement and the anti-apartheid struggle in the twentieth century. History also records that young people's political activity has often been both circumscribed and co-opted by others. Young people are excluded from meaningful participation in governance systems (Asante, 2006) but are recruited to "fight dangerous political wars" (Ahwoi, 2008), often as "foot-soldiers" of political parties (Bob-Milliar, 2014). In extreme cases, they have been lured or conscripted into armed conflict and terrorism. As Cooper (2008) observes that what is striking about the role of young men in postwar African history is less their occupying a specific role than their availability as supporters of political parties.

Youth participation is not a new phenomenon in Malawi, studies have described how youth in Malawi have been taking part in politics from the colonial period to the democratic dispensation, Clapham (2006) noted that political leaders, engaged the youth in their struggle for independence and relied on the youth to provide legitimacy to post-colonial regimes. Roessler (2005) recounts that since the colonial period, youth in political parties have been engaged in political violence.

The political leaders in Malawi have succeeded to use the youth who are normally participate within the political parties, these youth wings are created to mobilize political membership and carry out political indoctrination as was the case with the MCP, UDF and DPP. Nevertheless, the roles of the youth evolve to providing support and security to their

political leaders. They achieve through killing, persecuting and infringing the rights of their perceived and known rivals and supporters.

In Malawi, some trends have been recorded to point to the fact that youth are subjected to abuse in politics, for instance, Dr. Banda established the Young Pioneers the youth wing of Malawi Congress Party (MCP) in 1963, the year the country gained independence. The youth wing was initially established as a way of mobilising the youth in a national development cause. The youth wing was eventually transformed into a paramilitary group that persecuted pro-democracy groups (Roessler 2005). The Young Pioneer was disbanded in 1993 by the military following a Young Pioneer/military shootout which resulted in the latter dismantling the former. This subsequently saw the defeat of Banda in 1994. The new President Bakili Muluzi, at this time the expectation was that the transition to a democratic political framework will increase meaningful citizen political participation and that youth will participate meaningfully, instead, Muluzi transformed the same Young Pioneers that had dumped Banda into his Young Democrats, a youth wing that also continued with the evil and immoral terrorist activities they had learned during Banda's era (Banda 2006). In 2004 when Bingu Wa Mutharika took over power, the same youth was transformed into what he termed young Cadets, continuing with their terrorist activities (Gunya et al., 2015).

There are no tangible and sustainable benefits that are associated with youth being attached to a political party, like Dodo, et al., (2018) observed that in the majority of cases, the youth responsible for keeping leaders in office have very little benefits in terms of development and empowerment and a result of that they derive satisfaction from being associated with the leadership, by getting free alcohol, enjoying perennial impunity and getting preference in social and political activities among others. They are clouded in ignorance that they fail to realise the form and depth of abuse that they are subjected.

Youth politics in Malawi today show some continuity with a history of co-optation of youth in the service of formal political authorities or political parties but also evidences a disengagement of the youth from formal politics that contrasts with their enthusiasm at independence.

While the continent has undergone significant political and social change, patriarchy and gerontocracy still permeate political institutions in ways that disadvantage young people. Relatively lacking in social and political capital, the youth find themselves on the periphery of power even while hiring themselves out as ‘voting machines’ and party apparatchiks (Gyampo, 2011).

There are several ways in which young people participate in politics but their involvement in formal political processes is limited. Goudie (2018) observes that although young people participate in political processes in multiple ways, their representation in formal political processes is limited. In the case of Malawi, the youth are mostly used for violence and terrorizing people with differing political viewpoints (Lwanda, 2006).

The participation of young people in politics, however, as Goudie (2018) observes is hindered by inherent biases and practices that exist in traditional political parties. Political parties influence the extent to which young people are active in representational politics, but their failure to successfully engage young people can lead to distrust, disengagement and marginalization.

Notwithstanding the growing interest in youth participation in politics, there is little scholarly attention that has been paid to existing inconsistency in the levels of youth participation in Malawi. There is a gap in the existing literature that other important factors regarding youth participation have not been extensively explored to expose the existing political party policies that enhance youth participation; there is also a little investigation on the underlying reasons influencing the youth to join party politics; at the same time, there has been little need to understand the challenges and opportunities that exist for the youths in political parties in Malawi.

In addition, most of the available literature on youth participation in politics represents a more optimistic view as it is based on findings in the context of new forms of political participation, which are more appealing to and are used more frequently by young adults (Weiss, 2020); Weiss further challenges that research in this area can appear confusing, but

overall it is clear that a comprehensive picture of both the degree and the modes of youth political participation is lacking.

There is however an area that has not been interrogated more regarding the conception of the youth, that is how do political parties define the youth as well as what programs are available for the youth in between elections, especially in the Malawian context. Hooghe et al., (2004) observe that the state of research in this area lacks larger cross-national studies that take into account an adequate conception of how the youth define political participation and that conduct comparative research on youth political participation behavior, which is necessary if we agree that young people hold the key for the future functioning of our political systems and certainly the trajectory of the whole world. In the setting of Malawi, despite the youth bulge, there has been little research that has solely focused on a comprehensive understanding of youth participation in politics.

1.4. Research Questions

To examine the status of youth participation in political parties in Malawi. The following are the research questions:

- a) What are the existing political party policies that enhance youth participation?
- b) What motivates the youth to join the political parties?
- c) Are there any political career prospects for the youth in political parties in Malawi?

1.5 Research Objectives

The main objective of the study was to examine the status of youth participation in political parties in Malawi. The following were the specific objectives of the study, all within the setting of Malawi:

- a) Explore the party policies that enhance youth participation.
- b) Understand the key motivations of the youth in joining political parties.
- c) To explore youth career prospects in Malawi's party politics.
- d) Explore challenges that the youth face in political parties.

1.5 Justification

There is little knowledge on youth participation in political parties, especially in the age of social media when political participation takes other forms and there are challenges to routine established structures of political parties; even if it is the case in Malawi that the political parties remain an important avenue for political party participation. This study then addresses that knowledge gap. It also adds to the extant political science literature on youth in political parties in Malawi. It adds value to the body of existing literature on the role and challenges of the youth in the democratization processes. The existing literature has not extensively evaluated the extent of youth participation in political parties particularly exposing the motivation of youth joining political parties and exploring challenges and opportunities that the youth experience in political parties in Malawi. By exploring these factors, the study will add knowledge to the existing political science literature on youth in political parties in Malawi.

1.7 Organization of the thesis

Five chapters form this thesis paper. Chapter one discusses the study background, problem statement, objectives of the study and justifies the study. Chapter two discusses the literature in which the study is grounded as well as the theoretical underpinning of the research. Chapter three discusses the study methodology which includes the design, population size, sampling method, data collection tools and techniques that were employed for data analysis. Chapter four presents and discusses the study findings whereas, in chapter five, there are conclusions for the study.

1.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed background information and motivation to the study; it has further provided a context of the study with a focus on youth and party politics. A broader context of youth participation in Europe, the United States of America, Asia and Africa have been summarised.

This chapter has also provided some insights regarding youth participation and guiding frameworks, research context and the problem statement. The objectives of the study, guided by the main objective which was aimed at examining youth participation in political parties in Malawi, have also been discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The first part of the chapter is a conceptual framework while the second chapter is a theoretical framework.

2.1.1 The Concept of Youth

The concept of youth is contentious, has no universal definition, and is laced with numerous variations. Jones, (2010) suggested that "youth is just a word" and that it "has been an evolving concept" that has developed over the centuries into a social construction. Youth has also been defined in western societies as the "life stages between childhood and adulthood" and becoming independent from dependent (Kehily 2007). This definition takes an assumption that becoming independent is just an automatic element of life progression, depending on circumstances, one may be dependent at the age of 63 and obviously, such a person can not be considered a youth.

In other instances, some prefer to define the youth by using the biological markers, in which youth is the period between puberty and parenthood, while others define youth in terms of cultural markers as "a distinct social status with specific roles, rituals, and relationships" (USAID/CMM 2005). Further, Boudon et al. (2004) agree that 'youth' is a socio-culturally conditioned notion and that a society's typical pattern of socialization impinges on its understanding of youth. Christiansen (2006) note that instead of trying to identify youth as a period some researchers identify youth with culture, meaning that youth is a cultural entity itself. This definition may vary from one society to the other, this may not apply to the acceptable understanding of the youth at the universal level. Průcha et al. (2001) argue that although the definitions of youth have been numerous, they are often considered to be

a social group made up of people aged between 15 to 25, who no longer fulfill the role of children, but have not yet been conceded the role of adults by society. Macek, (2003), in agreement, although not using any specific years, defined youth as referring to any age group bridging the period between childhood and adulthood, during which physical, but more importantly psychosocial development is achieved, including professional training.

In understanding the difficulties in defining youth, it is important to look at the many different ways, as to why age from the earliest of ages, industrialisation, cultures and the biological concept, to identify some of the key issues as to why the concept of youth is so difficult to define as it has such a diverse range of ideas and notions.

The term youth is defined by sociologists as a transition between ‘childhood and adulthood’ (Roche et al 2004) the alternative is the term ‘adolescence’ which is often: ‘Used within psychology to describe the common biological, psychological, emotional and sexual maturation phases associated with the onset of puberty and the teenage years.

It is therefore difficult to define, as it is quite diverse and complex and there are numerous reasoning behind the concept of youth from nature to cultural and sociological explanations it also varies globally as their values and beliefs differ from others therefore as Jones, (2010) ‘when youth is taken to mean age, then it really is just a word. Therefore the concept of youth will always be difficult to define as there is no neutral definition and we all define the concept of youth in many different ways.

For this study, however, the focus is on the Průcha et al (2001) argument and holds that age is relevant in having to define youth. This study identified definitions that use age to define the youth including that of the United Nations (2006) which defined youth as the age between 15 and 24 years. In Ghana, Paalo (2017) records that the National Youth Policy defines youth as a young man or woman who falls within the age group of 15-35 years. The African Youth Charter (2006) has defined youth as every person between the ages of 15-35 years. This study, therefore, adopts the Malawi National Youth Policy (2013) which defines youth as all persons from age 10 to 35 years.

2.1.2 Youth participation and guiding frameworks

Globally, the participation of youth in political parties has been recognized as an important element in the democratic process, this is why the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) developed its first-ever Youth Strategy (2014–2017) called “Empowered Youth, Sustainable Future”; this framework is in line with the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Youth (2013) which calls on young generations to become more involved and more committed in development processes.

In addition, UN Women published the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for Youth in 2016, a youth-friendly version of the CEDAW elaborated by young people. In the same year, the International IDEA published a report entitled “Increasing youth participation throughout the electoral cycle: entry points for electoral management bodies” documenting the challenges and practices directed at youth inclusion in politics and within different electoral processes.

Recognizing the importance of the youth in political processes in Africa, the African Union (AU) developed a policy framework in the form of the African Youth Charter (AYC). According to the AYC (2006), every young person is assumed to have the right to participate in all spheres of society; it goes further to urge states parties to take measures to promote active youth participation in society by ensuring that the participation of youth in parliament and other decision-making bodies is under the prescribed laws; the state parties are further urged to facilitate the creation or strengthening of platforms for youth

participation in decision-making at local, national, regional, and continental levels of governance.

2.1.3. The Concept of Participation

The concept of participation has been argued extensively, such arguments have made the concept have different meanings in different theoretical and research traditions (Jenkins and Carpentier (2013) and Allen et al. (2014). Two approaches can be distinguished from the arguments that are providing a different meaning of participation.

The first one is the sociological approach, Carpentier, (2016) defined participation as taking part in particular social processes, this definition provides a very wide scope of meaning. In this case, participation includes the way people interact with each other. Power is not excluded from this approach but remains one of the many secondary concepts to support it. Melucci, (1989) provides a different view of understanding participation, he says that participation means both taking part, that is, acting to promote the interests and the needs of an actor as well as belonging to a system, identifying with the ‘general interests of the community. Additionally, Carpentier, (2016) noted that depending on the field where the participation concept is deployed, participation then, for instance, refers to visiting a museum, doing sports, watching television, or going online, just to name a few possibilities. Based on these meanings, participation is more of a technical term, a way of doing things, which should not entirely be understood as a political term because it describes how people contribute to processes that affect them or participate in using a service or a platform.

The sociological meaning results, Lury (2011) critiqued the approach in labeling the approach as the consumption as participatory because consumers are taking part in a consumption culture and are exercising consumer choices.

In contrast, the political approach produces a much more restrictive definition of participation, which refers to the equalisation of power inequalities in particular decision-making processes (Carpentier 2011; Carpentier, Dahlgren, and Pasquali 2014).

Participation then becomes defined as the equalisation of power relations between privileged and non-privileged actors in formal or informal decision-making processes.

This approach has its roots in democratic theory, as democracy is always defined through the tension between representation or the delegation of power and participation or the exercise of power (Held 1996). But these roots do not imply that participation can only be applied to institutionalised politics.

In the democratic theory, Pateman (1970) observes that participation and Democratic Theory is highly instrumental in showing the significance of power in defining participation, and can be seen as a key illustration of the political approach towards participation. The two definitions of participation that she introduces are those of partial and full participation. Partial participation is defined by Pateman as “a process in which two or more parties influence each other in the making of decisions but the final power to decide rests with one party only”, while full participation is seen as “a process where each member of a decision-making body has equal power to determine the outcome of decisions.”

While the sociological approach constructs participation as almost limitless, the political studies approach imposes clear limits on what is termed participation. Discussing these limits of participation is helpful to better understand the problems with the bad/dark participation arguments. Of course, this type of argumentation only works with the political studies approach to participation, which is very much focussed on establishing differences between what is and what is not participation, for instance, the distinction between the democratic practice of participation, and the non-democratic rhetoric on participation which means that participation has different forms that need to be viewed.

The concept of participation is shaped by the possibility of any individual being involved in decision-making processes that affect their lives. Every person has a right to participate in society, to defend her/his interests, to help create a society, which also fulfills her/his interests and desires. IHRC (2014) noted that the concept of participation entails the notion that all citizens should be involved in decision-making processes that affect them. These processes include direct and indirect ways in which people can exercise influence as

individuals, as members of networks and associations, and through various political institutions. For this study, “youth participation” can be understood as the active involvement of young people in decision-making processes and institutions that affect their environment and their lives within it (Ellis 2007).

According to IYF (2002), participation in formal political and electoral processes and structures includes voting, being a member of a political party (and joining youth wings), standing as a candidate at an election for a political position being part of election administration, such as a polling official, being part of a CSO and observing elections. Participation of young people in formal political and electoral processes is relatively low compared to older citizens across the globe. Voting, one of the most important formal avenues for political participation, is a clear example. Data on voter turnout from various countries suggest that young voters tend to participate less in polls compared to older citizens. Similar evidence is available for membership and leadership positions in political parties and parliaments (CPRN 2007).

Youth are more inclined to participate in informal processes than formal political processes such as protests, and campaigns are common avenues; youth are often driving forces behind reform movements. In the current world and throughout history, there are many examples of powerful youth-led protest movements (Hart, 1992). Youth also tend to get involved in civic, service-oriented activities, such as volunteering for a social cause. Many young people are more inclined to join a tree-planting project, for example, than to join a political party talking about planting trees in the future. Both formal and informal engagement can be understood as political participation. Both can be beneficial for a strong democracy.

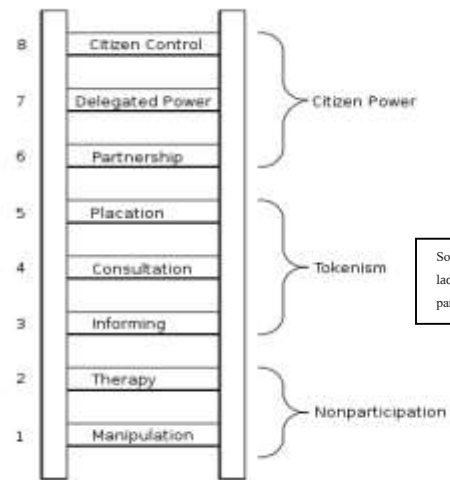
Karkara, R, (2011) contends that effective and meaningful youth political participation has one of three attributes. First, it can be consultative, where young people’s voices are heard in an adult-assigned consultation process, where they have capacities, a mandate and information to fully perform their roles. Second, it can entail youth-led participation, where young people have a direct impact on decision-making within their youth communities, such as through youth-led NGOs, student councils, and youth parliaments with competencies and budgets. Third, it can involve youth collaborative participation,

where young people effectively take part in regular political decision-making processes, including as voters, or as members of parliament, political parties, or advocacy groups.

Scholars have come up with typologies that have outlines levels of participation that help to understand the concept of participation, these levels are Sherry Arnstein's 1969 ladder of citizen participation and Sarah White's 1996 work on the forms and functions of participation.

