

**WOMEN IN POLITICALLY APPOINTED POSITIONS IN THE MALAWI
PUBLIC SERVICE: PROBLEMS, TRENDS, AND PROSPECTS**

M.A. (POLITICAL SCIENCE) THESIS

By

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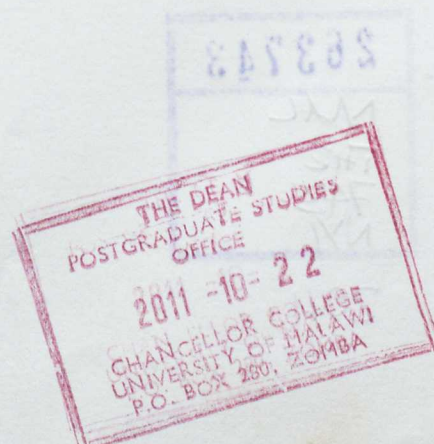


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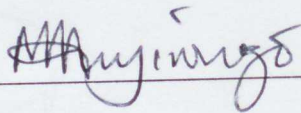
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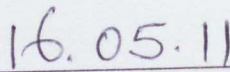
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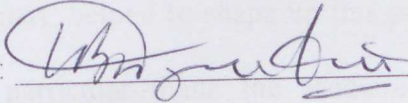
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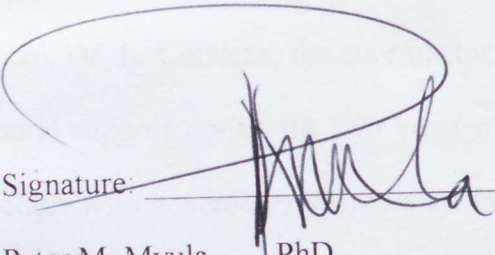
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ABSTRACT

This study sought to examine problems, trends, and prospects of women's numerical participation in politically appointed positions in the Malawi Public Service. The study focussed on appointive positions ranging from P4/S4 to P2/S2 and their equivalents in purposively selected Government Ministries and Parastatals. Analysis of the evidence from these organizations established several factors which account for the failure of the 30% critical mass in appointive positions. These include cultural socialization, political appointments, lack of technically qualified female personnel, lack of legal provisions to enforce the gender policy, female labour turnover, and limitations in the application of the measures. Closer examination of these problems, however, failed to identify any single factor largely accounting for the failure of the 30% critical mass. This necessitates further research on the issue using a larger sample but with emphasis on the quantitative approach. In terms of prospects, evidence suggests a stalled attainment of the critical mass by the Malawi Public Service strategic management

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

- ADMARC-Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation
- DHRMD-Department of Human Resources Management and Development
- ESCOM-Electricity Supply Commission of Malawi
- MBC- Malawi Broadcasting Corporation
- MRA- Malawi Revenue Authority
- OPC-Office of the President and Cabinet

Chapter 1

General Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This study sought to examine trends, problems and prospects of women's engagement in politically appointed positions in the Malawi Public Service. Examination of problems was aimed at identifying a factor that provides an overriding explanation on the failure of women's 30% critical mass. Analysis of trends and prospects, on the other hand, sought to ascertain whether the 30% critical mass was attainable in appointed public service positions. The study focussed on appointive positions ranging from P4/S4 to P2/S2 in Government Ministries and their equivalents in Parastatals (Department of Human Resources Management and Development (DHRMD) & Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare and Community Development, 2005).

Politically appointed positions in this study imply all positions in the Public Service filled through appointments made by elected leadership. In Malawi, the State President appoints managers into these positions. The President is empowered by Part II, Section 6 of the 1994 Malawi Public Service Act to appoint any person in the Public Service to any post above the rank of under-Secretary (Malawi Gazette Supplement, 1994).¹

¹ A key informant at Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development asserted that an Undersecretary operates at P5/S5 Grade or its equivalent

Politically appointed positions fall under the strategic management. Strategic management is understood as a body of senior managers which makes top level decisions that set an organization in its course (Waters, 2002:41-42). This chapter discusses initial aspects of the study under the study background; objectives of the study; study hypotheses; significance of the study; and the structure of the thesis.

1.1 Background to the Study

Gender means different things to different people. Within the context of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, it refers to roles, duties and responsibilities which are culturally or socially ascribed to women, men, girls and boys (SADC, 2008). Gender equality refers to the equal enjoyment of rights and access to opportunities and outcomes including resources by women, men, girls and boys (ibid: 7). Gender inequality could thus be defined as the unequal enjoyment of rights and access to opportunities and outcomes including resources by women, men, girls and boys. Gender inequality poses a major challenge to the contemporary world. Its resilience is manifest in the persistence of disparities in all spheres of life despite the efforts and measures by countries and international bodies aimed at bridging the gender gap. As is evident in written scholarship, inequalities between men and women are noticeable in various socio-economic, cultural, and political aspects of life.

The formal employment sector is one sphere of life characterised by gender disparities (Lopi, 2004: 60). The formal employment sector, as noted in Turshen and Holcomb (1993: 62), relates to activities in privately or publicly owned enterprises or in the Civil Service, which conform generally to tax and labour laws and other state regulations. Within this sector, gender inequalities are evident in levels of female labour

force participation; earnings ratio; and levels of women's participation in decision-making positions, among others. The formal sector, as noted in Kabeer (2008: 27), is male dominated and women are generally underrepresented in a wide range of its occupations (Kabeer, 2008: 27).

To reduce the gender gap in women's labour force participation in this sector, various measures are employed by countries and international bodies. These include passage of legislation and government policy (Mc Tavish and Miller, 2006: 206; Kabeer, 2008: 38). Application of these measures has had mixed implications on levels of women's participation in the labour market. These range from increases in women's level of engagement through stabilizing or stagnating patterns to decreasing trends. This is evident in women's labour force participation in the formal employment sector in both the developed and developing world.

In the case of USA, women's total labour force participation in the manufacturing sector remained stagnant between 1970 and 1984. After 1984, however, their share of jobs in this sector shifted up abruptly to the one-in-three mark (Sternlieb and Baker, 1997: 93). The service industry, on the other hand, experienced ever increasing levels of female labour force participation not only in USA but in many other countries as well. As regards USA, the service industry has seen a doubling of employment since 1970 (Sternlieb and Baker, 1997: 93).