According to Arnstein (1969), the ladder of citizen participation has eight steps, each representing a different level of participation. From bottom to top, the steps explain the extent of citizen participation and how much real power citizens have to determine the process and outcomes. These steps in the ladder help to interplate and understand what it means when we talk about participation in real terms. Arnstein uses the terms 'the powerful' and 'citizens' as shorthand, but emphasises that neither are homogenous entities; and that each grouping contains actors with more or less power.

At the bottom of the ladder, Arnstein state that are forms of non-participation used by powerful actors to impose their agendas. Participation as tokenism occurs when participants hear about interventions and may say something about them, which power-holders denote as 'input'. However, the voices of participants will not have any effect on the intervention; thus participation does not lead to change. At the higher end of the ladder, participation is about citizens having more power to negotiate and change the status quo. Their voices are heard and responded to.



The ladder has simplified to understand the participation and has expounded on the scholars thought about the concept, however, the illustration of the ladder has not provided a narrative on what challenges and opportunities are available from moving one level to the other. Such explanation would help to locate and identify why in other cases participation is seen as an obstacle to some sectors. For

purposes of this study, such a discussion would have helped to locate the youth in political parties.

2.1.4 The Forms and Functions of Participation

White (1996) has identified and distinguished four forms of participation and these include nominal, instrumental, representative and transformative. She reasons that each form has different functions, and argues actors ‘at the top’ (more powerful) and ‘at the grass roots’ (less powerful) have different perceptions of and interests in each form.

White further explained that nominal participation is often used by more powerful actors to give legitimacy to development plans. Less powerful people become involved in it through a desire for inclusion. But it is little more than a display and does not result in change. She went on to suggest that instrumental participation sees community participation being used as a means towards a stated end – often the efficient use of the skills and knowledge of community members in project implementation and while representative participation involves giving community members a voice in the decision-making and implementation process of projects or policies that affect them. For the more powerful, representative participation increases the chances of their intervention being sustainable; for the less powerful, it may offer a chance for leverage. Finally, she stated that transformative participation results in the empowerment of those involved, and as a result alters the structures and institutions that lead to marginalisation and exclusion.

The study considered these forms to understand the levels of participation in political parties in Malawi because these levels and functions help us to think about hidden agendas and the dynamic relationships between more and less powerful actors. Discussing the differences or compatibilities between bottom-up and top-down interests can lead to a clearer understanding of the politics of participation.

The actors at the top may talk about participation, but intend to maintain the status quo. It is only in ‘transformative participation’ that the power holders are in solidarity with the less powerful to take action and shape decisions.

Further, the concept of participation has been twisted allowing those in power to manipulate their followers especially the marginalised such as youth and women by including them into processes of an institution to demonstrate that those groups are participating but in a natural sense, they are not. In the name of citizen participation, people are placed on rubberstamp advisory committees or advisory boards for the express purpose of “educating” them or engineering their support (Arnstein 2007). Instead of genuine citizen participation, the bottom rung of the ladder signifies the distortion of participation into a public relations vehicle by powerholders.

In Malawi, participation in public life is a fundamental right that was recognized in Chapter IV (40) of the Malawi Constitution which states that every person shall have the right to participate in the activities of a political party and to participate in peaceful political activity intended to influence the composition and policies of the Government⁶.

2.1.5 Political party

There is limited contestation about the concept of the political party and its functions. Scholars have used some terms in their definitions of the term with most of them crystallizing to defining a political party as a group of people in agreement over an ideology with the ultimate goal of the political party being to govern. Heywood (2002) specifically defines a political party as a group of people that is organized to win government power, by electoral or other means. Agreeing with Heywood's definition are Hofmeister and Grabow (2011) define a political party as a team of people that seeks to control the governing apparatus by securing office in a duly constituted election. Additionally, Olaiya (2014) defines political parties as groups or a collection of individuals and groups with common political beliefs, ideologies, and orientations, and pursuing the goal of controlling government and the apparatuses of administrative power within a state. Further, Marume, et al. (2016) define a political party as an organized and presumably durable association, either of individuals or of distinguishable groups of individuals, which endeavor to place

⁶ Constitution of the Republic of Malawi

its members in governmental offices to bring about the adoption of favored political policies or programs.

The above definitions agree that the purpose of the political party is a desire to win and control state machinery or system. For the goal of the political party to be achieved they come up with different strategies such as the inclusion policy which makes the youth wings more important to the political parties.

Political parties are important in every democracy and some scholars have highlighted the importance of these political parties arguing that for democracy to thrive, then political parties become important. Lipset (2000) emphasizes that political parties are indispensable for democracy. Political parties provide space for the representation of people, Sartori (1976) asserts that representation takes place through and by parties. In addition to that, the parties help politicians act collectively by shaping their priorities and disciplining politicians for the goals of the parties (Levitsky and Cameron, 2003).

Sartori (1976) concludes that parties connect the governed with the government and serve as an intermediary between the government and civil society organizations. Lipset (2000) agrees by indicating that political parties not only connect the government with civil society groups but also stimulate other associational activities.

2.2 Current trends in Youth and Party Politics

Political parties have youth wings. These are organs created in political parties to provide space for the youth to learn about party ideologies. It is also an arena that encourages the full participation of the youth in politics. According to Hooghe et al. (2004), youth wings function as socializing agents for partisanship and organizational learning processes, further state that youth wings introduce young members to the ideology of the party just as they function as a learning school where the members gradually get acquainted with political and party life. According to Recchi (1999), being a member of a youth wing is one way of starting a political career for youth wings are expected to be a nursery of preparing future leaders of political parties.

It has been argued that youth participation in politics is dwindling. Hooghe et al. (2004) observe that the membership base of youth organizations in political parties is in decline, more so than party membership in general. Offe and Fuchs (2002) provide an example of Germany, where the Social Democratic Party had a powerful youth section yet faced its decline. The decline in youth party membership has been considerable. Rothstein (2002) corroborates with Offe and Fuchs that in Sweden, youth organizations in political parties lost more than 60 percent of their members from 220,000 in 1972 to less than 50,000 in 1993. Additionally, Sloam (2007) argues that the youth in the UK lacked interest, trust and were frustrated with political processes. This, however, does not mean that there is little interest in politics; Loader, Vromen and Xenos (2014) show that much of the interest has now shifted to young people supporting movements especially using social media, other than belonging to the actual political parties.

However, political parties are also beginning to realize the need for young people within the actual parties. According to Gyimah-Boadi (2007), the reliance on youth mobilization for political power is globally recognized and growing. Each political party tries to garner support from their youth branches, basically for grassroots mobilization. The approaches that the political parties are taking to bring back young people within the system are, of course, context-specific and differ basing on geographical and cultural-political context. For example, in Ghana Paolo (2017) pointed out that two political parties have created positions such as youth organizers, and communication officers for their youth leagues. The youth wings in this context are not substantially integrated into their parent parties. Kanyadudi (2010) observes that although youth wings in Ghana are not integrated systematically into mainstream politics, they are associated with several activities, in their attempt to advance the fortunes of their parent parties. Van Gyampo (2012) observes that this arrangement created an opportunity for the youth to serve as pressure groups within their parties and often brought pressure to bear on national executives over pertinent issues, including matters bordering on internal democracy. For example, the youth resisted attempts by party executives to impose parliamentary candidates on them in their constituencies.

Focusing much on the Sub-Saharan African context, Twala (2009) posits that the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) in South Africa is a reservoir of leadership for the ANC as many of the great leaders were drawn from among the ranks of the ANCYL; it is therefore considered as a preparatory school for the parent party. Further, the records that the ANCYL has produced several leaders who later occupied senior positions in the ANC and these include Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu and Nelson Mandela. In recent years, Julius Malema rose through the ranks of the party, amassing power, before he eventually fell out of favor with the main party and formed his party, the EFF, which has gained considerable attention (Forde, 2012). Frequently, Malema has drawn on the policies and politics of the ANC to drive his agenda including a debate on the land question as well as the empowerment of black businesses (Nieftagodien, 2015).

For Malawi's neighboring country, Tanzania, Kanyadudi (2010) observes that youth wings contributed though anecdotally, to their mother party manifestoes, while serving as grounds for mentoring future political leaders. Bennie and Russell (2012) generally observe that while many parties have made concerted efforts to include young people in the formation of policy, their marginalization is still evident. Political parties remain reluctant to give young members too great a voice in party affairs. Mcgee and Greenhalf (2011) point out that in many African countries, the youth have been portrayed as a frustrated and excluded lost generation who are marginalized from decision-making processes.

2.2.1 Youth and party politics

While in the past, political participation of citizens was through activism in political parties, the last decade has shown that political parties are facing difficulties in attracting new party members, particularly young people. According to the UN Global Youth Report (2016), political party membership is less prevalent among those under the age of 30 than among older adults. Only 4.1 percent of 18–29-year-olds are active party members, compared with 5 percent of all adults. Young people are preferring to do their activism outside of political establishments (Loader, Vremon & Xenos, 2014).

In Europe, the European Youth Forum perceives the decline in youth party membership in the region as one of the core problems in institutional politics. According to research by International IDEA (2014), only 2 percent of young people in Europe acknowledged having been members of a political party. Also, the 2015 AfroBarometer survey shows that youth participation in election campaigns remains limited in Africa. On average, 34 percent of youth attended campaign rallies or meetings in 2014, the year preceding the survey, and only 23 percent tried to persuade others to vote for a certain candidate or party. In East Africa, 51 percent of youth said they attended campaign rallies or meetings. North African youth had by far the lowest levels of participation, with 12 percent reporting having attended a campaign event and 11 percent have tried to influence other voters⁷.

It is worthwhile to pinpoint that political participation can take different forms. Signing a petition, joining a party, or casting a vote are the most accepted actions deemed as political participation. Political participation can be viewed in two different categories and that is direct and indirect participation. Pausch (2012) defines direct political participation as the expression of political interests and a political aim. He further explains that a citizen who participates directly is politically motivated, either intending to make his/her favorite political party or personality win in elections or to promote his/her political convictions or interests within a certain field.

According to Verba and Nie (1972), political participation must be understood as activities that citizens would take to influence government personnel or the actions that they will respectively have to take. Brady (1998) expands on this argument certifying that for actions that citizens take to qualify as political participation, the actions must be observable, manifest, and voluntary. Thus, the coaxing of a person to participate in political activities would not be accounted for as political participation. Dahl (1973) declares that for the functionality of democracy, then political participation is essential since it enables citizens to hold their governments accountable.

⁷ AfroBarometer, Dispatch no. 41, (AfroBarometer, 2015).

Participation, argues Karsten and Speaking (2011), is one of the key components of democracy; they further stated that participation is frequently considered key to any policy response, more often than not with the ambition to orchestrate the comeback of previously established forms of political involvement. Pratchett et al. (2004), discussing political participation in Africa, posit that participation is widely accepted and practiced across the continent although they acknowledged that it was increasingly confronted with widespread mistrust and was declining.

Flanagan et al. (2012) present evidence that intergenerational differences in patterns of political engagement are cyclical, and that when they enter later stages of adulthood, young people end up participating in politics in ways that mirror the behavior and preferences of their older contemporaries; this argument pointed to the need to both include young people in politics, focusing on quality leadership. Karsten and Speaking (2011) observe that in recent years, youth participation has been diminishing in formal political institutions. This aspect was highlighted as continuing to capture attention and take center stage in public discourses about the perceptions and realities of growing democratic deficits in young as well as established democracies.

Forbrig (2005) further agrees to assert that while public arenas for youth involvement appeared to be more numerous than ever before, few would claim that these opportunities had amplified the participation of young people. Loader, Vremon and Xenos (2014) however present a different angle as they highlighted how social media has created spaces through which young people can participate in politics; their view, however, is steeped in the participation in politics, not party politics. It is in party politics, however, that Driskell et al. (2002) concedes that the participation of young people in the structures amounted to tokenism; they highlighted that proper participation is that which provides participants both power and interaction. They further highlighted ways of shifting this relationship arguing that young people should be treated as equals. Their thinking was that when young people are treated as equals and valued partners through shared decision-making, influence can then be gained on larger issues, and the power to make decisions and affect change can be maximized.

Elsewhere, Grasso (2014) argues that young people's increasing withdrawal from mainstream electoral politics and their interest in alternative and transformative styles of politics is rooted within underlying economic prosperity or austerity conditions. Instead, she sees this as a reflection of the period effects in which they have been socialized, such as the ideological and volatile nature of contemporary societies. Dalton (2009) observes that there was a transition in the US from an 'Old' politics rooted in material scarcity concerns towards a 'New' politics characterized by expressive quality of life priorities. These new citizens, argues Norris (2011), are generally considered to be critically engaged with politics, mostly influenced by their disillusionment with the performance of the political class and seeking social change.

2.2.2 Youth and party politics in Malawi

Youth participation in politics is not a new phenomenon in Malawi, the context of which can be traced back to different political periods in the country's modern history. Nkomo and Plooy (2015) argue that participation in organizations is an important marker of whether youth are engaged and participate in decision-making that directly affects their lives. This is why youths in political parties have been taking center stage in political party activities in different periods in Malawi.

Following Malawi's history as far as youth participation in politics is concerned dates back to the colonial period. Youths participated in politics during the colonial period (1891–1964), through mobilization and acts of sabotage; Clapham (2006) observe that the nationalist leaders often engaged disaffected youth in their struggle for independence and relied on the youth to provide legitimacy to the post-colonial regime.

During the one-party state (1964–1993), Malawi's first President Hastings Kamuzu Banda through an Act of Parliament (1963), established the Youth League which included the Malawi Young Pioneers (MYP), this was a youth arm of the Malawi Congress Party (MCP). According to the Act, the MYP was established to organize the youth and provide them with training and ensuring that the youth were disciplined. With time, the MYP started being armed and terrorizing opponents of Banda and the MCP. Roessler (2005)

records that the youth wing was transformed into a paramilitary group that terrorized pro-democracy activists. The Youth League was eventually disbanded on the eve of multiparty democracy in 1993.

The disbandment of the League of the Malawi Youth and the reintroduction of multiparty brought excitement and expectation regarding youth participation in politics in Malawi. Political parties started to institutionalize youth wings in their structures. However, the hangovers of the dictatorship period on the structuring of the youth wings in Malawi parties still started reflecting in the new set-up (Lwanda, 2006). For instance, the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD) established a youth wing and was called The Young Democrats (YDs), the model was adopted by the United Democratic Front (UDF) who established a youth wing called Young Democrats (YDs). The UDF during the Muluzi era desired to have a youth wing that will be different from the MCP Youth League and therefore the establishment of the Young Democrats focused on youth empowerment and entrepreneurship, encouraging youth to engage in small-scale businesses. With time, the YDs were used for political mobilization in UDF, in many other instances dealing with those deemed to be a threat or opposing its leadership, for instance during the campaign for Bakili Muluzi bid for an unconstitutional 3rd term between 2000 and 2003.

The trend of establishing youth wings in political parties continued with the DPP. In 2005, the newly found party established the Youth Morale which eventually changed to be called DPP Cadets. DPP continued with an agenda of economic empowerment of the youth and established a fund to support small-scale businesses called Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF) which was heavily politicized. Just like MCP and UDF, the youth were involved in political mobilization and many instances, orchestrating violence against members of the opposition with the founder and first President of the party urging them to 'do anything possible to thwart demonstrations' (BBC, 2012).

Peoples Party (PP) was formed in 2011 by Vice President (at that material time) Joyce Banda, PP just like MCP, UDF and DPP established a youth wing and was called the Patriots. PP was in power for two years, but the PP youth also were involved in political mobilization and other instances dealing with members of the opposition and orchestrating

the violence. Thus, despite the clear purpose of the youth wings, political leaders in Malawi have engaged the youths in acts of violence against opponents especially during elections (Lwanda, 2006). Goldstone (2001) observes that youths resort to violence as a consequence of exclusion from certain pathways to social mobility and engagement in the political process. However, the evidence from the Malawi political situation indicates that the situation is complex than presented; political party leaders deliberately create youth wings for purposes of violence and intimidation, not necessarily as a breeding ground for future leaders (Lwanda, 2006).

2.3 Driving force for Youth Participation in Politics

There have been studies that have interrogated the motivations behind active participation in politics across different people in different contexts. Rush (1992) refers to some of the reasons pointing out that some of the reasons for people's participation in politics border on their understanding of the impacts of politics, the sense of morals, attitudes, knowledge, and behavior. He further pointed out that participation in politics is related to the idea of good governance. Tian, Gao and Cone (2008) argue on the motivations for joining politics focusing on China and on the reasons for entrepreneurs deciding to participate in politics, showing how it is not always for good reasons as some want to amass power and influence for themselves.

In terms of youth participation, Utter (2011) observes that their political participation ends up serving the best interests of their societies. He argues that a high level of participation of young people in political activities necessitates their involvement in several political activities, not just those of their party. A similar view was previously advanced by Hooghe et al. (2004) who indicate that young people hold the future to the functioning of political systems.

In Africa, the wave of democracies had youth at the forefront of instigating change; it can be argued that the youth have always been willing to be associated with political change in a particular country. Dahl (1973) indicates that political participation by young people is an essential part of modern democracies as it enables citizens to hold their governments

accountable. Bincof (2018) contextualizes this political participation by highlighting how general political participation is different from party political participation.

Eneji and Ikeorji (2018) make an interesting case in highlighting the motivation for young people to participate in politics in Nigeria. They observe that youths inject enormous energy into supporting individual politicians to win elections and massively mobilize to provide this support with the expectation that, in return, these youths will be awarded by the political elites through such opportunities as jobs and contracts. This has also been the case in Malawi where appointments have mostly been tailored towards party lines; youths here are boxed into thinking that for their political support and loyalty, the party will reward them.

The youth decide to participate in politics based on different reasons and what dominates out of many reasons are the incentives that are available within a particular political party, Bruter et al (2009) define incentives as benefits that someone expects to gain from becoming a member. The youth seem to have a dominant set of incentives for joining a party, allowing for their grouping into ideologically, socially, or professionally motivated party members and Brady et al. (1995) has defined the resources as the time, money, and skills an individual has. In this case, these youths are largely motivated to join a party considering what they will gain as an incentive to satisfy their personal needs and not about what the youth will contribute to the party or being encouraged by what the party stands for.

Bruter et al (2009) identify three groups of young party members and defines their characteristics, the first and largest group has a comprehensive set of motivations, covering moral-ideological, social and professional incentives. The second group disregards professional motivations but considers moral-ideological and social incentives as important. The (small) third group is not motivated by either of these incentives, their motivation remains undefined. These categories form an interesting area to be interrogated to locate the motivation of youth who participates in party politics, the third option is a popular view to locate Malawian youths.

Further, socialization among peers is another aspect that influences them to join a particular party, this may be different from the groups identified by Bruter in that young people are influenced during their formative years by experiences they make within their social environment and through institutions. Discussions about politics with family and friends as well as the exposure to politics in school are important indicators for the formation of political interest and activity of young people (Dostie-Goulet 2009; Levinsen and Yndigegn 2015; Jennings and Stoker 2002).

Young people having access to information about party membership through their social networks can be an important factor to participate, making party membership something that can be inherited from family and friends.

Young people likely differ in their motivations from older party members. They are still forming their political orientation, influenced by family and friends (Dostie-Goulet 2009; Levinsen and Yndigegn 2015). They are preparing for the labour market, making decisions about their future professional paths. Party membership may help a young person gain access to jobs in the public sector (Bruter and Harrison 2009b, 1263). These reasons suggest that the motivational settings of young party members require special consideration.

2.4 Challenges of youth participation in politics

Participation of young people in political party decision-making has been a challenge due to issues associated with clans, age, time and poverty, among other factors. Highton and Wolfinger (2001) contend that as people have a finite amount of time, engagement with politics is more costly for those who have not yet sorted out their lives, this is a situation for most young people in Africa. Thus, their engagement with politics is forced to be understood on the premise of personal rewards and benefits that would make their participation worthwhile.

Mycock, et al. (2014) note that young people feel that politicians or policy-makers do not take them or their concerns seriously; further, they observed that there have been very few opportunities afforded to young people to shape the policy agendas of these political

parties. Political parties have failed to offer and maintain the youths within their structures because youth has not been a policy priority area; they have been a vehicle that is used to attain a position without due consideration of them. Henn et al (2014) suggests that due to disillusionment from most of the youths, formal politics has failed to attract successive youth cohorts especially when they realize that the politicians do not have their welfare at heart.

It is often the case that there are few meaningful programs to sustain the youth in the political parties. Busse, et al. (2015) lament that the discourse and programs of the political parties have converged, offering very little in their party manifestos designed to improve young people's economic and social well-being or to champion the policy priorities and aspirations of the youth.

It has been a challenge for young people to be involved in policy formulation and shaping the youth agenda other than being used during political campaigns or activities as observed by Mycock and Tonge (2012) who highlights the few opportunities afforded to young people to shape the policy agendas of the political parties they are members. This has tended to exacerbate the ongoing and deepening disconnect between young people and democratic politics.

In United Kindom, Henn et al (2014) note that in addition to the extremely low number of positive references to youth, political parties failed to offer substantial sections focusing on youth in their respective manifestos. Labour, so they argue, presented only a single bespoke youth passage. Analyses of the Malawi political party manifestos presented by the main political parties that contested in the 2019 general election suggested that each had learned relatively little from their collective failures to mobilize the youth vote a decade previously.

On the factors hindering the participation of the youth in politics, Quintelier (2007) argues that it is a general perception by the youth that the challenges they face in politics are a result of the organization of politics rather than of the youth's lack of interest. He points out that the low political participation rate among the youth is a by-product of their narrow

conception of politics and their impression that politicians do not truly care about their needs.

Further, other typical explanations for the challenge towards youth interest in politics include young people's belief that politics lacks relevance for them or their preoccupation with other interests and concerns. Other studies point to the complexity of politics and the difficulties young people have in understanding political life and processes. Except for work carried out by Park (1999) which might be understood within its period, young people have also been found to hold politicians in low esteem, lacking trust in them Bentley and Oakley (1999), or respect for them (Pirie & Worcester, 1998).

2.5 Summary of Literature

Mycock and Tonge (2012) observe that the relationship between young people and political parties is complicated as political parties rarely engage young people or consider issues of youth political participation. Some political parties in Malawi have adopted youth wings as a way of attracting youth to participate in party politics. However, beyond recruiting young people into youth wings there is not much that is done to enhance their political participation. The problem that is common in political parties regarding youth participation is that the youth wings cannot initiate any activity on their own without being sanctioned by their mother body. The youth wings have limited power and influence. Russell (2005) observes that youth wings are dependent on the main party for funding and their representation and influence are determined by the main party. Consequently, the expectations of the youth in joining politics are not fully met. This then leads to some level of dissatisfaction by young people and forces them to leave party politics.

Heidar (2006) notes that young people have proven most likely to complain that their interests are overlooked by political parties both in terms of policy formation and electoral campaigning. Further, young people consider political parties as a bad option for them to advance their political careers or as the best alternative arena for participation in politics. YCC (2009) observes that young people have increasingly viewed political parties as remote, infantile and divisive in their approach to public debate and policy formulation and

embarrassing in their occasional attempts to appeal to younger generations. But while this is the case, some young people have been motivated to joining party politics all over the world. In Malawi, this seems to be quite the case where young people have openly campaigned for a political party or showed their allegiance.

The studies shared above and largely in this literature review, devoted their interest to explain the low levels of active political participation in existing structures by young people. According to IDEA (2018), these include patrimonialism, cynicism about politics, and mistrust of political parties, exclusionary legal regimes and related structural factors. Coupled with these, there is a wider concern that corruption and the use of illicit financial resources limit effective representation and the desire for change among young people.

The available literature highlights that the youth are also subject to active manipulation and often find it difficult to navigate political processes, including practices within political parties, to make a substantive and sustainable difference to their communities. Magdelina, (2019), observes that citizens in advanced democracies are motivated by the norms and political opportunities in their country to participate in politics, that the citizens in advanced democracies have a sense of obligation to be active in the political life of their country, and the opportunities to participate in politics are higher in advanced democracies.

This literature, therefore, creates a ground on which interest in motivation and the nature of youth participation in Malawi political parties can be explored.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

This section of the chapter presents an outline of the theories that grounded this research. The section discusses the two theories employed for this research.

2.6.1 Elite Theory

In political science, an elite theory has been used to explain power relations in society. The theory posits that a small group of people, simply called the elites, holds the most power and this power is independent of democratic elections. Mills (1956) observes that the

psychological difference that sets apart the political elite from non-elite is that they have personal resources, for instance, intelligence, skills, and vested government interest. Friedrich (2014) contextualizes the question of the elite in politics arguing that they abound in all societies and they always have the exceptional ability to secure power, perpetuate it and rule over others.

The elite using their skills and resources can control and manipulate the youth that has decided to join party politics, youth who do not possess any kind of resource apart from the fact that they are in majority they are still under the elites.

Deducing from the above understanding of the political elites, we can conclude therefore that these political elites are those that have the capacity as well as the character of a higher degree; they are distinguished by other levels of class in society as well as in an establishment such as a political party. More precisely, if all individuals participating in a political party are clustered and put in classes, it will be automatic that the elites will be in a high class even though they may not have other qualities to help the party excel, but because they possess resources and power they are always on top of classes. Normally, the elites are few but can control a large number of people and this is where the youth in politics becomes vulnerable because in a class hierarchy youth are in the periphery, they have less voice despite and controlled the fact that they are in majority.

Youth in political parties have been regarded as being violent, this can in many ways being attributed to the power that elites possess. Elites usually control the lower classes and these include women and the youth by using some level of coercion and by making money easy to access. Money is distributed easily to the youth and in return to please the elite and generate more income, the youth will continue being involved in violence and their aspirations to participate positively in politics are shuttered.

Even though the elites are not in majority, they are not stable. They keep on moving and are able to be replaced with others within their category, new elites come and occupy the positions and while the people occupying other classes are stable and continue to save in the parties within their positions, these usually are women and the youth. Regarding this situation, Pareto (1935) observes that new elites rise and take the old elite's place; this

change Pareto calls the law of circulation of elites. He says, they take the position for a certain period and move on. In course of the time, elites undergo a change when elite member's composition change or their descendants do not have qualities to be elite; or, infiltration of extraneous elements from lower classes and another society, or, changes in legal rights in a society like an extension of the right of citizenship that allows non-elites to move up (Pareto 1935).

The elites in political parties are well informed and aware of the status as well as the situations and the interest of the individuals especially the youth, they claim that they are working in the best interest of the majority more particularly women and the youth, and when the elites succeed for example in an election, they are the ones who benefit a lot than the majority that votes for them. This time, the elites use youth to mobilize and support the campaign activities, the youth are popular and a darling to the elites but in the end elites are the ones that gain a lot of wealth, power, prestige, and many other benefits.

Ekundayo (2017) points out how the theory critiques democracy, highlighting that it emphasizes the rule by the minority over the majority in any society. The society is usually ruled by the political elite, a minority group of achievers in politics who are highly organized, cohesive and will do everything to secure, conserve, preserve and perpetuate its power over a majority that is largely unorganized. Johnson (2005) agrees that their power is seen as based most fundamentally on their economic resources and especially on their positions within the top management, and does not depend upon their ability to garner mass support through efforts to “represent” the interests of broader social groups.

Mosca (1939) provides a summary of the elites in the context of this thesis; he says that in any society there are two classes of people and these classes include those that rule and the other that is ruled. Those that rule are few but possess the political powers as well as many other privileges while those that are ruled are large in number but they have no power because all of them are under the rule of those that rule them.

The political elites usually have a certain material, intellectual, or even moral superiority over those they govern. Pareto postulated that in a society with truly unrestricted social mobility, elites would consist of the most talented and deserving individuals; but in actual

societies, elites are those most adept at using the two modes of political rule, force and persuasion, and who usually enjoy important advantages such as inherited wealth and family connections (Marshall 2007).

Further, Linz, et al., (2006) noted that the notion of elites is rooted in the need of large organizations for leaders and experts, in order to operate efficiently; as these individuals gain control of funds, information flows, promotions, and other aspects of organizational functioning, power becomes concentrated in their hands Weber held that political action is always determined by “the principle of small numbers, that means, the superior political maneuverability of small leading groups.

Despite the narrative being propagated by the proponents of this theory, it is important to recognize that even though these elite constitute a close-knit group, they do not manipulate events and processes of an institution with a view of achieving their selfish ambitions. They respect the civil liberties of the people, they abide by the guidelines and the constitutional principles and they operate openly and peacefully. It cannot be concluded that the elites are undemocratic or act in a terror manner or as dictators. They don't impose certain decisions, they present to the people about their wishes and interest, it is up to the people to reject or support.

The membership of the elite is not closed, although many members have enjoyed a head start in life by virtue of their being born into prominent families. Nevertheless, those who work hard, enjoy good luck and demonstrate a willingness to adopt elite values do find it possible to work into higher circles from below.

2.6.2 Iron Law of the Oligarchy

Leach (2015) provides the iron law of the oligarchy as a working theory referring to it as a provocative and very influential theory that is posited by German social theorist, Robert Michels. In this theory, Michels claims that all organizations – no matter how democratic their original intentions – eventually come to be ruled by a powerful entrenched minority that, when necessary, will act illegitimately to squelch internal opposition and divert the organization's goals in order to maintain its power (Michels & Gouldner, 1993).

Organisation's intentions at the very start when are being established, are perceived to be democratic. This also is common in political parties that from the start, democratic tendencies are encouraged and visible; making sure that everyone is included when making decisions and other internal processes, the majority feels empowered and part of the organization. It is when the organization or political power has gained ground that can attract more members and has widely been accepted that is when they slowly slide into oligarchies but operating under the armpit of democracy.

Leach (2015) further posits that if power rises, power corrupts. Once power is concentrated in the hands of a minority, the leadership develops an interest in maintaining the status and perquisites of its position. Driven by a supposedly inherent 'desire to dominate,' the minority, having once attained this position, will do whatever is necessary to preserve its power even when that means going against the interests of the membership and will use undemocratic means to stifle any internal opposition which it interprets as a threat to its authority.

The organizations are generally run by a certain class of people; these are the people that hold key positions in the executives or management team of the organizations. Instead of being representatives of the majority, the leadership takes charge of all the affairs of the organization and such a team of leaders has the power that enables them to control all the affairs of the entire organization with limited accountability practices and are influence all major decisions for their interest. Further, the leadership is obsessed with power and can create procedures that help them manage the organization. Information is controlled, there is less transparency and the majority are detached from the affairs of the organization.

According to Diefenbach (2018), the theory concludes by arguing that oligarchy is inevitable, the leadership becomes susceptible to co-optation and the displacement of the membership's original goals for the sake of organizational maintenance. Michel's theory contends that 'It is indisputable that the oligarchical and bureaucratic tendency of party organization is a matter of technical and practical necessity. It is the inevitable product of the very principle of organization.'

It is evident that the organizations or institutions such as political parties by their nature and their leadership cannot be separated from the Iron Law of Oligarchy because Michels (1966), posits that it is the organization that gives birth to the domination of the elected over electors, of the mandatanes over the mandators, of the delegates over delegators, who says organization, says oligarchy. Michels proposition suggests that those in the majority and the ones who support the minority take charge of the affairs of the organization.

Considering this theory in political organizations where there is bureaucracy, membership and leadership are some of the attributes that this theory finds their root in the political parties. Additionally, political leaders often abuse their power and opportunities by promoting self-interest and by coming up with means and organizational ethics and means such as party discipline that make it impossible for the majority to ask questions to their leaders that themselves elected to hold such positions.

This theory argues that all organizations even if their intentions were democratic, but will eventually come to be ruled by a powerful group of minority people that will act illegitimately to suffocate internal opposition and divert the organization's goals to maintain its power.

The theory has been provided to and suggests main claims and suggest that bureaucracy happens as a result of a structural imperative that affects an organization, and this will usually increase when the organization is growing when the power rises, such power is concentrated in the hands of a minority and develops into leadership with a monopoly of skills, knowledge, and resources. Once power is concentrated in the hands of a minority, the leadership develops an interest in maintaining the status and perquisites of its position. Driven by a supposedly inherent 'desire to dominate,' the minority, having once attained this position, will do whatever is necessary to preserve its power – even when that means going against the interests of the membership – and will use undemocratic means to stifle any internal opposition which it interprets as a threat to its authority. The organization becomes an end in itself, and as a result, the leadership becomes susceptible to co-optation and the displacement of the membership's original goals for the sake of organizational maintenance (Leach 2015)

The Iron Law of Oligarchy assumes that power is based on the ownership of property, and this suggests that the leaders, in this case, do not have real power to defend or abuse if they do not own the means of production and in that case, this can be considered oligarchic. This line of the argument holds that people who control resources such as those who have administrative authority can have at least as much impact on people's lives by monopolizing decision-making processes as those who own resources.

In other words, what makes a group oligarchic is its power to control the processes by which decisions are made and implemented, regardless of what allows them to wield that power.

2.7 Applicability of theories to study

The study focuses on youth participation in politics. It is the case that young people feel that they are outside of the political establishment and their interests are not considered by politicians. The two theories are chosen for this study focus on the deliberate and structural ways through which power is concentrated in the hands of a few, in this case, it is the young people in political parties in Malawi who are restricted from accessing this power.