Women's participation in the labour market of developing countries has also been characterized by variations. Countries that have experienced an increase in labour force participation in the manufacturing since 1970, include those in East and South East Asia; South Asia; Latin America and the Caribbean; North Africa; and sub-Saharan

Africa (Kabeer, 2008: 38). The largest increase occurred in South Asian states, specifically in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, where women's participation on average rose from 12% in 1970 to 41% by 1990. In East and South East Asia, women constituted a large share of the manufacturing sector and rose from 41% to 44% over the same period. Women's share of the manufacturing works in Latin America, particularly in Mexico, and the Caribbean, increased over a similar period from 29 to 36%. In North Africa, women's participation rose from 11 to 23% compared to sub-Saharan Africa going from 18 to 28% (Kabeer, 2008: 38).

Participation of women in the manufacturing sector in South Africa also varied over time. For example, between 2000 and 2007, female shares in the South African formal labour grew in all sectors except manufacturing where their share fell. In mid-2009, women's manufacturing employment decreased less rapidly and this was attributed to the world economic crisis that hit South Africa (Klaren et al (2009: 4). In the case of Malawi, which has no significant manufacturing sector, women's share in manufacturing was low at 10% in 2009 (ibid: 25). The Middle East in general, also experienced declining levels in women's share of manufacturing labour force. Between 1970 and 1990, for example, women's labour force in manufacturing declined from 12 to 10%.

The service sector, on the other hand, experienced a steady rise in women's share of the labour force in most regions, with higher rates of increase in some than others (ibid: 38). This rose from nine to 15% in South Asia; from nine to 17% in North Africa; and from 12 to 17% in the Middle East. Elsewhere, the increases occurred from already

higher levels: from 28 to 36% in sub-Saharan Africa; from 33 to 41% in East/ South East Asia; and from 43 to 48% in Latin America (Kabeer, 2008: 39).

Women's underrepresentation in the formal employment in general is attributed to a number of factors which include attitude of employers; patriarchy; organizational cultural barriers built on biases or stereotypes held by men; and low levels of education for women (Webster, 1996: 13; Mc Tavish and Miller, 2006: 206; Kabeer, 2008: 33).

Besides labour force participation, gender gaps are also evident in the earnings ratio. As noted in Wach and Revees, (2000: 21), almost everywhere, women are worse paid than men for the same kind of work. In 2000, for example, women's earnings in the world on average ranged from 50% to 85% of men's earnings (ibid: 21). To narrow the gender wage gap, most countries employed legislative initiatives. Passage of legislation, however, has been entailed by wide variations in average wage earnings between men and women in the world. Amongst EU countries, for example, there are large variations of the gender wage gap and yet each state ascribes to the Treaty of Rome which calls for equal pay for equal work through provisions stipulated in Article 141 (Commission of the European Communities, 2006). While some EU states registered wide gender gaps in 2008, others recorded gaps that were smaller. Estonia, for instance, recorded the largest gender earnings gap at 30.9%. Other countries with a comparatively wide gender wage gap of more than 20% included the UK; the Czech Republic; the Netherlands; Austria; Germany; Greece; Cyprus; Lithuania; and Slovakia (Eurofound, 2009). Italy, on the other hand, was reported as having the narrowest gap at 4.9%. Besides Italy, countries with notably narrower gender wage gap differentials of less than 10 percentage points, included Slovenia; Romania; Belgium; Portugal; Malta;

and Poland. For the Eurozone, the average gap stood at 18% in 2008, up from 17.3% in 2006 and 17.6% in 2002 (ibid). Variations in gender wage ratios amongst EU member states suggests that while some countries may attain the wage convergence soon, others may take a little bit longer. The reversed trend at Eurozone level, on the other hand, rules out the possibility of the attainment of wage parity at any point in time unless action is taken to reverse the trend.

Gender earnings ratio in the US has also varied over time. But unlike the wage trend at Eurozone level, gender earnings ratio in the US has followed a mixed trend. Before the late 1970's and the early 1980, for instance, gender earnings ratio were constant since they tended to hover around 60% (Blau and Kahn, cited in Jamali et al, 2008: 231). Between the 1980's and early 1990's, the wage ratio increased greatly. Since the 1990's, however, the rate at which the gap got narrowed, slowed down with gender earnings ratio stabilizing at 76-77% at the turn of the 21st Century (ibid: 231). Stabilization of the earnings ratio rules out the possibility of attaining wage convergence any time soon.

In South Africa, the wage trend was also mixed. As noted in Klaren et al (2009: 6), overall wage inequality grew between 1995 and 1998/2000, but reversed afterwards though the earnings differences between population groups grew. Since 2000, however, the gender pay gap has narrowed though it is still wide at 25-30% (ibid: 6).

A continued gender earnings differential coupled by the narrowing down of the gender pay gap is also evident in other developing countries. A study by Davila and Pagan cited in Jamali at al, (2008: 232) suggests gender pay gaps of 30.4% and 23.6% in El Salvador and Costa Rica, respectively. Further, Nopo and Hoyos (2010: 3, 10)

who analyzed gender wage gaps for 18 Latin American countries between 1992 and 2007, noted that the overall wage gap in Latin America dropped from 16.32% of average female wage to 8.5% during the 15 year span. A continued trend of this nature raises prospects of achieving the gender parity in Latin America within the foreseeable future.

Low wages for women are explained by a number of factors which include employer's prejudices and assumptions; differences in human capital; cultural factors; and the structure of the labour market (Jacobsen, 1994: 37, 323, 387).