The selected theories have provided a better understanding of the social and political life of societies, they largely focus on "power" and it entails that those that hold power are the leaders in society, the discussion in both theories demonstrate that for one to have such power you need to possess at a minimum wealth, intellect, organizations and popularity which may not be common to the majority of the people including the youth.

It can be suggested that the elites when in power, come up with rules, procedures and policies that will enable them to continue holding or exchanging power and continue to protect their privileges, such rule do not give a chance to the youth who aspire to take leadership positions in their political parties and suffocates the youth organizations that seem to be progressing so well because leadership space is exchanged among the elites.

The iron law of the oligarchy theory directly relates to the elite theory because the iron law of the oligarchy theory, those holding elected positions are not checked and accountable to anyone even the very same people that put them into such positions. The people that are

put in positions in organizations are usually in majority and they become relevant during the time of electing such people, once they are elected the majority are left out and needed at a time of electing new leadership of an organization. In this thesis, these theories are relevant because they will help to locate the role of the youth who are assumed to be in majority but to what extent are they utilized in making decisions of political parties in Malawi. It will further help to understand what happens to the majority (in this case the youth) after the elections and identify their relevance in political parties.

May (2008), focusing on the iron law of the oligarchy theory, asserts that a system where leaders possess the means and the disposition to ignore their followers' will (or wills) is an undemocratic system. It is therefore interesting to find out how in a democratic society such as Malawi, a scenario that ignores other active voters and members of a party plays out.

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the literature that shaped and drove this study, aiding the study in formulating objectives as well as questions. It has also discussed the theoretical framework; providing a brief overview of the elite and iron law of the oligarchy theories.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter articulates the methodological approach that is employed to operationalize the study objectives. It covers the sampling techniques, data collection techniques, data analysis, research ethics considerations as well as the limitations of the research.

3.2 Research Approach

In terms of this study, a qualitative research approach was adopted owing to the focus of the research on life experiences, personal experiences, opinions and attitudes. The approach helped the researcher to produce a detailed description of participants' feelings, opinions, and experiences; and interprets the meanings of their actions as well as understanding different people's voices, meanings and events in their settings.

The study was exploratory and descriptive, it employed a case study. A case study can be defined as an empirical research method used to investigate a contemporary phenomenon, focusing on the dynamics of the case, within its real-life context Yin (2003). The case study helped the researcher to understand complex issues within the topics that were selected through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of conditions and their relationships.

The study also interpolated language, symbols and gestures. Thus, to make sense of them, a qualitative approach was necessary. Creswell et al. (1999) argue that qualitative research methodology infers results from the discussion of case studies, personal experiences, life stories, interviews, observational, historical, and visual texts that describe routine and problematic moments and meaning in an individual's life.

This methodological approach helped to achieve the study objectives of exploring the political party policies that enhance youth participation, understanding the motivations of

the youth in joining political parties, exploring the challenges that the youth face in political parties and exploring youth career prospects in Malawi's party politics.

Flick (2014) claimed that “qualitative research interested in analysing subjective meaning or the social production of issues, events, or practices by collecting non-standardized data and analyzing texts and images rather than number and statistics.” This definition stressed how people make sense of something in the world in this case the youth participation in political parties in Malawi.

3.3 Study Population

Dale (1973) describes research population as all cases of any specified group of human beings or of non-human entities such as objects, geographical areas, time limits, methods, tests, or schools. Thus, the participants that one gets for their research would be understood as the population sample of the study.

The main objective of the study was to examine the motivation, opportunities and challenges of youth in politics in Malawi. Thus to meet this objective, the study purposively targeted the members of youth wings and party leaders from MCP, UTM, DPP and UDF. 120 respondents were engaged for this research in both Interviews and Focus Group Discussions. 8 were Key Informants which included party officials such as 3 were Secretary Generals, 1 a Party Spokesperson, 4 National Directors of Youth, and youth wing leaders as well as members of the youth wings.

3.4 Sampling

This study used a purposive sampling technique. Etikam, Musa, and Alkassim (2016) define this type of sampling technique as one that targets specific individuals owing to their being information-rich participants with the ability to contribute to the objectives of a study. This study targeted party officials, members and leaders of youth wings. The aim was to generate and capture different insights.

The study also purposively targeted members of just select political parties in Malawi. Thus, out of over the 40 parties that are registered in Malawi, only members of 4 parties were contacted. The focus on these parties, namely the UDF, DPP, MCP and UTM, is because these political parties have strong youth wings and in addition, they contested in the elections of 2019 which is within the study period.

Further, the four parties have been in power at different political times. The MCP was in power under the one-party dictatorial Banda regime and won the 2020 presidential election together with the UTM and are now in power together (at the time of the research, however, they were not in a working alliance and had not been in power). The UDF and DPP have been in power at different intervals and both had formed a political alliance in the fresh 2020 election which took place in Malawi; they had just lost power, more applicable for the DPP, which gave a fresher perspective of youth in political parties within and outside of government.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

3.5.1 Documents Analysis

This study conducted document analysis to analyze political party constitutions and other policies in place focusing on youth participation. The focus was on understanding how the parties have recognized the youth in their statements, how the political parties define youth and the strategies in place that enhance youth participation.

According to Bowen (2009), document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessment topic. He further noted that documents are stable, “non-reactive” data sources, meaning that they can be read and reviewed multiple times and remain unchanged by the researcher’s influence or research process. They can certainly be impacted upon in their analysis; however, as in their form, they remain true.

The technique helped to interrogate political party policies that enhance youth participation in Malawi, in this research, a process of understanding the data from the documents was

employed. This process included reading the available data, examining, sorting out, categorizing and evaluating, comparing, synthesizing as well as reviewing the raw and recorded data. The next stage involved summarising and assembling data around themes. The final stage was the interpretation which involved deciphering meanings and lessons from data (Creswell, 2007).

3.5.2 Key Informant Interviews (KII)

The key informant interviews involve interviewing a select group of individuals who are likely to provide needed information, ideas, and insights on a particular subject. Two characteristics of key informant interviews need special mention.

The key informant interviews help to collect information from different kinds of people who have first-hand knowledge and information about a topic. Burgess (1989) observes that key informants are used primarily as a source of information on a variety of topics, such as kinship and family organization, economic system, political structure and religious beliefs and practices. The interview, argues Bryman and Cassel (2006) is an opportunity through which a researcher explores a question or research problem in-depth.

In this study, KII were identified and interviewed. The KII targeted selected key people in MCP, UTM, DPP and UDF. Specifically, the following were identified as Key informants from the political parties: Party Secretary Generals (SGs)/spokesperson, National Youth Directors and leaders from the party youth wings. These were selected because they possess information or ideas that were solicited by the researcher. The researcher probes the informants to elicit more information and takes elaborate notes, which were developed later.

Further, the study sampled party officials and youth wing leaders because they have in-depth information as regards internal party processes and youth wing activities and helped to achieve the study objective of understanding the political party policies that enhance youth participation in Malawi.

3.5.3 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is an approach that uses qualitative research methods and data collection techniques. This approach allows people to discuss issues in a more detailed way; it generates participants' knowledge, perceptions over issues as well as attitudes of the individuals. In an FGD, participants share their thoughts and reflect on them within a group setting (Boateng, 2012).

In this study, FGDs were used in engaging young people who identify as members of political parties. The focus was on the part of the study which sought to understand the motivation of the youth in joining political parties; it further explored challenges and opportunities that the youth face in political parties in Malawi.

The study conducted 8 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), these were two FGDs for each political party (MCP, UTM, DPP and UDF), each session had 15 participants. In total, 120 (94 male participants and 26 female participants) participants made the FGDs.

The FGDs were important because they encouraged participants to open up and provide descriptive answers using their personal experiences, knowledge and attitudes that have been gathered during their participation in political parties. The FGDs involved representatives from all targeted political parties.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data that was collected from the reviewed documents, KIIs and the FGDs were analyzed using two approaches: content and thematic analysis.

On content analysis, Creswell (2003) points out that this process provides interpretation which involves deciphering meanings and lessons from data. For this research, the content analysis helped the researcher to focus on the study objective of analyzing political party strategies that enhance youth participation in Malawi. In this regard, political party manifestos, constitutions and other literature were consulted. These assisted the researcher

to make inferences. Luo (2019) observes that researchers make inferences about the producers and audience of the texts they analyze when using content analysis.

Thematic analysis, on the other hand, was used to analyze the KIIs and FGDs. Gavin (2008) argues on the importance of thematic analysis in qualitative research highlighting that they are important for understanding the meanings of comments and responses that were made by a participant. It is through a thematic analysis that patterns are drawn from the data, showing a linkage between participants' responses in terms of differences or similarities. For this research, thematic analysis was used to understand the ways through which political party representatives make sense of youth participation and how young people themselves make sense of their participation focusing specifically on motivations, challenges and opportunities.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The study took into consideration the ethical issues raised by Johnstone (2005) and further implores some principles identified by Bryman and Bell (2007); thus, there was respect for the dignity of research participants, seeking full consent from the participants before the study, the protection of the privacy of research participants, assuring the level of confidentiality of the research data. The anonymity of individuals in the research was ensured and any deception or exaggeration about the aims and objectives of the research was avoided.

3.8 Study Limitations

The qualitative approach, mostly of using Interviews and Key Informant Interviews, although relevant in capturing lived experiences, concerns, worries, motivations, actions, attitudes and behaviors of the participants might not have been accurate in capturing the actual lived experiences. There was no opportunity to observe the actual experiences, as detailed by the participants, mostly due to the period for the research. These limitations, nevertheless, do not invalidate the findings of the study. If anything, they point to alternative ways through which further research can be pursued.

3.9 Conclusion

The chapter provides the techniques used and specific justifications for selecting such techniques in this study. The section has further discussed the sampling techniques, data collection techniques, data analysis, research ethics and limitations.

The study adopted a qualitative research design because such a design helped to capture the experiences and concerns of participants. The weakness of this design is that it is prone to make the researcher subjective or bias during the interpretation of data.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the study findings in line with the study-specific objectives. The first objective was to explore the political party policies that enhance youth participation. The second objective was to understand the motivations of the youth in joining political parties. The third sought to explore challenges that the youth face in political parties whereas the fourth, and final objective, was to explore youth career prospects in Malawi's party politics.

4.2 Political party policies that enhance youth participation

The section analyses political party policies that enhance youth participation, a key document for all political parties is the party constitution. Each political party in Malawi has a constitution. The party constitution describes the political party objectives and how a party is organized. According to NDI (2011)⁸, party constitutions are the set of written rules by which political parties structure and organize their affairs. It is the result of a series of discussions involving party leaders and organizers about the philosophy, purpose and internal organizational structure and processes of the party.

Four political parties in Malawi have been examined, namely the Malawi Congress Party (MCP), United Transformation Movement (UTM), Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and United Democratic Front (UDF). The findings are based on data obtained from senior

⁸ NDI, (2011), A Compilation of Political Party Statutes, Washington, DC 2001

party officials and the youth in youth wings in response to a questionnaire and Focus Group Discussions which covered a wide range of issues in depth.

4.2.1 The United Democratic Front (UDF)

The UDF was formed as an underground pressure group determined to end Malawi's one-party rule in the early 90s. It was registered in August 1993 after the legislation for political parties to function legally was enacted. The party is deeply rooted in the South-Eastern part of the country and the city of Blantyre was long considered its main base. From 1993 until now, the party has retained its UDF name and its prime objective of securing a multiparty democracy in Malawi. The UDF became the ruling party in the 1994 election and was retained to power in 1999 and, in the coalition, in 2004 (Patel, 2005).

The United Democratic Front (UDF) in its constitution, which was amended and ratified in 2012 at its National Conference, article 9 (e) of the constitution has created a National Youth Wing and further Article 5 (p) has set an objective committing to advance youth inclusion in the party, the stipulate that:

“the party shall support and advance the full integration of women and the youth in political, social and economic development”

The UDF constitution has further provided for a National Conference which is the supreme ruling and controlling body of the party; delegates to this high-level conference include the National Director of Youth Affairs and his/her two deputies.

The party constitution gives a mandate to the National Director of Youth Affairs to co-ordinate the activities of the youth in the party, deal with matters affecting the youth and mobilizes the youth for purposes of strengthening the party.

Additionally, the 2018 UDF National Conference established an autonomous youth organization called United Democratic Front Youth Wing (the Youth Wing) and has its

constitution and a national structure. The Youth Wing is aimed at aiding, supporting and facilitating the realization of the objectives of the party through mobilizing and appropriately sensitizing the youth in Malawi.

The Youth Wing was established to mobilize the youth to support policies and programs of UDF about the Constitution, laws and the National Youth Policy of the Republic of Malawi and the African Youth Charter as promulgated by the African Union⁹.

The UDF Youth Wing has a structure at different levels similar to the main party: it has the National Youth Conference; Youth Management Committee; Regional Youth Committee; District Youth Committee; Institutional Youth Committee (For University, Technical Colleges and other public and private educational and training institutions); Constituency Youth Committee; Ward Youth Committee; Zone Youth Committee; Area Youth Committee; and the Branch Youth Committees.

The National Youth Conference is the supreme ruling and controlling body of the youth wing; it elects its executive committee which includes a President, Secretary-General and Treasurer General and other executive members. Such a structure resembles that of the main party.

The President, Vice Presidents, Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General, Treasurer General and Deputy Treasurer General of the main Party are invited to attend the UDF Youth Conference to represent the youth. They, however, do not have voting powers.

The study, in discussing with youth in UDF during the FGDs, established that the youth in UDF are aware and familiar with the available guidelines including the party constitution. It was revealed that despite such provisions in the party, members of the youth wing believe that they are dependent on the funding party. This situation is similar to what Lamb, (2002) observed that youth wings have some independence from the main party to develop their policy positions and organise events such as annual conferences which participants for UDF have managed to conduct in 2018. However, Lamb noted that such youth wings are

⁹ UDF Youth Wing Constitution 2018 amended in 2018

dependent on the main party for funding and their representation and influence are determined by the main party.

4.2.2 The Malawi Congress Party

The MCP was registered on 30 September 1959, replacing the National African Congress, which was formed to end colonial rule and lead Malawi to independence. The MCP was the only official party and ruled the country uninterrupted for three decades until 1994. The party was founded by such freedom fighters as Kanyama Chiume, Henry Chipembere, Kamuzu Banda and others. After Banda died in 1998 there was a struggle for the leadership in the party. Differences were growing between Gwanda Chakwamba and John Tembo and in the run-up to the 1999 elections, these differences came into the open.

These were superficially resolved in 2003, but in the run-up to the 2004 election, the Chakwamba faction finally broke away from the MCP and formed the Republican Party. In traditional ideological terms, the MCP can be called a conservative party. However, political parties in Malawi admittedly have not been exposed to ideological discussions and are not very conscious of their ideological identities (Patel, 2005).

The Malawi Congress Party (MCP) constitution was amended in 2018, the party is established on four cornerstones of Unity, Loyalty, Obedience and Discipline. The party holds that for the youth, the four cornerstones upon which the party is built shall be maintained to realize the party vision¹⁰. Article 3 (7) of the party constitution stipulates that the party shall ensure that the youth have the same opportunities as every other member within the party.

Further, the party constitution established a League of Malawi Youth. Article 60 (1) states that there shall be established youth wings of the party at all levels, which wings shall be referred to as League of Malawi Youth and further states that the party shall promote the interests of youth and ensure their effective contribution and participation in the Party.

¹⁰ Malawi Congress Party Constitution amended in 2018

MCP has a National Executive Committee (NEC) which is responsible for controlling and managing the party and its operations. The youth are represented in the NEC by the Youth Director and his/her two deputies.

In terms of the membership requirements to the youth league, the procedures are laid out in the Malawi Congress Party constitution, the expectation is that if a person wishes to be a member of the party he/she must apply for membership to the branch office or any other office of the party nearest to the place where he or she is ordinarily resident.

The MCP has established structures at different levels and these are local Committees, Area, Ward, District and Regional Committees and National Executive Committee. According to the constitution, the Malawi Youth League chairperson is part of the district committee. It is represented by the chairperson, secretary and treasurer of the Youth League.

The study reveals that the youth in the MCP is fully conversant with the party's four cornerstones of Unity, Loyalty, Obedience and Discipline and the youth wing is also guided by these four cornerstones.

Article 3 of the MCP constitution states that the party shall ensure that the youth have the same opportunities as every other member within the party, the study found out that these opportunities are not discussed or outlined anywhere in the constitution or any other party guiding documents.

The constitution of MCP established structures including that of the youth, the study noted that the youth in the party are aware of the structures as laid out in the party constitution and are conversant with how people are elected into such positions.

It was further revealed that the National Executive Committee of MCP controls and manages the affairs of the youth league, the League is not independent and it cannot undertake its activities without being sanctioned by NEC. Further, it was noted that those that represent youth wings are not necessarily youth as defined by the National Youth Policy and the African Youth Charter.

Membership to the youth league is guided by the party's constitutional provisions which include a membership application, such records are supposed to be kept at the branch office or any other office of the party nearest to the place where he or she is ordinarily resident. This study, however, found that there are no records to show membership of the Youth League in the MCP.

4.2.3 The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)

The DPP is one of the main political parties in Malawi, the party was formed in February 2005 by the former President Bingu Wa Mutharika after a dispute with the United Democratic Front, which was led by his predecessor, Bakili Muluzi. Mutharika's administration quickly set out to improve government operations by eliminating corruption and streamlining spending¹¹; supported by generous development partners and good weather conditions, the Malawi economy grew by an average of 7% between 2005 and 2009¹² under President Mutharika's rule and as a result of this, DPP become popular in the country such that the 2008 Afrobarometer survey found that 61% of adults said they would vote for Mutharika if elections were held then¹³.

In 2011, the DPP National Governing Council (NGC) endorsed Peter Mutharika as a presidential candidate for the 2014 elections¹⁴. This announcement came a few days after the 20 July 2011 protests where nationwide strikes were held against Bingu Mutharika's regime. His appointment was endorsed by the DPP NGC since the party did not hold a convention to elect new leaders. Mutharika was elected as President in the 2014 election. His first term was marked by strong popular discontent, due to corruption, food shortages and power cuts. In 2018, thousands of people took to the streets in several cities across the country to denounce corruption scandals¹⁵. In 2019, Mutharika won the election which was later nullified by the courts citing massive irregularities, in the next election in 2020

¹¹ Malawi Since 1994: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Malawi/Malawi-since-1994#ref836930>

¹² Annual Economic Report 2010 and 2007 (Ministry of Development Planning and Cooperation (2010, 2007)

¹³ Afrobarometer Briefing Paper no. 75 (Tsoka, 2009) available at www.afrobarometer.org

¹⁴ DPP fires Secretary General and endorses Peter Mutharika for 2014". www.malawitoday.com. Accessed on 24th November 2020.

¹⁵ "Malawi : Peter Mutharika, le président anticorruption, pris la main dans le sac". 28 May 2019. Accessed on 24th November 2020

Mutharika was defeated by Lazarus Chakwera of the MCP which joined forces with other 7 political parties.

DPP's mission is to facilitate the instilling of self-confidence, people-driven governance structures, transparency and accountability systems, and a deeper sense of socio-economic independence in Malawians, by creating a conducive environment for wealth creation, more sustainable pro-growth jobs especially for youths, redistribution of incomes and increasing the supply of quality goods and services for the domestic and international markets while making Malawi open for business.¹⁶

The 2018 National Political Conference for the Democratic Party (DPP) amended its constitution article 4 of its constitution outlined eleven (11) party aims and objectives that seek to promote the welfare of Malawians, fight poverty, attain prosperity, develop agriculture and attain food security to ensure enough food for all and to promote quality education in the country.

In addition, article 5 of the DPP constitution outlined key nine (9) principles and guidelines, these principles are set to help the party serve the interest of people in Malawi. Article 5 (1) (i) state that the party shall encourage all of Malawi to participate in the political, social and economic development of Malawi and that special attention shall be given to the role of women, youth, the elderly, people with disabilities and people in rural areas.

The DPP establishes the National Political Conference with powers and responsibilities to, among other things, elect office bearers to various positions in the National Governing Council (NGC); under article 8 (3) (c) one member of a youth committee is delegated to National Party conference.

The DPP has a Central Committee which provides strategic direction to the party, according to article 9 of the party constitution; the Central Committee is responsible for giving direction to all issues of an urgent nature which may arise out of the National

¹⁶ DPP Manifesto

Political Conferences or any other matter connected to the party affairs. The National Director of Youth in DPP is part of the Central Committee of the party.

In addition to the above structure, article 10 of the party constitution has established the National Governing Council (NGC) which is elected at the National Political Conference. The Director of Youth is a member of the NGC.

Finally, the DPP has established several Standing Committees (article 14) which are appointed by the NGC. One of the standing committees is that of Youth Affairs.

The study reveals that the party constitution has no specific and clear objective that seeks to promote and empower the youth in the party, while in its 9 party priorities, the DPP state that the party shall encourage all of Malawi to participate in the political, social and economic development of Malawi and that special attention shall be given to the role of women, youth, the elderly, people with disabilities and people in rural areas. The study noted that no program within DPP seeks to achieve this priority area.

4.2.4 The United Transformation Movement

On 21 July 2018, Saulos Klaus Chilima launched his transformation movement called the United Transformation Movement (UTM) towards the formation of his political party to contest in the May 2019 elections¹⁷.

UTM as the party contested for the first time in the tripartite elections of 21st May 2019 that was later nullified; Chilima alongside Michael Usi as a running mate came third with 20.24% of the popular vote and UTM won 4 seats in the National Assembly. The presidential election of 2019 was held again in 2020.¹⁸ Chilima of UTM contested the race as Lazarus Chakwera's running mate for the Malawi Congress Party, in the Tonse Alliance which brought up to nine opposition political parties.

¹⁷ Meet Saulos Chilima, the DPP running mate". .faceofmalawi.com. accessed on 24th November 2020

¹⁸ MCP settles for Chilima: Deputy speaker Kazombo tells Chakwera to form alliance with UTM". Malawi Nyasa Times - News from Malawi about Malawi. 17 February 2020. Retrieved 24 June 2020.

UTM was established on the premise that the standard of living of the people is less than dignified; and that cronyism, nepotism and corruption, in general, are endemic. The UTM argued that the post–1994 democratic order has been compromised by the narrow, self–serving politics of patronage. “As a country, our podium–political class has ignored the lessons of the past, but it is from our shared history that we shall draw our energy and understand the urgency of developing the agenda that forges our country forward¹⁹” claimed the UTM.

In September 2018, the United Transformation Movement (UTM) adopted its first-party constitution which recognizes a youth wing in article 10 (g). The constitution also established the office of the National Director of Youth Affairs whose duties are to coordinate the activities of the youth in the party and report to the Secretary-General; assist and look after the affairs of the youth in the party; mobilize the youth for purposes of strengthening the party, and to liaise with the Regional Governor and other party organs.

UTM has instituted different committees and these are regional, district and constituency committees. The regional committee has provided room for youth participation through the Directors of Youth from district committees. In addition, the structures at district and constituency levels have youth wings that are organized similarly to that of the main party.

The constitution of the UTM has established youth league in article 43 (43.3); this states that:

“There is hereby constituted and established the Youth Wing as a constituent component and integral part of the UTM and the Youth Wing shall be known as the Youth League”.

The objectives of the UTM Youth League is to mobilize the youth for full participation in the political, social, cultural and economic affairs of the country; mobilize the youth in support and defense of the party; promote and protect the interests of the youth; foster

¹⁹ UTM 2019 Manifesto

solidarity with progressive youth organizations and groups in the Republic of Malawi and internationally.

The UTM constitution has presented the criteria for membership for the youth wing; it highlights that members of the Youth League are open to all citizens and residents of the Republic of Malawi who has attained the age of 15 years but have not yet attained the age of 30.

The leader of the youth league is called the “National Chairperson” whose responsibility is to oversee the party youth programs and coordinate all activities relating to the youth membership of the party in liaison with the National Executive Committee. He/she is also mandated to represent the interests and articulate issues concerning the youth membership of the party at the National Level, submit the plan of activities and programs through the office of the Secretary-General for approval by the National Executive Committee, submit periodical reports on the performance of their league to the office of the Secretary-General.

The study observes that UTM’s constitution has recognized the youth league and set clear objectives of the youth league which is to mobilize the youth for full participation in the political, social, cultural and economic affairs of the country; mobilize the youth in support and defense of the party; promote and protect the interests of the youth; foster solidarity with progressive youth organizations and groups in the Republic of Malawi and internationally. However, the youth in the party are not fully aware of the purpose as stipulated in the party constitution, the study noted that the objectives are understood based on one’s expectations. What dominated during the study is that the wing would alleviate youth poverty and offer some opportunities for the youth which is not in line with the objective set out by the party constitution.

The party has provided for structures within the party at different levels from national, regional, district and constituency levels; the study noted that the youth are not aware of the structures and where they can start their political career within the party. There is a belief that youth can join the youth wing at any level, but the constitution provides for criteria for one to join the party.

The membership to the youth wing of the party is open to all citizens who have attained the age of 15 years but have not attained the age 30 years but the study revealed that the league has some old who do not fall within the category of youth, they are above 30 years. Those holding positions in the youth league are above the age of 30 as opposed to the required age for membership into the youth league.

4.3 Key issues in the party constitutions

This section will discuss the issues found in the party constitutions about youth. It will start by focusing on the broader similarities and differences in the party constitutions before discussing the actual issues in each of them.

4.3.1 Youth instruments and global position

The study notes that international and local policies for the youth are not adequately aligned to the youth work in three of the four sampled political parties: DPP, UTM and MCP have not made any reference or connection to available instruments that guide the youth work. It is only the UDF Youth Wing Constitution that has recognized and aligned its work to the African Youth Charter and the National Youth Policy. Article 5 (a) of the UDF constitution setting out the foundations of the youth structures state that:

“The objective of the UDF Youth Wing shall be to mobilize youths to support the objectives, policies and programs of United Democratic Front in any way deemed appropriate having regard to the Constitution, laws and the National Youth Policy of the Republic of Malawi, constitution of the United Democratic Front, regulations, rules and the code of ethics of the Party and the African Youth Charter as promulgated by the African Union.”

This failure to harmonize or localize the party positions with other global instruments can also be linked to the way that the parties regard the youths or the structures that support them. It can also be linked to the rising of parallel structures of the youth in the political parties. As Loader, Vremon and Xenos (2014) have indicated, it is disillusionment with traditional politics that many young people are resorting to using their own spaces to

articulate their views of politics. It can be argued that by consulting national and international instruments, which are a product of research, then the political parties can make themselves attractive to the youth.

4.3.2 Broader differences and similarities in party constitutions

The study through a comparative analysis of the political party structures revealed some similarities and differences that exist between UDF, DPP, UTM and MCP in the ways they approach the youth question.

The study revealed that UDF has a clear objective that seeks to advance youth inclusion in its political party constitution. Article 5 (p) in the said constitution states that:

“the party shall support and advance the full integration of women and the youth in political, social and economic development”

Further, article 9 (e) of the constitution has created a National Youth Wing. Similarly, the Malawi Congress Party constitution article 3 (7) stipulates that the party shall ensure that the youth have the same opportunities as all other members.

While there is this consideration of youth in the party objectives, both the UDF and MCP have not provided mechanisms and strategies for ensuring that such objectives are achieved. Neither have they set clear targets for any particular period. The UDF is clear on how the party will ensure full integration of the youth in the party as provided for in its constitution; similarly, MCP desires that the youth in the party have the same opportunities as other people, the constitutions however did not describe how this objective will be achieved and it has not defined the available opportunities that the youth will benefit under this objective.

The study establishes that despite each political party establishing its youth institution; it is only UTM that has provided clear objectives of the youth league in the constitution. DPP, UDF and MCP have only identified the youth wing but there is no clear purpose and objectives of these youth wings.

Of importance is how some of the quite popular youth structures for the parties are not a part of the party structures. From the observations of the researcher, each of the parties has its structures that are not recognized by the party constitution and structures, yet they exist and attract most of the young people aligned with the party. The researcher noted the following as popular youth structures of the party in question that are not formally recognized: MCP has Kololiko, Renaissance, Mighty Tambala Graduates (MTG), Nfuwu (Nothing for Us Without Us) and Kwacha Youth Support Network. UDF has Yellow Youth for Change and Jubilee 50, while DPP has Blue League, UTM, a party that was formed few years (2 years) before the study is not the exception, it has parallel youth structures, and these are UTM Professionals, UTM Associates and Kuwala. This is an interesting phenomenon that, unfortunately, was not the focus of this research.

4.3.3 Membership to the wings

4.3.3.1 The United Transformation Movement (UTM)

The study establishes that the UTM constitution has set membership criteria to the youth league, it states that membership to the Youth League is open to all citizens and residents of the Republic of Malawi who has attained the age of 15 years but have not attained the age 30 years, while the 2019 Manifesto of the party states that “we conceptualize the ‘youth’ as males and females below thirty–five years of age.” This inconsistency might be referred to as the reason why within the formal youth structure of the UTM there are people older than 30 holding significant positions in the youth structure of the party.

4.3.3.2 United Democratic Front (UDF)

UDF has an independent youth wing that has its constitution; this is where membership criteria are discussed in article 7 of the constitution. It states that membership is open to any person, under the age of forty years (40) regardless of race, ethnic group, color, and creed shall be eligible for the membership of the wing if he or she; one also needs to accept to abide by the Constitution of the youth wing; and that one is not a member of or in association with another political party, other than the United Democratic Front, whether registered in Malawi or not; and should not be a member of or associated with any

association or organization whose aims and objectives conflict with the Constitution, rules, regulations and code of ethics of the United Democratic Front.

The constitution of the youth wing further stipulates that for one to become a member of the youth wing, he/she must agree to pay such membership fees as may be fixed by the mother party. A member who joins an organization whose objectives are political or who joins any party, other than the UDF, shall be expelled from the wing and the party notified for appropriate disciplinary action.

The study establishes that the UDF youth wing allows members who do not fall within the youth bracket as guided by the Malawi National Youth Policy; this is despite that the UDF youth wing constitution has made references to the policy and other global structures. The UDF youth wing state that membership is open to any person, under the age of forty years (40), the National Youth Policy (2013) defines youth as all persons from age 10 to 35 years and the African Youth Charter (2006) has defined youth as every person between the ages of 15-35.

The study observes that for one to be a member he/she has to pay a membership fee, but it was revealed that at the time of the study the wing had no bank account. Despite the fact the youth wing has its constitution and makes independent decisions, the constitution states that the mother party decides on a membership fee for one to join the youth wing.

4.3.3.3 The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)

The study reveals that the constitution of the Democratic Progressive Party has not discussed any membership to its youth wing even though the youth wing is a body that has been created by the party constitution. This might also be tied to the changing nature of the DPP youths who previously have been called by various names including DPP morale, DPP youth before being christened to Cadets.

These changes might be a reflection of the way that the DPP deals with its youths; as a matter of political convenience. Lwanda (2006) has pointed out this problem in most

political parties in Malawi and their relationship with the youth, often looking at them for the political expediency of using violence on opponents.

4.3.3.4 The Malawi Congress Party (MCP)

The study reveals that the Malawi Congress Party has no specific criteria for membership into the youth wings that have been created by the constitution, further, the study noted that there is no reference or guiding document for the youth league in the MCP that guides youth membership.

Generally, DPP and MCP were noted to be vague in their inclusion and exclusion criteria for belonging to the youth wings of the parties. Despite the fact that membership in itself is not a factor to demonstrate that participation will take place as argued by Torpe (2003) that youth membership is becoming looser and that this membership doesn't necessarily influence the likelihood of political participation, but it is important to recognise that the absence of clear membership criteria is a weakness to achieving youth participation in the political parties because even older people may have the liberty to join the youth wing and suppress the youth into the structures, Theocharis and van Deth, (2018) contend that the advantage of following these membership criteria is not only that we can distinguish between political acts that fit into definitions with stricter or looser requirements, but also that we can systematically exclude those who do not meet the definitional requirements.

4.3.4 Structure of the Parties' Youth Wings

4.3.4.1 Youth Structure for the United Democratic Front (UDF)

The UDF is seen to have a proper and actionable operating structure. The party has a different setting because the Youth Wing has its constitution that has a defined structure. They also have a similar structure to that of the mother party.

The UDF Youth Conference is the supreme ruling and controlling body of the youth wing; this is the organ that decides and determines the policies and programs of the youth wing, reviews its achievements and adopts or amends the Constitution. This conference meets once every three years to among others receive the report from the National Youth President, National Youth Secretary, National Youth Treasurer report. The conference also elects the President, 1st Vice, 2nd Vice, 3rd Vice and 4th Vice President, Youth National Secretary, Deputy National Secretary, Youth National Treasurer and Deputy Youth National Treasurer.

The UDF youth wing has set a minimum academic qualification of a Malawi Certificate of Education for one to be elected into the committee.

The other organ is the National Youth Committee (NYC) which is entrusted with the management of the youth wing; it is composed of the first ten (10) secretariat positions from and including the position of National Secretary.

The committee is composed of the following positions; the National President who has four deputies, National Secretary with a deputy, National Treasurer with the deputy, National UDF Youth Organiser; National Spokesperson; National Director of Recruitment; Director of Legal Affairs; Director of Research; Director of Elections; Director of Protocol; Director of Political Affairs Director of Economic Affairs; Director of Education; Director of Internal Security; Director of Agriculture; Director of Social Services; Director of Transport and Logistics; Director of Telecommunications and Information Technology; Director of International Affairs; Director of Disabilities Affairs; Director of Religious Affairs; these positions have deputies and also, there are Fifteen (15) other elected members.