Apart from the earnings ratio, gender gaps are also evident in women's participation in decision making. Although women have made significant strides in terms of increased labour force participation in general, their access to decision making positions has been limited. To help narrow down the gender gap in decision-making, various measures have been employed by countries in the world. These include the use of critical masses; affirmative action/ quotas; and legislation. The concept of critical mass was borrowed from nuclear physics where it referred to the quantity of plutonium that needs to be brought together to produce a nuclear explosion. The concept had first been applied to gender in mid-1970's by an American feminist scholar, Rosabeth Moss Kanter, who was studying women in business. Kanter reviewed studies of the behaviour of minorities in task-oriented groups to find out the level of participation that was necessary for the minority members to function effectively as a group to press their interests. She estimated that when the proportion of minority members reached about 30%, they were able to influence decision-making autonomously as a group. At levels lower than that, effectiveness required the minority members to act more like those of the majority and,

failing that, they would be ineffective lonely dissenters. In the 1980's, these findings were picked up by the Danish feminist political scientist Drude Dahlerup, who argued that the critical mass phenomenon could apply to politics as well (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2003: 3-4). The 30% critical mass of women's participation in decision-making was adopted at the Fourth World Summit held in Beijing in 1995. It demanded all member states of the UN to ensure that by 2005, women reached 30% representation in decision making at all levels (United Nations Department of Information, 1995: 64-66).

To achieve the 30% critical mass in political decision-making, countries have used affirmative action in form of quotas and legislation. As noted in Mutume (2004: 4), most of the countries that have achieved significant gains in women's participation in parliaments, have done so through the use of quotas. Use of legislation and quotas in Rwanda, for example, enabled Rwanda to move to the top of the world ranking of women in national parliaments with 49% of representation overtaking the long time leader Sweden at 45% by 2004 (ibid: 4). In 2002, Rwandese women's engagement in parliament stood at 25.7% compared to Sweden which came first at 42.7% (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), (2002: 226, 229).

Use of quotas by political parties in Nordic States such as Denmark, Norway and Sweden, was also instrumental in raising levels of female legislators. In mid 1980's, women legislators in these countries fell below the 30% critical mass. By 2002, however, following the implementation of quotas, women constituted over 42% of legislators in Sweden; 38% in Denmark; and 36% in Norway (Mutume, 2004: 4). In South Africa, application of quotas by the ruling African National Congress led to a similar trend with an increase of women representation in parliament to 42% in 2009 up

from 34% in 2004 (Klaren et al, 2009: 11; Genderlinks, 2009: 46). In Malawi, following the 50-50 campaign in 2009 aimed at boosting levels of women's participation in political decision making, numbers of legislators have increased to 40 women (26.5%) from 10 women (six percent) in 1994; 16 women (nine percent) in 1999; and 27 women (16.2%) in 2004 (Genderlinks, 2009: 46-47; Centre for Social Concern (CFSC), June 2009: 66, 70). Increasing levels of female legislators in Rwanda, Nordic States, South Africa, and Malawi, raises the possibility of the attainment of gender parity in parliaments within the foreseeable future.

Factors that have hindered women's advancement in decision making include the glass ceiling effect; patriarchy; low levels of education for women; lack of political will; and cultural factors (Annan-Yao, 2004: 2; Malera, 2005: 14, 68-69; Jamali et al, 2008: 230).

In general, efforts aimed at narrowing the gender disparity gap in the formal employment have been characterized by mixed trends. In some cases gender gaps have been narrowing while in others the reverse has been the case. This is illustrated by trends in female labour force participation; earnings ratio and women's engagement in political decision making. While sustained narrowing of gender gaps raises prospects of the attainment of gender parity, constancy and the widening of the gaps questions this possibility.

1.2 Problem Statement

The persistence of gender disparities, which are mostly skewed towards women, prompted the international community and individual states to come up with remedial measures. Malawi Government made several initiatives which include the promulgation

of the National Gender Policy in 2000 (Ministry of Gender, Youth & Community Services, 2000). One of the objectives of this policy, captured under the theme of governance, was to increase the level of women's participation in decision-making at all levels, by a 30% critical mass, by 2005. To achieve this objective, several measures were outlined in the policy for use by various stakeholders. These were affirmative action; gender sensitization campaigns; training of women in leadership, assertiveness and management training; and lobbying campaigns (ibid: 21, 23).

Since the promulgation of the gender policy, however, the achievement of women's 30% critical mass in politically appointed positions in the Malawi Public Service remains a pipe dream. Efforts by the Government and other stakeholders have had little impact on the level of women's engagement in top management positions of the public service. The question is: Why did the Malawi Public Service fail to achieve the 30% target for women in policy making positions against all the efforts and measures employed? Evidence, in general, indicates that the 30% critical mass failed in public administration decision making but is silent on factors that led to the failure. A draft copy of the revised National Gender Policy (2007-2011), for instance, indicated that the 30% target was yet to be attained at all levels of decision making in the public service. Apart from stating this fact, the draft policy was silent on factors leading to this development (Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Development, 2007). Similarly, Centre For Social Concern (CFSC) Press Review (July 2008: 69) indicated that Malawi was still far from achieving 30% of women's representation in decision making positions but did not provide reasons for this development. In all cases, it was asserted that women's 30% critical mass had not yet materialized in decision-making positions.

Other than this, no details were provided on why and how the failure of women's 30% engagement in politically appointed positions in the Malawi Public Service was registered.

Apart from absence of explanation on what led to the failure of women's 30% engagement in public administration decision-making, empirical evidence on current trends and prospects on increased women's participation at a strategic level of the public service is scanty. A common pattern evident in written scholarship on gender and decision-making is the tendency to mainly focus on political decision-making positions such as Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament while glossing over decision-making positions in the Public Service.

A Centre for Social Concern(CFSC) Press Review(Sept, 2003: 80) noted, for instance, that Malawi was still registered as one of the poorest performers in the SADC region regarding empowerment of women in order for them to participate in top-decision-making bodies. As is evident in most literature, CFSC Review Report (ibid: 80), supported its point using lower numbers of women in the Malawian parliament. It claimed, for instance, that Malawi had only 16 women legislators in a national assembly of 193 members. Malera's (2005) study identified obstacles hindering women's equal participation in the political arena. Kamanga-Njikho and Malumelo (2009) analyzed the participation of women during the one-party era and the present democratic dispensation. Basing on empirical evidence, the two scholars contended that there has been little progress of women in political decision-making across the two dispensations as reflected by lower levels of women representation in the Malawian Parliament. In their view, political will is critical in increasing the level of women in parliament. They

observed that the number of women in parliament in 1985 exceeded 30 percent because of President Banda's use of affirmative action.

A CFSC Press Review (June, 2009: 66, 70) reported on the outcome of the 50:50 campaign spearheaded by the NGO Gender Coordination Network (GCN) before the 2009 Malawian Presidential and Parliamentary Elections aimed at promoting 50 percent female representation in decision-making positions in political bodies like parliament. The Press Review (ibid: 66, 70) indicated that some progress had been made in the national assembly and the cabinet. The 50:50 campaign was said to have contributed 41 female Members of Parliament to a house of 193 legislators and 11 women in a Cabinet of 43 members (ibid: 70). Examination of the above works shows a tendency to focus more on political decision making bodies like parliament than on public administration decision making.

It is also worth noting that, within the public service itself, the gender discourse mainly centres on women's engagement in a few senior positions in Government Ministries namely the Principal Secretaries; Chief Executives, and Cabinet Ministers. While women's engagement in the few cited positions could give a picture on levels of women's participation and prospects in the attainment of the 30% target for these positions, it may not be representative of the situation in the strategic management level as a whole.

Further, where statistical evidence on percentage proportions of women's engagement in decision-making positions exists, it mostly relates to all levels of decision making. While such evidence may be useful in providing an aggregate picture on trends and prospects in women's engagement in decision-making positions at all

levels in the Public Service, the information given may not adequately explain the situation in the strategic management. For example, Malawi Government (2005: 2005) indicated that by 2005, women constituted only 12.8% of all decision-making positions in the Public Sector. NORAD (2007) noted that at the end of 2006, women's percentage proportion in decision-making positions was at 18.4%. A comparison of women's proportional engagement in decision making positions in the foregoing, suggests that by 2006 women's participation in decision-making in general had risen by about six percent. While such a trend could suggest a move towards the attainment of the 30% target in decision-making positions at all levels in the event of sustained increases over time, it may not give an explanation that is representative of the situation in the strategic management as a whole. This is the case because women's level of engagement cited in the foregoing, apply to all levels of decision making irrespective of whether or not they fall under the middle or strategic management levels (Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare and Community Services and Department of Human Resources Management and Development (DHRMD), 2005: 7; Malawi Government, 2005).

Absence of explanations on the failure of women's 30% critical mass in strategic management positions and scantiness of data on trends and prospects in the status of women in appointed positions in the Public Service makes it necessary to undertake this study.

1.3.0 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 Overall Objectives

- To examine trends, problems and prospects of women's engagement in politically appointed positions in the Malawi Public Service

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To analyze trends in levels of women's engagement in politically appointed positions in Government Ministries and Parastatals in the post 2000 era.
2. To identify measures implemented by Government Ministries and Parastatals for promoting women's 30% target in politically appointed positions
3. To identify problems hindering women's attainment of the 30% target in politically appointed positions in Government Ministries and Parastatals.
4. To determine prospects of achieving 30% women's engagement in politically appointed positions in Government Ministries and Parastatals

1.4 Study Hypotheses

1. Lack of political commitment towards the enforcement of gender policy measures, to a large extent, explains the failure of 30% in politically appointed positions in the Malawi Public Service
2. Failure of the 30% critical mass against prescribed measures, questions the possibility of the attainment of the target in politically appointed positions in the Malawi Public Service

1.5 Significance of the Study

Several reasons make this study valuable. Firstly, the study unearthed reasons explaining the failure of 30% women's participation in public administration decision-making. In so doing, it helped to provide answers on why women's 30% engagement in appointed positions was not achieved in the public service. In addition, the study established prospects of women's engagement in politically appointed strategic positions in the Malawi Public Service. This information gives an insight on whether or

not the 30% critical mass for women in the Public Service strategic management is attainable. Lastly, information provided on problems that limit women's progress in top management positions could serve as a spring board for further exploration of measures for correcting existing disparities in strategic management positions in the Public Service.

1.6 The Structure of the Thesis

This study comprises of six chapters. The first chapter introduces the study and presents the background; statement of the problem; objectives; and structure of the thesis. The next chapter comprises of the literature review and theoretical framework. The third chapter has sections on the research design and methodology; ethical considerations; and limitations of the study. The preceding chapter analyses findings from Government Ministries and Parastatals. In the next chapter, findings from Government Ministries and Parastatals are interpreted within the framework of the chosen theories. The last chapter presents a summary of the findings, major conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.0 Introduction

The first chapter gave an account on the study background, objectives, hypothesis, significance, and structure of the thesis. This chapter firstly examines causes of gender inequalities in general. It then analyses trends and problems in women's advancement in decision-making positions vis-à-vis politically appointed positions. Further, the chapter explores prospects of women's attainment of the 30% target in politically appointed positions in the Malawi Public Service. Lastly, the chapter briefly discusses theories that guide the interpretation of study findings.

2.1 Causes of Gender Inequalities: Major Debates.

Sociologist, anthropologists, and psychologists, have debated causes of gender inequalities. Divisions characterizing such debates have led the emergence of two main positions. One position explains causes of gender disparities in terms of biological differences between men and women. The other position sees cultural factors as responsible for disparities between men and women (Harlambos and Heald, 1985: 369).

Biological reductionism is a position which postulates that the inequality between the sexes stems from biologically or genetically based differences between men and women (ibid: 369). This view is at variance with a position that explains gender differences on the basis of cultural factors (ibid: 369). Tiger and Fox (1972), for

instance, contend that inequalities between sexes are a result of differences in the biogrammers (genetically based programmes which predispose mankind to behave in certain ways) of men and women (ibid). Man's biogrammer in the view of Tiger and Fox (ibid) makes men more aggressive and dominant than women. These attributes enable men to have an edge over women when it comes to acquisition of influential positions. Thus in the view of the two scholars, it comes as no surprise that politics is the province of men in all forms of human societies (ibid).

Murdock (1945) on the other hand, claims that men have an edge over women because they are naturally endowed with greater physical strength and are not handicapped by physiological burdens of pregnancy and nursing. In Murdock's (ibid) view women are relegated to less strenuous tasks because they lack physical strength and are burdened by biological functions. Scholars of an opposing view on the other hand, trace the roots of inequalities in cultural rather than biological parameters.