There are regional, district and constituency committees that have positions similar to that of the National Youth Committee. The UDF Youth wing has what they call Institutional Youth Wing Committees; these are committees that are established in institutions of learning and vocational or professional training.

The leadership is composed of the Chairperson or President; Deputy Chairperson or President; Secretary; Deputy Secretary; Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer.

4.3.4.2 Youth Structure for the United Transformation Movement (UTM)

The UTM has established the office of the National Director of Youth Affairs and its deputy, this is the office that coordinates the activities of the youth in the party as well as looks after the affairs of the youth in the party; and mobilize the youth for purposes of strengthening the party.

The UTM Youth Wing exists at regional, district and constituency levels. The positions at these levels are similar to those of the mother body and women wing of the party. These positions are the Chairperson; Secretary; Treasurer; Director of Research; Organizing Secretary; Campaign Director; Publicity Secretary; Director of Elections; Director of Political Affairs; Director of Public Relations; Director of Religious Affairs; and all these positions have their deputies.

4.3.4.3 Youth Structure for the Malawi Congress Party (MCP)

Members of the League of the Malawi Youth are part of the party committees at different levels including Local Branch Committees, Area Committees, Ward Committees, District Committees and Regional Committees.

The study found that the MCP constitution did not provide a clear structure of the youth wing, it has not elaborated how the committee is structured and organized at the national level or how the youth might influence the policy of the party.

4.3.4.4 Youth Structure for the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)

The study found that the DPP has no clear youth structure, in its organizational structure. It has recognized the National Political Conference, National Governing Council, the Central Committee, National secretariat, regional, district, constituency, zone and area committees. However, the study further found that the constitution has included one

member of the youth committee into the National Political Conference and it has also included the National Director of Youth as a member of the National Governing Council. This is the case with the Standing Committees that have created Youth Affairs. The study further revealed that there is no description of these sections of the youth and also no description of how youth are structured at different levels of the party.

4.3.5 Concept of Youth in Political Parties

4.3.5.1 The United Democratic Front (UDF)

The constitution of UDF (main party) has not made a provision to define the concept of youth, but the constitution of the UDF Youth Wing has clearly defined youth as any person below the age of 40, article 7 (a) of the youth wing constitution state that:

“Any person, under the age of forty years (40) regardless of race, ethnic group, color, and creed shall be eligible for the membership of the wing if he or she”.

The Secretary-General of the party in an interview explained that those holding positions in the National Executive Committees of the youth wing are all below the age of 40 in line with the prescriptions of the youth wing constitution. The Secretary-General of the main party also alluded to the reconciliation of the party with the national and international instruments that guide the party in their conceptualization of youth. He said:

“Apart from the definition provided by the UDF Youth Wing, the party is guided by other instruments such as the African Youth Charter and UN definitions”. (UDF SG)

4.3.5.2 The Malawi Congress Party (MCP)

The Malawi Congress Party (MCP) has recognized youth in its constitution through the establishment of a youth league but both the constitution and the political manifesto have not defined the youth. During a KII with the MCP Secretary-General, he indicated that

even though the party has no written definition of youth, anyone below the age of 40 can be considered as a youth in the party.

This situation of course presents a challenge in formulating proper responses to the challenges that young people face. It is hard to address a problem that one cannot identify. In commenting on the situation in Hong Kong and the youth involvement in politics, Ng (2015) has highlighted how issues of youth in politics are most bundled together with other issues (for example independence of the country from China) that they do not get significant attention. A similarity would be drawn with the MCP position. It is not such a surprise that in FGDs, the members of the MCP presented varied responses to the question of the definition of the youth. One of the participants, for instance, said:

*“Wachinyamata ndi munthu yemwe amapezeka pazochita zambiri pa mudzi, makaka za ku chipani, pa maliro, ma ukwati, odziwa kucheza ndi anthu”*²⁰

(a youth is any person who is always available during different events in a village, especially being involved with party activities, helping out during weddings and funerals).

Here, the conceptualization of youth is not on age but on actions. This was true even in my observations. For instance, the District Chairperson for Mchinji²¹ was born in 1969, and has been in the youth wing since 1989, and was one who had even played a crucial part in the struggle for/against democracy in Malawi. This is certainly odd for what and who would pass for youth in Malawi politics.

4.3.5.3 The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)

The DPP, just as the MCP, found itself in a similar predicament. The constitution of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) has not defined a youth, but the Secretary-General for

²⁰ Focus Group Discussion with members of a Youth wing for the Malawi Congress Party in Lilongwe

²¹ The District Youth Chairperson for was in Lilongwe during the time of FGD with the MCP Youth Wing

DPP defined youth as any person who is below the age of 45. Almost a similar claim to that of MCP, he said:

“As a party, we recognize those that are below the age of 45 as a youth but that does not restrict others who are willing to be involved in youth activities and are above the age of 45.”

This presents problems whose knowledge to party leaders is common. A senior member who is also an MP in Blantyre City observed that there is a problem in the conceptualization of the youth because the constitution of the party has not defined a youth. He said:

“Unfortunately, the whole party has not defined a youth although it has put youth at the center, for instance, the party has more youth programs such as vocational-technical training colleges, the youth loans and other but no any document that has a clear definition of who a youth is.”

The youth in DPP, like their counterparts in MCP, also believe that the youth are those that are active and willing to serve their party through a youth wing. One participant during the FGD said:

“We chose to belong to the youth wing and not because of the age but because of how we want to contribute to our party. This is the only wing that is engaged more than others and so we are here not because of age but because of our skills and abilities that will help the party grow”.

4.3.5.4 The United Transformation Movement (UTM)

UTM has recognized and defines a youth in its constitution. Article 43 (43.3.3) states that members of the Youth League shall be open to all citizens and residents of the Republic of Malawi who has attained the age of 15 years but have not attained the age of 30 years.

The Publicity Secretary for UTM during an interview indicated that the party stated that although there is no clear definition of youth, the party still considers every person who is

not more than 40 years as a young person. This is regardless that the party constitution places that threshold at 35. He said:

“Our party considers a youth any person who is eligible to vote and is not more than 40 years.”

The youth that participated in the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) stated that the party considers youth as any person who is below the age of 40 (also against the 35 in the constitution) but the age is not a restriction for one to be part of the youth wing in the UTM. One participant said:

“Age is not the main factor in UTM if anyone believes in working with the party through the youth wings is welcome because if we restrict ourselves to the actual age then we will leave out some potential members of our society to participate in our party. For example, our President Dr. Saulos Klaus Chilima when he stated that the party he was over 40 years and until now he is regarded as a youth”.

The study establishes some disparities in terms of how political parties have defined the youth in Malawi. Political parties have failed to define the youth; UTM and UDF have made a provision of who can be recruited as a youth in UTM and UDF and that provision is not enough to define youth in these political parties. However, as the KII and FGDs showed, these positions are quite open to change.

The impact of these positions can be seen in the way that the parties in Malawi treat and regard their young people, mostly as agents of violence and there just to help the parties get the votes (Lwanda, 2006). It can also be witnessed in the structuring of youth leadership in the parties. It is the case that all political parties have National Youth Directors and other youth positions that are not held by the youth. This brings into focus the elite and iron law of the oligarchy theory where Ekundayo (2017) has argued that a small group of people still retain power despite the system labeled as a democracy. In this case, this small group is mostly defined by its age.

A review of the documents, as well as the KIIs, further revealed that the party leadership does not see any problem of not defining the youth and align it to the National Youth Policy and/or other international youth-related policies such as that of the African Union and The United Nations. During the Key Informant Interviews (KII) with UTM, DPP, MCP and UDF it was clear that this is not an issue of concern. For example, the Secretary-General of MCP said:

“The Malawi Congress Party has not defined the youth and those willing to continue saving in youth wing and feels happy that way are not restricted to do so as long as they promote the party agenda.”

Likewise, the Spokesperson for the UTM indicated:

“those who are above and above should not be restricted to work in the party through the youth wing; our leader is above 40 and is still youthful”.

The Secretary-General of UDF was precise that although it is difficult to limit people’s participation in the youth wing, there are some processes underway that will limit those above 40. He said:

“UDF has allowed the youth to determine how the membership will be because the youth wing is now autonomous, we will have to agree with what they want and what they believe. At their National Conference, the youth agreed that membership should be for those who are below 40 years and our party accepted and started recognizing the youth as such”

The study found that political parties claim that they have youth in their structures but in the natural sense, it is only adults holding positions of the youth and claim to represent the youth a conclusion that is supported by Farthing (2010) who noted that youth may be presented as politically active but engaged outside the arena of constitutional politics. While having the structures provided for in the political party constitution, youth still are not participating in those structures one of the reason is that the definition of the youth has not been addressed in political parties, and therefore Gyampo, et al., (2019) conclude that

youth are still excluded or marginalized in formal political processes and structures, this may be due to the fact that the participation of youth has not been formalised in the political parties, Coe et al., (2016) added that youth political participation is characterized by very distinct restrictions such as age limits.

4.3.6 Political Party Strategies that Enhance Youth Participation

The study further probes specific party policies and strategies that are in place to enhance youth participation.

The Secretary-General of the United Democratic Front (UDF) indicates that even though the youth wing is autonomous, the party does not have clear policies that are aimed at enhancing youth participation. However, the Secretary-General said that the constitution of the youth wing provides some policies within it to ensure that the youth participate fully in the party; additionally, the fact that the youth wing is an independent organ also means that the main party has nothing to do with formulating specific policies focusing on youth but rather the youth wing is at liberty to create own policies and sell such to the mother party.

The UDF Secretary-General further indicates that the party has not yet formulated policies to enhance youth participation within the party, but pointed out the fact that allowing the youth wing to be independent and have its constitution is a step forward to coming up with such policies. The UDF youth wing has a constitution that is similar to that of the main party. The Secretary-General of UDF Youth Wing corroborated that the Youth Wing is an autonomous organ to the party; this means that the wing can undertake its activities and has the power to make any decision without the influence of the mother party.

The Secretary-General of UDF said that the party created an autonomous wing modeled under other progressive political parties in the region notably, the African National Congress in South Africa, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (Revolutionary Party) of Tanzania and Mozambican National Resistance Front (FRELIMO). They learned that these political parties have party youth wings that are independent of the main party, before that the UDF youth wings were an integral part of the structure of the party such that when the party is

going to the convention, delegates elected National Youth Director. But after the amendment of the constitution, the party only elects office bearers of the main party because the youth wing holds its convention and elects the Youth Wing President, Secretary-General, Treasurer General, and committee members.

This, the Secretary-General argued, is a way of attracting the intellectual youth into the party. The Secretary-General indicated that in this way the youth wing has grown to be a source of dissenting views and such views are taken seriously and discussed at a higher level. In UDF, the SG said that the youth have an opportunity to express themselves freely without any hindrance. The SG gave an example that the youth ask questions when the party has made major decisions, saying:

“for instance, at the moment I have a letter from the youth wing asking for an early convention because the youth are not happy with how UDF performed in the last previous elections particularly our association with DPP towards elections. The youth recommended that UDF should partner with UTM during the fresh elections but for some reason, the main party settled for DPP²²”

The Malawi Congress Party Secretary-General indicates that the party does not have a standalone policy that is aimed at enhancing youth participation. He indicated that the party uses the 4 party cornerstones to guide the work of all its organs including the youth wing. He said:

“..... the party has no particular policy specifically for the youth, our constitution is clear in terms of what we are structured and all other organs including youth wing are guided by the 4 party cornerstones - Unity, Loyalty, Obedience and Discipline”.

²² United Democratic Front (UDF) Secretary General

The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) Secretary-General indicates that the party has the welfare of the youth at heart and that is why all its programs focus on youth empowerment. She said:

“The party has a functional youth wing, a vibrant one and it contributes a lot to the main party vision. By allowing the youth to be able to participate in the activities, it signifies that the party has a special focus on the youth and that in our view it is a good policy of creating a good platform for youth to participate”.

UTM Spokesperson indicates that the party has a policy that aims at encouraging more youth to take part in the party. The policy will ensure that UTM has more youth in parliament and the local councils. The UTM Spokesperson said:

“We have a policy that encourages youth to contest during elections. The party takes an interest with those that show interest to contest in an election through the UTM tickets but have financial challenges to pay the registration fee with the electoral body. During the 2019 elections, UTM paid registration fees for over 50 youthful candidates who contested in the elections as MPs and Councillors”.

The research discovers that despite the comments by the leadership of the party, all political parties under study have no youth policies and strategies that enhance youth participation. There is no indication from DPP and MCP if they may consider having such policies in place. However, it is noted that UDF is in the process of coming up with different policies that will enhance youth participation in the party. The starting point is the establishment of an autonomous youth wing that has its constitution. The constitution of the youth outlines several important policy areas including its vision, objectives, and governance structure and has recognized and linked it to the National Youth Policy as well as the African Youth Charter (2006).

Likewise, in UTM there are some efforts concerning enhancing youth participation. The party encourages young people who are below the age of 40 to contest as Members of Parliament and Councillors in their constituencies and wards respectively. The party managed to pay for over 50 shadow candidates during the 2019 General Elections. While

there are efforts, the party does not have a written policy to support this, besides, there are no minutes to support that the party agreed to have a policy of this nature. The study discovers that this was a statement and a promise made by the Presidential candidate of UTM, Saulos Chilima and the statement did not exclusively indicate the support towards the youth who desired to contest as members of parliament in their respective constituencies.

4.4 Youth involvement in formulating the party manifesto

The MCP Manifesto 2019-2024 which has a vision to “Build a New Malawi” on the foundation of a capable democratic developmental state²³ was developed by a consultant who was hired by the party. The Secretary-General pointed out that the youth wing members were consulted to provide their input to the party manifesto. The MCP Secretary-General reported that the youth provided their inputs through the National Director of Youth who was consulted on behalf of the youth in the party. He said:

“..... the process was very thorough, and we could not involve every youth in the party but the views that the National Director of Youth represents the voices of the youth within the Malawi Congress Party.”

UTM launched its manifesto prior to the 2019 elections which recognised that “Malawi has deteriorated at all levels, cronyism, nepotism and corruption, in general, are endemic”.²⁴ In formulating the manifesto, the Spokesperson of UTM indicated that the youth are the majority in the party as such their involvement was important. She said:

“as you might be aware the majority of our members are the youth and they provided input towards the manifesto that we used during the 2019 elections. Their input was well captured by a team of those that developed our manifesto”.

The UDF 2019 Manifesto has a theme called “New Beginning” which desired to “build on a solid foundation and we believe with a strong focus on accountability and demonstrable

²³ MCP Manifesto 2019-2024

²⁴ UTM Manifesto 2019

results that are rooted by a social contract between a government and its citizens, we can make real and positive development for all in Malawi.”²⁵ The UDF manifesto was developed by a consultant who engaged the youth wing to provide their input. The Secretary-General said:

“The consultant was hired and one of the tasks was to engage the youth wing to solicit views of what should be contained in the party manifesto”

This was shared by the Acting President for the Youth wing who remarked that:

“We were involved in the process of developing our manifesto, and some of our inputs were included in the final draft of the 2019 manifesto”.

DPP 2019 Manifesto reflects DPP beliefs and values which are grounded on “people-centered development approaches, long term infrastructure developments, people-driven economic paradigms, and a culture of respect for human rights and human dignity for all”²⁶. It was not clear how the youth in DPP contributed to the manifesto of the party.

This study, in general, establishes that political parties outsource the services of the Consultants to come up with their Political Manifestos. There are terms of reference developed to guide the consultant to be able to come up with the manifesto. The MCP Secretary-General reported that the youth in the party was allowed to provide their input through the National Director of Youth. The process did not involve other young people apart from the National Director of Youth and it was not certain that the National Director solicited ideas from the youth wings or had a mandate to provide input on behalf of all the youths in the party.

The UTM spokesperson indicates that a lot of youth were consulted when coming with the political manifesto of the party, but there was no evidence to support this. The youth that

²⁵ UDF Manifesto 2019

²⁶ DPP Manifesto 2019

participated in the FGDs could not comfortably state what is contained in the manifesto of their political party.

The study further establishes that the focus in political manifestos focuses more on youth economic empowerment, entrepreneurship, skills development, sports and education. There is no political party that has included youth development and their political participation within the political parties themselves creating a platform through which they can be groomed to take over party leadership positions. MCP has committed to implement fully the provisions of the National Youth Policy which aims to empower the youth and encourage their participation in development processes to their fullest potential. Despite such a commitment, the MCP manifesto is silent on how it wishes to enhance youth participation within the party. Gyampo (2019) recommended that it is important for current political parties to address the deficits of political systems and expand the inclusiveness of political structures in order to boost young people's participation and representation in politics.