Oakley (1974) is of the view gender roles are culturally rather than biologically determined. Backed by empirical evidence from a research on different societies, Oakley (ibid) argues that apart from child bearing roles, there are no tasks which are the exclusive domain of females. In her view, biological characteristics per se do not bar women from particular occupations (ibid). Friedl (1975) contends that inequalities are an outcome of differences in the enjoyment of rights by men and women. Friedl (ibid) believes that men's control over the exchange of valued goods beyond the family group has placed man at a more advantageous position than that of a woman (ibid). In this scholar's view, this activity brings man more power and prestige thus elevating men over and above women (ibid).

Ortner, (1974) on the other hand contends that it is not biology per se that ascribe women to their inferior status in society but the way in which every culture defines and evaluates female biology. She asserts that in every society a higher value is placed on culture than nature. Society ascribes women's inferior positions because of their proximity to nature imposed upon them by physiological functions concerned with reproduction of species (ibid: 90-104). Activities which are seen as far removed from nature such as politics, warfare, and religion, are thus taken to be more superior to domestic tasks (ibid).

Briefly, debates on causes of gender inequalities in general have resulted in the emergence of two positions: biological reductionism and cultural determinism. The former explains gender inequalities in terms of biological characteristics. The latter position attributes their existence to cultural causes.

2.2.0 Causes of Gender Inequalities in the Formal Employment Sector

A number of reasons have been advanced to explain the existence of gender inequalities in the formal employment situation. These include socio-cultural factors; inequalities in training and career opportunities for men and women and boys and girls; lower literacy levels for women; attitudes and behaviours of those in the employment situation; and political and institutional factors/ structure of the labour market (Trudeau, 1993; Lee et al, 2000; Johnson, 2005; Dzimbiri and Pendame, 2008).

2.2.1 Socio-Cultural Factors

Under this category are factors like socialization and lower literacy levels for women. These can best be explained by feminist and human capital theories (Dzimbiri and Pendame, 2008: 132; Lee, et al, 2001).

2.2.2 Socialization

In the view of Dzimbiri and Pendame (2008: 132), socialization plays a critical role in shaping the occupational aspirations and attitudes of boys and girls by inculcating beliefs of masculinity and femininity which determine the way they behave. These beliefs make them grow up with different career aspirations, with boys aspiring for challenging occupations such as engineering, accountancy, and medicine and girls relegated to traditional teaching and nursing careers (ibid: 132). The impact of socialization is evident in Malawian schools with girls dominating in courses like home economics and cookery and boys dominating in the sciences and technical subjects (ibid: 132). A similar trend is observable in most countries of the world, across the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. In most SADC countries, for instance, women dominate in arts, humanities and health sciences than in disciplines of science or law (Genderlinks, 2009: 71).

2.2.3 Lower Literacy Levels for Women

Lower literacy levels for women are also cited to explain the existence of gender inequalities in the formal employment sector. In general, literacy levels of women in the world are said to be lower compared to those of men. As stated in Dzimbiri and Pendame(2008: 11), literacy levels for women in most developing countries were lower than those of men as shown by levels of enrolment for male and female students in Secondary Schools and Universities (ibid: 113). In Southern Africa, for example, the literacy gap was reported as still wide in the tertiary and other higher learning educational levels despite increases in the enrolment of more female students in primary, secondary, and tertiary educational institutions (Lopi, 2004: 9). In the view of

the Human capital theory, lower literacy levels for women which leads to their underrepresentation in the formal employment sector stems from women's choice to invest less in human capital (formal education) because of their taste and preference for domestic labour (Becker, 1964).

2.2.4 Inequalities in Training and Career Opportunities for Men and Women

Inequalities in training and career opportunities for men and women are attributed to a number of factors. These include low levels of education for girls; differences in career choices amongst boys and girls; women's taste and preferences; and employer's assumptions (Dzimhiri and Pendame, 2008: 130). These factors can best be articulated by neo classical/human capital theories (ibid: 130). These theories make several assumptions which are used to explain the existence of gender inequalities involving training and career opportunities. The first one provides that women bring lower levels of education to the labour market and in less relevant fields of the labour market. Lower education levels for women are attributed to lower enrolment rates for girls in schools and colleges. Women's predominance in less relevant fields is attributed to girl's socialization to pursue courses labeled as 'feminine' and avoid those described as 'masculine' (ibid: 131). This results in few women engaging in non traditional careers like engineering and law and more of them in traditional fields like teaching, clerical duties, and nursing.

The second assumption provides that household responsibilities make women as rational actors to choose occupations that are flexible in terms of entry and working hours. This was confirmed by a study in Malawi which established that women working

in tea estates were mostly employed as seasonal workers due to domestic responsibilities (ibid: 130).

Thirdly, it is assumed that men's and women's preference for particular occupations also influences employer's preference for them. It goes that since women generally prefer occupations considered feminine such as secretary, clerical worker, and teacher, employers seeking personnel in such occupations, will mostly employ women. The opposite is true for 'masculine' occupations (ibid: 130). This, in the view of Dzimbiri and Pendame (ibid: 131), reflects the influence of labeling on employers when recruiting personnel. Lastly, it is assumed that women are considered to be high cost employees because of higher rates of absenteeism, frequent lateness to work and higher labour turn over due to family responsibilities. This affects the type of job employers offer women depending on the relative importance of these factors for each occupation (ibid: 131)

2.2.5 The Behaviour of Actors in the Employment Situation

The existence of gender inequalities in the formal employment sector is also attributed to attitudes of employers and employees (Dzimbiri and Pendame, 2008). As noted in Dzimbiri and Pendame (ibid: 208) the effect of attitudes of employers and employees are best explained by the institutional discrimination/market labour approach. These theories assume that employers prefer to employ men over women because of beliefs in the existence of 'male jobs' and 'female jobs' and fear that women have a lesser productive period because of pregnancies (ibid: 133). A study conducted in Ghana involving 215 employers confirmed some of the assumptions when it

established that most employers failed to offer employment to women for fear of the implications of pregnancy (ibid: 134).

Further, the theories also assume that labour markets are divided into primary and secondary sectors. Jobs associated with the former sector are male dominated and have good working conditions than the latter which are dominated by females and have poor working conditions. Primary sector occupations like engineering and accountancy, for example, are dominated by men all over the world. Similarly, secondary jobs such as secretary and clerks are female dominated in most parts of the world (ibid: 134).

2.2.6 Political and Institutional Factors /Structure of the Labour Market

Gender discrimination in the labour market is also attributed to political and institutional factors/structure of the labour market. Political and institutional factors are blamed for creating a labour market structure that promotes discrimination against women. Theories that explain the effects of political and institutional factors vis-à-vis the structure of the labour market include radical feminism and dual labour market (DLM)/ labour market segmentation (LMS) approaches (Johnson 2005; Mallier and Shafto, 1989:148-150).

Radical feminism traces institutional and political factors perpetuating gender discrimination in patriarchy. Patriarchy, in their view, creates a structure where men virtually rule over women (Johnson 2005: 5). The element of control which patriarchy entrusts to men makes men to exercise control over women (ibid: 15). Man's dominating role is thus seen as the major cause of gender differences (Beechy, 1996: 69).

Dual labour market approach traces institutional and political factors responsible for discrimination in the secondary and primary sectors dichotomy. In the view of this approach, discrimination against women occurs through restrictions to women's mobility from the secondary to the primary sector (Mallier and Tony, 1989: 147-150).

Labour market segmentation approach, on the other hand, explains these factors in terms of segmentation within the primary sector. It postulates that within both primary and secondary markets, jobs are segmented. For example some jobs are categorized as subordinate jobs and others as independent jobs. Women dominate in the former jobs and men in the latter. Discrimination against women occurs through restrictions in the access to independent jobs (ibid: 147-150)

In summary, factors explaining gender inequalities in the formal employment sector include socio-cultural factors; inequalities in training and career opportunities for men and women; lower literacy levels for women; attitudes and behaviour of those in the employment situation; and political and institutional factors/ structure of the labour market.

2.3 Women's Participation in Politically Appointed Positions in the Malawi Public Service Since 1994: A Trend Analysis.

Women's marginalized state in appointed strategic positions in general and the Malawi Public Service in particular, has received attention in various scholarly works; media reports; and documentary reports both for the pre-2000 era when Malawi had no gender policy, and the post 2000 dispensation.

Dzimbiri and Pindani (1995) noted that there were few women compared to men serving in top management positions of both public and private sector organizations in

Malawi. Mvula and Kakhongwe (1997: 30) also noted that women were visibly absent in decision-making positions of Government Ministries, Parastatals and private companies. CFSC Press Review (Sept, 2003: 80) indicated that Malawi was one of the poorest performers in the SADC region regarding the participation of women in top management positions. Similarly, the 2008 Malawian Millennium Development Goals Report indicated that gender disparities were still evident in decision-making (Ministry of Economic Planning & Development, 2008: 11).

Women's underrepresentation noted in the forgoing account, is supported by statistical evidence on the participation of women in some strategic management positions whose data is available. Positions that feature highly are Principal Secretary and ministerial posts. Details on women's participation in other posts in the Public Service like Chief Executives and Directors of parastatals are patchy. Ministry of Gender and Community Services (2004: 37-38) indicates that by 1994, there were four women out of a total of forty of Principal Secretaries representing 10% of their participation at this level. In 1999, there were 11 women out of a total of forty nine Principal Secretaries representing 22.4% of women's engagement at this level. A comparison of women's level of participation at the level of Principal Secretary indicates that by 1999, women's level of engagement had improved by 22.4 % (ibid: 37-38). In 2003, 13.1 % of Principal Secretaries were women and 11.5% of Deputy Secretaries were women (Lawton et al: 77). In 2006, there were 11 women (27.5%) out of 40 Principal Secretaries and three women (12%) out of 26 Deputy Secretaries (CFSC, Feb 2003: 85). In 2008, there were five women (15%) out of 38 Principal Secretaries (CFSC, July 2008: 69).

From the foregoing account, it is evident that women's engagement in the post of Principal Secretary was characterised by fluctuations between 1994 and 2008. Women's level increased between 1994 and 1999 followed by a decline in 2003 and a further increase between 2006 followed by another decline in 2008.

Women's level of representation in Malawian Cabinet posts also fell short of the 30% critical mass. In 2003, for example, there were eight women in a Cabinet of 39 Ministers translating into 24% of women's participation in Cabinet posts (CFSC, July 2008: 69). By 2009, there were 11 women in a Cabinet of 43 and of these, five were Senior Ministers and six Deputy Ministers. Women's participation in the Cabinet stood at 22%. (CFSC, June 2009: 70).

Women's underrepresentation is also evident in the positions of Chief Executives and Directors. In 2002, for instance, there were 423 members in fifty Malawian Parastatals (Gender Links (2009: 100). Of these, 86 were women representing 20.8% of women's participation in these Parastatals. It is further provided that of the 50 Chief Executive Officers for these Parastatals, four were women accounting for eight percent (ibid: 100). CFSC (Sept, 2006: 49) indicates that by 2006, there were five women out of a total of 80 Directors. The five Directors came from Government Ministries since there was no woman Director at this time out of 49 Parastatal Directors. Available data (Gender Links: 99-100) indicates that women are also underrepresented in the Parastatal sector of SADC countries in general. In DRC, for example, there were three women holding the position of President in Parastatal Boards and four Parastatal Director Generals. Overall, women's participation in the Parastatal sector was at 17%. South Africa state owned enterprises proved to be the best employers for women with a high

level of both female Directors (35%) and Executive Managers (31%) (ibid: 99-100). Scantiness of data on women's engagement in the posts of Chief Executives and Directors over a period of time makes it difficult trace the trend in women's levels of engagement in these positions. This in turn makes it difficult to determine the prospects in the attainment of the 30% target in these positions.

In general, women's underrepresentation in top management positions in the Malawi Public Service fall short of the 30% target as illustrated by levels of women's participation in positions of Cabinet Minister, Principal Secretary, Chief Executive, and Director.