In the manifesto of the MCP, under youth development, the party planned to introduce a National Youth Service (NYS) and Jobs4Youth Programme that will offer vocational skills training to all youth completing secondary school and tertiary education including all out of school youth. The party is also committed to treating young people, at all levels of government, as partners in development and meaningful change agents in creating a society and economy that provides opportunities for the prosperity of all Malawians and to implement fully the provisions of the National Youth Policy, which aims to empower the youth and encourage their participation in development processes to their fullest potential.

UTM, article 4.0 (2.4.4) of their constitution outlined the focus of the party on youth development and empowerment. The manifesto seeks to focus on the “unskilled Youth”, UTM has recognized that this group of youth is often engaged in primary economic activities such as agriculture, construction and the manufacturing industry, among other areas. UTM recognizes that there are a vast number of citizens in this category that have the potential to undertake sustainable business activities that support a dignified life. Secondly, UTM focuses on the skilled or professional youth, this group consists of those

who acquired tertiary and technical education, who often look for employment in the formal employment sector.²⁷

The UDF manifesto's focus when it comes to youth is on developing forums for vocational training establishments, employers and the civil service to ensure that the party is training the right people in the right skills and the right number to support the number of jobs available²⁸. The UDF further desired to create sustainable and meaningful jobs for the youth, increase access to finance and provide enterprise development skills to the youth and encourage the participation of the youth in sporting activities as a means of further developing individuals to be ready for the workplace.

As for the DPP manifesto, the party stated that the party would focus on community colleges to train our youths in different skills and link them to the market, support entrepreneurial behavior by providing soft loans to enable the trained youths to start or capitalize on their businesses, build youth centers in all districts so that youths have space for sports, recreation and entertainment and construct stadiums for Nyasa Big Bullets and the Mighty Be forward Wanderers²⁹.

4.5 The Motivation for the Youth in Joining Political Parties in Malawi

The study investigates the motivation of the youth when joining political parties. Focus Group discussions were relied upon to answer this question and they were conducted for political party youth committees from UDF, MCP, DPP and UTM.

There are different reasons why young people join their political parties, this section discusses a summary of the drivers and they include the influence of the peers, influenced by family members, desire to launch a political career, searching for opportunities such as jobs, businesses and "quick money".

²⁷ UTM Political Manifesto 2019

²⁸ UDF Political Manifesto 2019

²⁹ DPP Political Manifesto 2019

4.5.1 Launching a political career

During the Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) with the MCP youth wing, some participants indicated that they joined the political party of their own choice because they wanted to launch a political career. A participant said:

“I joined my party because it is a forum where people from the main party can recognize you and give you more responsibilities when you active in party organ, and youth wing is one of such grouping that will help me sharpen my political skills before joining the mainstream politics”.

In addition, one participant said that he desires to contest as a member of parliament in his constituency; he further said that for this to happen the only way to succeed during elections is by aligning himself to a party that is popular in his constituency. He said:

*“I am young and popular in my area. I know I can win the election but since the people in my area supports MCP and it is easy for one to win if they are representing MCP that is why I joined the youth wing so that when the time comes, it will be easy for the party leadership to recognize and support me as a representative of my people through the party”.*³⁰

4.5.2 Influence from family and peers

Other participants indicated that they were influenced by their peers who were active and busy with party activities in their area. In an FGD with MCP youth members, a participant said:

“most of the people in my area support MCP and most of my friends were active with party activities and they were so recognized in community activities, they were so close to party leaders who could give them some money on several occasions

³⁰The respondent was a 32 year old aspiring to contest as an MP in 2025 on MCP ticket in Machenga constituency in Lilongwe.

when they meet, I was asked to help them with an activity during the party activities where I received MK5 000 which motivated me to join the next activity.”

Family influence is another factor that makes youths join a party. Having a family member who is already an active member of a political party was cited as helping the youth to increase their knowledge about the party, how the party operates, membership criteria and benefits that one gets for being a member of that particular party.

During the FGD with UDF young wing members, some participants indicated that they joined the party because their family members have been involved with UDF in one way or the other. One participant said:

“I was born in a family of politicians and I never thought I would be inactive politics ever as am doing, my late uncle took part in formulating the UDF constitution and became a Minister in different ministerial positions during Bakili Muluzi rule, in addition, my mum was a chairperson for Women Action Group in UDF in its early stages. I grew up seeing these people being active in politics. So when Atupele Muluzi took over the leadership of UDF, then I thought this is my time too to help my fellow youth and in 2012 I joined active politics through the UDF wing”.³¹

Parent’s experiences were also cited as influences for some youths to join the DPP, one participant said:

“my father was once MCP when he was young; he eventually became a victim of dictatorship. He told us how the MCP regime of his time tormented people including his family members. When UDF won, he was not sure if he was ready to join UDF and eventually joined DPP and he encouraged me to join DPP so we don’t want MCP to come back in power again.”

³¹ Mbiri Ligomeka was a Secretary General of UDF Youth Wing at a time of the interviews

4.5.3 Personal benefits

Other participants indicated that they joined a political party because it is easy for one to access financial assistance and other materials for belonging to that political party. In their research focusing on China, scholars Tian, Gaon and Cone (2008) indicated that it was quite common for Chinese entrepreneurs to align themselves to the Communist party to get favors. The situation would be the same for young people with a similar motivation. In an FGD, a participant said:

“For instance during the campaign period, candidates come to us so that we can help them organize meetings and other activities. Our role is to mobilize our fellow youths and campaign for a candidate, that is not done for free we are usually compensated with some money, party materials such as clothes (T-shirts), farm inputs and others items. The candidates give us money and at times materials such as t-shirt, clothes, push-bikes and many other materials”.

Even while political parties and other powerful actors employ young people’s energy and resources for their ends, young people treat these activities as avenues to jobs, money, and social capital (Dawson, 2014). The study revealed that searching for “connection” is said to be a reason why other young people joined UDF. It is believed that if one belongs to a particular party it becomes easy to get certain opportunities and linkages with high profile people such as Chief Executive Officers of different companies, business persons who can easily give you a job or business. One participant said:

“if you are a businessperson and you belong to a certain party, it is easy for you to know people who may need your services and they too are willing to support your business however small it may be because you are regarded as one of them.” He added, *“It is easy for you to be considered for a job because those that recruit people are the same people you interact with during party activities. So if the party is outside government we fight so that we go into government for the leaders to consider us with certain positions in government structures and also business opportunities”.*

Other participants further indicate that the main reasons for them to join DPP is the fact that during the 2014 political campaign, they were promised that they will receive loans and forms were given to them by the DPP candidate of their area with the promise that once the DPP wins then the MP will ensure that the youth in the area access loans from Youth Development Enterprise Fund (YEDEF). The major social and economic differences among the youth account for their decision to participate in party politics. Verba et al. (1995) noted that the role of income is an important predictor of youth participation. According to Verba, the causal mechanisms driving this relationship are the resources, such as time, money, and civic skills, that are both associated.

Others felt that joining DPP is one way of alleviating their poverty because they believe those participating in party politics having access to multiple sources of income. A participant said:

“Ndakhala mu umphawi wadzaoneni kwa nthawi yaitali ndipo ndinalibe chichita chenicheni pa moyo wanga, ndinaganiza kuti ndikalowa DPP ndikulimbikira ndizipezako mwayi wa Ndalama ndipo umphawi wanga udzachepe”.

(I have been living in poverty for a long time and I had nothing meaningful that may help me. I thought it wise that if I join DPP and become active, I will access money and that may enhance my income capacity and reduce my poverty).

4.5.4 A belief in the values and leadership of the party

Other young people indicate that their choice for joining that particular political party is based on the values that they see in that political party. A participant in an FGD said that he was encouraged by the pillars of DPP especially that of ending hunger. He said that youth from his area, their livelihood, largely depended on farming and DPP wanted to end hunger by providing farm inputs at an affordable price. He said:

“ife kuno timadalira ulimi ndipo timalima kwambiri. DPP idalonjeza kuti ibweretsa feleteza otsika mtengo kuti ife alimi titukuke. Komanso kuti feleteze ameneyu andipeze ndimayenera kukhala mmodzi mwa iwo achipani cha DPP kudela kwangaku”.

(in our area we depend on agriculture and DPP promised to provide subsidized fertilizer so that smallholder farmers like us should benefit, to access such help so easily I had to join DPP because we were told that the supporters of DPP will be a priority to receive the fertilizer).

Others agree that DPP preaches peace and brought peace in comparison to the previous parties before DPP. The other participant indicated that they believed that they needed to have some technical skills and being a member of DPP would make them have easy access to the Community Colleges as promised by their Shadow MP, showing that even if it is for altruistic intentions that they join the political parties, personal benefits are also considered.

Some youths were frustrated before with other parties and wanted a change. A participant said:

“Ndale ndinayambira ku People’s Party ngati wachinyamata, koma samatiganizira ife ngati achinyatama. Committee yathu palibe wankulu anabwera kudzatiyenderako koma chipani cha DPP akuluakulu a chipani amabwera pafupi pafupi. Zinandipangitsa kukalowa ku chipani cha DPP”

(I first joined politics through the People’s Party as a youth but party officials never visited us as a youth group, but our colleagues from DPP in our area were visiting their youth wing more often and I decided to join DPP).

Youth in UTM indicates that they joined the party because of the President of UTM whom they considered a youthful leader who resonates well with the youth. One participant in an FGD said:

“I joined the party because our leader is a youth and we speak the same language. He understands much of our problems – such as a leader who can easily help us the youth because he is one of us”

Another participant said that UTM appeared to be a different party than other traditional parties, it brought some hope that things would change in Malawi. She said:

“I lost hope in our parties because the way they conduct themselves is not different from the other, but the coming of UTM there were some hopes that were provided. When listening to Chilima, you will see hope for the nation has come and he convinced a lot of us that we cannot join politics. He was an inspiration”.

4.6 Career Prospects for Youth in Politics.

According to Recchi (1999), being a member of a youth wing is one way of starting a political career for youth wings are expected to be a nursery of preparing future leaders of political parties. The major political parties in Malawi have youth wings within their structures which are an integral part of political parties, such structures are expected to prepare future leaders of the political parties, Svåsand and Khembo (2007) posit that the party youth organizations build the parties by providing future leaders and sustaining institutions of party organizations beyond the life span of the founding members. The youth wings are an arena for training the youth to learn more about party beliefs and ideologies and graduate into a main political party taking leadership roles. On this, Hooghe, et al (2004) note that youth sections of political parties do not just participate in political action; they provide training opportunities for their members.

According to Hooghe et al. (2004), youth wings function as socializing agents for partisanship and organizational learning processes, further state that youth wings introduce young members to the ideology of the party just as they function as a learning school where the members gradually get acquainted with political and party life.

The study found political parties in Malawi have no clear and formal processes that will ensure that those that are in the youth wing can increase their prospects of political career path. During the FGDs with participants from DPP, UDF, UTM and MCP, it was clear that youth do not see the future of enhancing their political careers in their political parties, one participant alluded to the fact that their role is to support the candidate to win elections and other than that as youth do not see any prospects of ascending to the higher office within the party, he said:

As youths in our party, we are here as a supporting team to ensure that our candidates win the next election and ensuring that they secure their sits. this is the only way the candidates reward the youth wing and this is particularly common during election time i.e. the primary elections, the general conference and presidential and parliamentary elections.

This insinuation is what Somolokae (2005) observed, that the youth see their work as merely supporting party work, ensure that their parties recruit new members and mobilize the necessary resources to enable candidates to win elections.

Another candidate observes that the party is silent on whether youth can easily ascend to key political positions within the party or not, attributing to the resources available, he said:

The party does not restrict youth to compete during elections but the problem is that these elections require a lot of investment and one needs to have a good budget to support his or her campaign, this opportunity is there for those that have money.

Other participants agreed that the party see youth as a threat to their positions as such there are no efforts to ensure that youth are encouraged to take key positions that will enhance their political career, one participant concluded that;

There is a recognition that youth of our time are knowledgeable and possesses skills that party leadership needs to sustain power with that in mind, adults in the party feel that their positions may be given to the youth pushing them from politics. Such people use the money to influence the process of suffocating youth to be considered in their political party.

Elsewhere, the youth have been rising to become leaders in their political parties. The New Zealand Herald in 2017 records that the youth wing in Labour helped to propel 37-year-old Jacinda Ardern to the Prime Ministership at the head of a Labour-led coalition government. In the same year, the 31-year-old Sebastian Kurz of the conservative People's Party (PP) was elected as Chancellor of Austria.

Similarly, Belgium Hooghe et al (2004) noted that the Christian Democratic Party (CDP) youth wing had two of their leaders, Wilfried Martens from 1981 and Jean-Luc Dehaene from 1992 moved on to become Prime Minister of Belgium from the youth wings. Additionally, the Prime Minister that was elected in 1999 was chairman of the liberal youth section from 1979 to 1981.

In South Africa Twala (2009) records that the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) has been a reservoir of leadership for the ANC as many of the great leaders were drawn from among the ranks of the ANCYL; it is therefore considered as a preparatory school for the parent party. Twala indicated that ANCYL has produced several leaders who later occupied senior positions in the ANC and these include Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu and Nelson Mandela. In recent years, Julius Malema rose through the ranks of the party, amassing power, before he eventually fell out of favor with the main party and formed his party, the EFF, which has gained considerable attention (Forde, 2012).

4.7. Youth and party ideologies

During the FGDs, it was clear that youth in MCP can articulate the ideologies of the party as guided by the 4 cornerstones and the Chakwera Hi5. It was indicated that the youth wing works towards the promotion of the 4 cornerstones which are Unity, Loyalty, Obedience and Discipline.

Towards the 2019/2020 General Elections, youth wings in MCP promoted the Chakwera Super Hi5 pillars: uniting Malawi, prospering together, servant leadership, rule of law and ending corruption.

UDF Youth Wing participants at the FGD indicated that the wing supports the party ideologies that the main party believes in. It was clear that most members were comfortable picking Agenda for Change as the party ideology, this was promoted as the theme for the 2014 Tripartite Elections while the 2019/2020 elections focus was on economic freedom, social inclusion as well as a responsive and inclusive party. According to the youth wing members, these are ideologies that are a basis for the youth wing's existence.

The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) youth wing indicated that they fully support the party ideologies. These ideologies that are being promoted by their leadership include patriotism, integrity and hard work. Participants indicated that they believe that other than patriotism, integrity and hard work DPP also has a special focus on food security and development and these resonate so well with the aspirations of many youths that support DPP ideologies.

The UTM youth indicates that the ideologies of the party are what make the party attractive to many people; the youth wing promotes such ideologies in the activities of the youth wing. The party has a strong passion for the youth and is concerned with the high rate of unemployment among the youth, that is why they promised one million jobs, the increase of youth and women fund to a tune of MK75 billion from MK15 billion annually, the party believes that people should have food all year round and that is why they campaigned about the farm inputs being cheaper – fertilizer at MK4, 995.

The study finds that youths are not fully aware of their party ideologies. During the FGD, it was evident that members of the youth wing were comfortable discussing some campaign promises and not what the party stands for or its ideologies. For example, at an FGD with members of UTM anonymously said that the parties ideology is having cheap fertilizers and 1 million jobs, likewise, DPP youth indicated about the Youth Scheme Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF) and provision of technical colleges for the youth while MCP youth were able to articulate the “Chakwera Hi5” campaign promises and UDF youth mostly are familiar with the Agenda for Change which was the main focus of the 2014 elections. As for clear party ideologies, they could not articulate them. This, however,

would not be squarely blamed on the youths as Patel (2005) indicated that ideologies are not such a strong feature of Malawian political parties.

4.8 Youth wings and party functionality

The Malawi Congress Party (MCP) youth wings indicate that the party considers the youth as very significant and they too feel that they are significant in the sense that they can help in party member recruitment and contributing towards campaign meetings and entertain political party supporters during party meetings. The youth indicated that they can spread the messages to help people learn and know about their candidates i.e. President, Member of Parliament and Councillors.

The United Democratic Front Youth wing members also expressed that they believe that they are significant to the main party in the sense that they can contribute towards the re-branding process that is underway in the main party. In addition, the youth feel they are significant in the sense that they can introduce other innovations to market their political party using social media and other mechanisms such as political campaign messages. The UDF youth wing also believed that they are relevant in mobilizing the youth in both rural and urban areas to support the political party during elections.

The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) youth wing believes that the youth are significant because they are energetic and in the majority. The youth can help recruit members into the party through different activities, in addition, they can present messages to the masses using creative means such as drama, dance and entertaining activities that old people may not be able to do. The youth in DPP consider themselves as ears and eyes of the party in communities, if there is anything that may be against the party, the youth can raise such issues to the party leadership; this was a call that the BBC (2012) indicated was given to them by the founding Mutharika.