2.4.0 Problems Leading to Women's Underrepresentation in Decision-making Positions vis-à-vis Politically Appointed Positions in the Malawi Public Service

Women's underrepresentation in decision-making positions, in general, and by extension public administration decision-making, is attributed to a number of factors. These include cultural factors; patriarchy; low levels of education for women; a weak legal and regulatory framework; and lack of political will.

2.4.1 Cultural Factors

Dzimbiri and Pindani (1995) traced the existence of gender disparities in public and private sector organizations in Malawi, through cultural factors. The UN Agencies Report (1996:10) blamed the existence of gender inequalities in decision-making on social attitudes entrenched in the Malawian culture. A study conducted in Malawi in 2001 also established that cultural and male prejudices were a major obstacle to women's advancement in Malawi in general (Mwakasungula, et al 2001: 36). A report appearing in the CFSC press review (Aug, 2003: 85) blamed women's

underrepresentation in decision-making positions in general on culture. Malera (2005: 69) blamed woman's limited participation in high political offices on culture and traditions. In her view, societal perceptions and attitudes and socialization helped to exacerbate the disadvantaged position of women (ibid: 85). Women's underrepresentation in decision-making positions in the SADC region in general has also been attributed to barriers that are deeply rooted in customs, culture, religion and tradition (Gender Links, 2009: 72)

2.4.2 Patriarchy

Women's failure to advance in Malawi was also blamed on patriarchy (CFSC, Sept 2006: 72). Johnston (2005: 5) defined patriarchy as a kind of society that promotes male privilege by being male dominated, male identified and male centred. CFSC (Sept, 2006: 72) identified patriarchy as an obstacle to women's advancement in decision making positions. The report asserted that patriarchy was dominant in both rural and urban Malawi and determined the social and gender power relations to the disadvantage of women and youth (ibid: 17). Malera (2005: 14) claimed that patriarchy concentrates power in the hands of men and men systematically keep women out of prominent positions in most of influential sectors.

Patriarchy is also evident in SADC countries in general as shown by male centredness in various socio-economic and political activities. Male centredness, in Johnston's view (2005: 12) refers to men's dominance in activities taking place. For example, male centredness may take the form of men's dominance in conferences by talking more, interrupting more and controlling content. (ibid: 12). Evidence (Gender Links, 2009: 67) on some SADC countries indicate that in general women speak less in

meetings. Observations of 11 Council meetings in South Africa, Namibia, and Mauritius indicated that men dominated meetings compared to women. It is provided that on average women's voices in meetings held in these countries accounted for 26% percent of the total with men (73%) dominating meetings (ibid: 67).

In general, patriarchy leads to women's marginalization by promoting men's dominance in socio-economic and political aspects of life in general and decision making in particular.

2.4.3 Low Education Levels for Girls / Women

Low levels for girls/ women were cited as one of the obstacles to women's participation in political offices. Malera (2005: 69) blamed the shortage of women vying for political positions on low education levels for Malawian women. Low education levels were mainly attributed to socialization which restricted girl's access to education (ibid: 39-40).

Dzimhiri and Pendame (2008: 132) also noted that there were unequal education opportunities between boys and girls in Malawi. In their view, these were an outcome of socialization in the family. Gender Links (2009: 76) also explained fewer levels of girls at higher levels of education in the SADC region in terms of social stereotypes. As noted by Gender Links (ibid: 76) social stereotypes undervalue girl's education by encouraging or forcing them to marry early, or to devote themselves to nurturing roles in the home. Annan-Yao (2004: 2) blamed lower levels of education for girls on socialization which made girls to accept and internalize an inferior position in society and devote themselves to performance of social and biological roles.

2.4.4 A Weak Legal and Regulatory Framework

Weak laws and absence of a regulatory framework were also cited as a hindrance to women's advancement in women's participation in top political positions. Malera (2005: 67) claimed that the regulatory framework and law of Malawi did not provide any clear cut stipulations for the application of temporary measures to address the continuous gap between men and women in political participation. CFSC (June, 2009: 66) asserted that the absence of legal framework on the promotion of women in Malawi was hindering the drive for women's empowerment.

2.4.5 Lack of Political Will

Malera (2005: 68) explained the failure of women's participation in politics on the basis of lack of political will. In her view (ibid), Malawi's democratic regimes demonstrated a lack of serious commitment to bring women to participate in politics on the basis of equality with men. Lack of government's commitment to the cause of women, in her view (ibid), was reflected in lower levels of women engaged in appointed political posts (ibid: 68). Catherine Munthali, Chairperson of the Taskforce for Women in Political and Decision Making Positions, on the other hand, claimed that the president had enough powers to promote women to higher positions (CFSC, Sept 2003; 81). In her view (ibid), the 30% target could not be attainable without government support (IBID: 81). Kamanga-Njikho and Malumelo (2009) contended that political will was crucial for increased women's representation in parliament as demonstrated by President Banda's successful use of affirmative action which raised the number of female legislators above 30% in 1985 (ibid).

Gender Links (2009: 72) blamed the failure of 30% women's target in all areas of decision making in the SADC region in general on lack of commitment by SADC Head of states and governments to achieve a minimum of 30% in decision-making positions by 2005. Gender Links (ibid: 43) argued that women's continued underrepresentation in cabinet positions in the SADC region (with some exceptions like South Africa) threw into question the political commitment of leaders.

Briefly, problems cited as a hindrance to women's increased participation in decision making positions vis-à-vis appointed positions in the Malawi Public Service, include cultural factors; patriarchy; low levels of education for women; a weak legal and regulatory framework; and lack of political will

2.5 Observations

Analysis of evidence in the forgoing account reveals several limitations that justify the necessity of undertaking this study.

Firstly, statistical evidence on the level of women's participation in Government Ministries and Parastatals focuses on individual positions such as Principal Secretaries; Cabinet posts; and Directors rather than on all positions in the strategic management as a whole. While these may be useful in determining the prospects of women's engagement in the individual positions involved, they may not adequately provide explanation on prospects of the attainment of the 30% critical mass for the strategic management as a whole. This, therefore, raises the need for a more detailed analysis of women's level of engagement in the Public Service at a strategic management level. This study addresses this limitation by among others examining evidence involving positions filled by political appointments ranging from P4/S4 to P2/S2.