The party security during rallies and other events is provided by the youth, they ensure that the political party can conduct activities in a safe place, further it was said that youth in the party provide security to their leaders as bodyguards. This security, of course, would not be further detached from the violence that Lwanda (2006) discussed.

“timateteza atsogoleri anthu a chipani kuti wina asawapange chipongwe Kapena kuwagwiragwira”

(we protect our party leaders that people should not attack them).

It was mentioned during the FGD that youths are significant in the party because they help to encourage members that are weak by visiting and inviting them to continue participating in the activities of the party.

The UTM youth also believed that they are very significant to the party because of the age of their leader whom they consider as youthful and as such that gives confidence that the youth have space in the driving seat of the party. The youth believe that they are very good at mobilizing people to patronize political party activities. This study noted that all political party youth wings are aware that they are significant to the party, mostly they indicated that they contribute a lot towards the elections of MPs and the President. It was however clear that the significance of the youth in the parties is very much visible during the campaign period. One participant commented:

“it is not strange that we easily partner with politicians during the campaign more than any other time in between the elections, right now just a few months after the elections we hardly get in touch with the political leaders. I used to talk to our shadow MP every day, more than 4 times a day and now she won and now in parliament, I don’t access again to her”.

And another participant added his experience:

“I was hoping that after winning the elections, our leaders will help us benefit the same way they are benefiting, but our lives are now 5 steps backward while theirs is 20 steps ahead from where they are, they shall come back to us again after 5 years”.

It was noted that while the youth know that the party relies on them, they could not spell out clearly what makes them feel that they are important to the party beyond the election

period. There is no clear activity for the youth in between elections and that makes it difficult to justify the claim that the youth are significant in the party but rather a tool for mobilization during the political campaign towards elections (Lwanda, *ibid.*). During the focus group discussions, it was a general understanding that all political party youth wings believe that the party will struggle without youth wings.

The youth in UDF believe that the party cannot succeed without the youth wing because the youth are in majority and that the youth are the drivers of change worldwide, One participant claimed:

*“The youth are in majority and things are changing politically worldwide and Malawi is no the exception, youth are becoming more relevant now than ever in our history. The youth make a party relevant; I don’t see any political party that can succeed without having a well-constituted youth wing in its structure.”*³²

It was indicated that even though the youth face some resistance from the party to include them in key positions, there are realizations that the youth wing is relevant to the development of the party. A participant remarked:

“We sometimes think that the party founders still believe that the youth do not have space and also believe that those that worked with Bakili Muluzi during the transition from the one-party system are the ones who are relevant in the party. We have challenged this and demonstrated that today’s youth can be different, we do not want to see UDF youth being painted and dance for our leader but we want to sit at the table with these leaders to shape the future of the party”

Another participant echoed the remarks by stating that:

“our participation in the party should be viewed as complementary to growth and sustainability of the party – we have that chance at the moment and we see this as

³² A youth representative from UDF Youth Wing

an opportunity that has been created. That shows that the party now recognizes that they cannot do without us”

UTM youth wing believe that the party in itself is youthful, and that majority of its members are the youth, one participant during the FDG said:

“the party founder is very youthful, and the majority of followers also are young people, as such the party heavily depends on the youth for its existence and without the youth wing, the party may not function properly. The strength of the party is the membership of the youth”

The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) believes that its youth is an integral part of the party and that the party will have difficulties succeeding without the youth. Thus, the Secretary-General of the party remarked:

The success of DPP in all previous elections was because of the youth involvement in the campaign. The campaign rallies were attractive because of youth wings; we make things happen in DPP.

The study revealed that all party youth wings share a belief that the political parties will not continue to exist without the youth, this view has been highlighted by scholars when focusing on the role of the youth in politics (Lwanda, 2006; Loader, Vremon and Xenos, 2014; Ng, 2015). Although this is the case, however, it was further observed that no political party in Malawi has guidelines for the youth to ensure its relevance. There is no party policy to ensure that the youth wings are relevant.

It is only UDF that has started having an autonomous youth wing that has an agenda that still makes it be able to contribute to the main party. The UDF youth wing is in the process is designing a strategic plan to ensure that their relevance to the party is realized. Having such instruments such as party youth policy and a strategic plan for the party makes more sense to claim that the political parties cannot exist without the youth wings.

4.9 Challenges that the youth face in political parties in Malawi

The study explored challenges that the youth face in their political parties, the challenges are appeared to be similar despite the positions of the political parties i.e. being in government or the opposition. The youth felt that political leaders promise a lot of things to the youth and fail at fulfilling such promises as business loans, technical colleges and jobs. This arrangement then leaves the youth frustrated.

During the FGD, it was clear that the youth in UTM were frustrated because their expectations were not met even after the party ascended to the Presidency together with the MCP; one participant said:

“We hoped that by now some of us will be provided with business opportunities and of course some expected to be appointed into public institutions as Board of Directors but not even a single youth from UTM has been appointed and none of us has a contract or hoping to have a contract with the government soon. We fought together to help the Tonse Alliance win the elections and now we have been dumped just like that”.

The other challenge that was pointed out was about the leadership of a political party detaching itself from the youth after the election. It was said that those in the regional committees or any higher office are the ones who have much access to the leaders such as the President and the expectation is that key leaders need to interact more often with the youth in between elections but that has since not proven to be the case.

It was also noted that there is silent competition among the youth due to the limited number of opportunities. In this state, each of the youth wants to be relevant; this then increases infighting and ends up leaving out other potential young people to continue because they may not have the capacity to fight on.

During the FGD, some participants disclosed that political party leaders prefer working with the youth in cities leaving out those that are in rural areas, by extension, it is said that available opportunities for the youth are largely meant for urban youth. This was linked to

the challenge of mobility. Participants mentioned that the youth are invited and at times walk for long distances to patronize such activities. In addition, those with bicycles can cycle and this usually disadvantages young women who may not cycle long distances.

4.10. Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed major findings of the study informed by data collected in the field through document review, Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The main findings focus on the recognition of youth wings in political party constitutions, how political parties define the youth, the motivation of youth joining political parties, challenges and opportunities for the youth is associated with being members of political parties.

The study revealed that UDF has a clear objective that seeks to advance youth inclusion in its political party constitution which states that “the party shall support and advance the full integration of women and the youth in political, social and economic development”. Similarly, the Malawi Congress Party constitution article 3 (7) stipulates that the party shall ensure that the youth have the same opportunities as all other members. While there is this consideration of youth in the party objectives, both the UDF and MCP have not provided mechanisms and strategies for ensuring that such objectives are achieved. Neither have they set clear targets for any particular period. It is only UTM that has provided clear objectives of the youth league in the constitution. DPP, UDF and MCP have only identified the youth wing but there is no clear purpose and objectives of these youth wings.

The study also noted that UTM and UDF are the only parties that are clear in terms of the membership criteria to the youth wing. UTM membership of the Youth League is open to all citizens and residents of the Republic of Malawi who has attained the age of 15 years but has not attained the age 30 years and UDF states that membership is open to any person, under the age of forty years (40) regardless of race, ethnic group, color, and creed shall be eligible for the membership of the wing. The study, however, established that this is not always the case in reality as older people take up positions in the youth leadership of the party.

The constitution of UDF (main party) has not made a provision to define the concept of youth, but the constitution of the UDF Youth Wing has clearly defined youth as any person below the age of 40, article 7 (a) of the youth wing constitution state that:

“Any person, under the age of forty years (40) regardless of race, ethnic group, color, and creed shall be eligible for the membership of the wing if he or she”.

The Malawi Congress Party (MCP) has recognized youth in its constitution through the establishment of a youth league but both the constitution and the political manifesto have not defined the youth.

The DPP, just as the MCP, found itself in a similar predicament. The constitution of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) has not defined a youth, but the Secretary-General for DPP defined youth as any person who is below the age of 45.

The youth in DPP, like their counterparts in MCP, also believe that the youth are those that are active and willing to serve their party through a youth wing.

The study established that political parties outsource the services of the Consultants to come up with the Political Manifesto. There are terms of reference developed to guide the consultant to be able to come up with the manifesto. It was claimed that the consultant receives inputs from the youth through the youth directorate. Youths, however, were found to have limited knowledge of their manifestos with them focusing on the same issues that political leaders popularised in their campaigns as the manifestos.

The study further established that the focus in political manifestos was more on youth economic empowerment, entrepreneurship, skills development, sports and education. There is no political party that has included youth development and their political participation within the political parties. The study found that youth are not fully aware of their party ideologies. During the FGD, it was evident that members of the youth wing were comfortable discussing some campaign promises and not what the party stands for or ideologies

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the study findings based on specific objectives, highlights the implications of the study and suggests areas that can be considered for further study.

5.2 Conclusion

The study revealed that despite constitutional provisions in all parties to allow youths to participate at different levels, there are challenges associated with youth representation. All parties under study have people holding positions and represent the youth at these organs who are not in the category of the youth, this is a result of the fact that political parties have struggled to define youth in the political party statutes. As a result of this, all political parties have National Youth Directors, Regional Youth Directors, District Directors, Constituency Youth Directors that are not youth because there is no provision and guidance to include youth who are below the age of 35 based on the National Youth Policy. It is only UDF that is clear in terms of who a youth is, they are defined as those below the age of 40 which is different from the National Youth Policy as well as the African Youth Charter. The study found that in UDF, all members of the National Youth Wing Committee are below the age of 40.

The study established differences in motivations for young people joining politics. Some youths find youth wings as a vehicle to access more opportunities such as business connections through awards of contracts. It is said that those that belong to a political party that is in power have more chances to win government contracts other than the youth that are not part of a ruling youth wing.

As a result of this, the youth wings in opposition work so hard to ensure that the party they belong to wins the elections so that they increase their chances of winning such contracts and other businesses.

In addition, it was clear that many youths are motivated by their peer who easily gets jobs because they belong to a party that is in power at that particular time. Getting a job in civil service becomes easy if you are part of the youth wing of a ruling party. This motivates a lot of youths who try to align themselves with the youth wings that are in power at that particular time. The study further revealed that other youths are motivated by handouts such as motorcycles, clothes and farm inputs promised by politicians.

The study used the elite theory and the iron law of oligarchy. By using the elite theory, the study reveals that the theory describes the relationship between groups in political parties, and this relationship elites are in minority but more organized and hold power while the youth who are in majority are manipulated using the capacity and resources that elites have. Although the political parties in Malawi have youth leagues, the study found that these youth wings are disorganized and are not stable which makes it hard to increase youth influence at the main party decision-making table. In political parties in Malawi, youth structures are used to recruit youth with a view of supporting them during the campaign period and thereafter, if the leaders win elections the youth are ignored until the next election. It has also been revealed that political parties have no ongoing programs and activities for the youth in between elections that will keep the youth busy and prepare them for future leadership roles within the party. Elites are seen to possess capital which includes political, social and political that enables them to enhance their influence within the political parties and youth with their vulnerabilities fall into the trap. Elites, provide money and other materials to the youth to help them get the much-needed votes, and the youth with their vulnerability can accept the materials which provide short-term solutions to their social problems.

Further, considering the fact that the iron law of oligarchy, political parties are run by leadership of the same class who makes key decisions and dominate the affairs of the parties, the theory entails that when political parties are starting they need more people,

they get organized and put proper structures and eventually when the party becomes strong oligarchies start to immerge, as a result of that the youth leagues become less influential in the process. The study revealed that those that participate and represent the youth leagues at National Governing Council and National Executive Committees are not necessarily the youth, but adults who have resources (elites) who bring the voice of the youth themselves to the decision-making table. The study learned that youth leagues are but cosmetics because they are part of the party structure but the youth does not have space to be fully represented.

5.3 Implications of findings

Malawi is experiencing a youth bulge. There is also a lack of opportunities for most of the youths. In terms of the political setup, Malawi's democracy needs the youth if it is to remain strong and resolute. For instance, the Economist announced Malawi as a country of the year due to its political gains in 2020 following the nullification of the 2019 election (Economist, 2020). It was due to the vigilance of young people that the election was nullified. However, as this research established, political parties have got little consideration for the youth in their structures. If this situation is not addressed, youths will continue to be used by politicians to promote their narrow interests and not to build the capacity of the youth to take leadership positions in the party. This might have a dangerous impact on the state of democracy in Malawi. At the same time, there is a risk of seeing young people engage in other political processes and institutions (such as violent demonstrations) instead of political parties; the death of political parties in Malawi might spell doom for Malawi's democracy.

5.4 Recommendations for Further Research

Further studies can look at factors that lead to the establishment of more than one youth wing of a political party as provided for in the party constitution. Further studies can also look at how activities of the youth wings are planned or designed, to assess if the youth wings have strategic plans and assess if such wings have targets under which they want to contribute within a certain given time.

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APPENDIX 1:



Principal
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Department of Political and Administrative Studies

3rd September, 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION: MR GIFT NUMERI

I refer to the above captioned matter. I write to introduce the bearer of this letter, **Mr Gift Numeri**, who is a second year Master of Art (Political Science) student in the Department of Political and Administrative Studies at University of Malawi's Chancellor College.

Our postgraduate political science students are required, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (Political Science), to submit a thesis at the end of second year of their studies. Among other things, the said thesis is generally based on empirical data. In this regard, Mr Numeri intends to carry out a data gathering exercise for this purpose and you have been sampled as one of the possible respondents. His approved research topic is entitled "*Youth and Party Politics in Malawi*".

Any assistance rendered to him in the course of this exercise will be highly appreciated. Let me also point out that the information gathered will be treated as confidential and it is purely for academic purposes.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

H.M.KAYUNI, BA(Pub Admn) *Mlw*, BPA, MPA *Stell*, PhD *Western Cape*
Professor & Programme Coordinator, PAS Department
Mobile: 0882436251

APPENDIX 2:

DATA COLLECTION TOOL

Key Informants Interviews - Political Party Secretary Generals and National Youth Directors

To understand the political party policies that enhance youth participation in Malawi.

1. How does your party define a youth?
2. Does your political party constitution recognize the youth? If yes, how?
3. Does your political party have policies that enhance youth political participation? If yes, what are these policies?
4. What is the purpose of these policies?
5. How effective are these policies?
6. How are these policies developed?
7. How accessible are these policies to the youth in your party and others?
8. How often do you review these policies?
9. At what level were the youth involved in formulating these policies?
10. In your view, to what extent does that party use these policies?
11. How do you incorporate youth wings in decision making?
12. Do you have database to show number of youth in your party?
13. Is there program/strategy or policy that is focusing on increasing level of young women into the youth wing?
14. Do you have anything you want to add in terms of youth participation in political parties in Malawi?

APPENDIX 3:

DATA COLLECTION TOOL

Focus Group Discussion with the Political Party Youth Committees (Chairpersons, Secretaries and other members)

To investigate the motivation of youth joining political parties in Malawi

1. Why did you join your political party than the other party?
2. Do you support your political party ideology?
3. What are the main party ideologies that motivated you to join?
4. Do you think that friends also influenced you to join this party? If yes, explain.
5. How significant are you to the main political party?
6. Do you think that your party can exist without your wing?
7. Is there anyone here who aspires to be the party secretary General, Treasure general even the party president?
8. Do you know what your party constitution says about the youth? If yes, what does it say?
9. What are the plans for your youth wing?
- b) Do you have anything you want to add in terms of youth participation in political parties in Malawi?

APPENDIX 4:

DATA COLLECTION TOOL

Focus Group Discussion Youth Wing Members

To explore challenges that the youth face in political parties in Malawi.

1. What are the challenges you face as a youth wing within your party?
2. What are the challenges that each of you as a young person faces within your party?
3. Do you have guidelines that ensure that youth moves on the ladder to take positions in the mother party?
4. Do you think young women face a lot of challenges than boys in your party? If yes, explain your experiences.
5. How often are you involved in making key party decisions?
6. Do you have clear long and short-term plans for your youth wing?
7. Who is responsible for the implementation of these activities?
8. Do you think your youth wing is relevant in your mother's party? If yes, explain how?
9. Do you have guidelines/constitution that governs the operations of your wing?
10. How often do you meet as a youth wing?
11. What do you mainly focus when you meet?
 - c) Do you have anything you want to add in terms of youth participation in political parties in Malawi?

APPENDIX 5:

DATA COLLECTION TOOL

Focus Group Discussion Youth Wing Executive Members and other members

To establish the opportunities that the youth face in political parties in Malawi

1. In your view, what are the available opportunities that are associated with being members of your youth wing?
2. What are the opportunities that you see are available in your party for the youth?
3. Who benefits more than the other? For instance, those in executive committee or ordinary members, etc.
4. Is there any document that has stipulated available opportunities from your party for the youth?
5. What do you expect to be your opportunities of being members of this party?
6. Do you have anything you want to add in terms of youth participation in political parties in Malawi?