Secondly, most of the statistical evidence on women's representation in top management positions relates to women's participation in Government Ministries. With the exception of the positions of Chief Executive and Director, all the positions cited in this account relate to Government Ministries. For example positions of Principal Secretary; Deputy Secretary; Cabinet Ministers and Deputy Ministers pertain to Government Ministries. Thus, it is evident that there is little statistical information available on women's engagement in strategic level positions of the Parastatals. This study addresses this short fall by examining details of women's participation in some selected Parastatals besides Government Ministries.

Further, although a number of obstacles were raised in the discussion to explain women's failure to advance in decision making positions, most of them relate to women's engagement in political decision-making bodies like parliament. While this information may provide explanation on women's position in political decision-making, it may not adequately explain women's status in the Public Service strategic management. This study addresses this limitation by investigating obstacles hindering women's progress within the context of public administration decision-making.

Furthermore, examination of women's level of engagement in positions whose data is available shows that women's participation in top management positions is mixed. In some cases levels of women's participation in top management positions exhibit an increasing trend which raises the possibility of the attainment of the 30% target in top level positions involved. In others, the trend either stagnates or declines over time and thus questioning the possibility of the attainment of the 30% target in these positions. While the varied patterns of trends may be useful in forecasting the prospects of

women's engagement in top management of the concerned positions, they may not be helpful in determining prospects of the attainment of the 30% target for the Public Service strategic management as a whole. This, however, could be possible where evidence analysed focuses on case studies from Public Service organizations. This study addresses this shortfall, which is apparent in available scholarship, through the use of the case study approach involving nine Public Service organizations.

Limitations highlighted in the foregoing account, necessitate a study aimed at, among others, establishing problems that led to the failure of women's 30% target in politically appointed positions in the Malawi Public Service.

2.6.0 Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by the human capital theory; radical feminism; and dual labour market/labour market segmentation approaches.

2.6.1 Human Capital Theory

Human capital is a label for personal skills that people contribute to a job (Trudeau, 1993: 23). It consists of a wide range of factors, including technical skill and ability, mental ability, attitude and inclination (ibid: 23). As noted by Creedy (1999: 163), suppliers of labour invest in education, training, or job search in order to maximize their utility. Investments in human capital fall under three categories: Investment in formal education; investment in on-the-job training; and investment in job search (ibid: 163). Investment in on-the-job training is divided into general and specific training (Becker, 1964). Investment in general training (which resembles formal education) has the following characteristics: Firstly, it is financed by workers themselves who forego earnings during training in return for higher earnings after training (Creedy, 1999: 163).

Secondly, it is useful in a broad range of situations. That is, it may also be useful to other firms besides the firm where the trainee worker operates (Jacobsen, 1994: 259). Investment in specific training differs from general training as follows: Firstly, its costs are shared between workers and employers. Secondly, it is useful only in the firms providing it (Becker, 1992: 7). Distinctions between specific and general training in Becker's view (ibid: 7), explain why workers with highly specific skills are less likely to quit their jobs.

In the view of the human capital approach, inequalities in the labour market are not an outcome of discrimination per se but of worker differences in the levels of commitment and training. Women are discriminated against because they choose to invest less in human capital such as education (Trudeau, 1993:23). Human capital theory is mostly used to explain wage differences between men and women in the labour market and thus may not adequately explain causes of gender inequalities in politically appointed positions. Nevertheless, the theory will be useful in providing explanations on gender discrimination in relation to human capital.

2.6.2 Radical Feminism

Radical feminism explains gender discrimination in relation to political and institutional factors. (Lee et al, 2000: 6). Political and institutional factors are rooted in patriarchy which creates a structure where men virtually rule over women (ibid, 2000: 6; Johnson, 2005: 5). Johnson (ibid: 5) defines patriarchy as a kind of society that promotes male privilege by being male dominated, male identified, and male centred. Patriarchy is male dominated in that positions of authority at all levels of decision-making are generally reserved for men (ibid: 5). It is male identified in that core cultural

ideas about what is considered good, desirable, preferable, or normal are associated with how we think about men and masculinity (ibid: 5). Patriarchy is male centred in that the focus of attention is primarily on men and what they do (ibid: 5). An important element of patriarchy which promotes discrimination, in Johnson's view, is the privilege of control. Johnson (2005: 14) asserts that the privilege of control elevates men over women. He claims that it is this element of control which makes controllers (men) to see themselves as subjects who intend and decide what will happen, and to see others (women) as objects to act upon (ibid: 15). Radical feminists view this 'sex gender system' of male domination and women subordination as the source of women's oppression and to achieve women's liberation this system should be completely removed (Ford, 2006: 22).

Radical feminism may not adequately explain causes of gender inequalities relating to the behaviour and attitude of women because it focuses exclusively on men and what men do (Johnson, 2005: 5). Despite this shortfall, it will help to provide explanations on causes of gender discrimination associated with patriarchal elements.

2.6.3.0 Dual Labour Market/Labour Market Segmentation Approaches

Several approaches have been developed to explain the implications of labour market structure on differences amongst workers operating in the labour market. This study utilizes elements from two of the approaches namely the dual labour market and labour market segmentation approaches.

2.6.3.1 Dual Labour Market (DLM) Approach

Dual labour market theorists trace gender discrimination in the formal employment sector through the polarized market structure (Trudeau, 1993; Lee et al, 2000). Dual

labour market theory makes several assumptions: Firstly, it assumes that the labour market is divided between two non-competitive groups of labour; a primary 'core' sector of workers, and a secondary sector of periphery workers (Trudeau, 1993:33; Creedy and Thomas, 1982: 146-147; Rosenberg, 1989:365). Labour market is understood as a mechanism for distributing jobs (Mallier and Shafto, 1989: 118). The primary sector, as noted by Piore (1970) offers jobs which possess several characteristics: These are high wages; good working conditions; employment stability and job security; equity and due process in the administration of work rules and chances for career advancement (ibid). Creedy and Thomas (1982:147) assert that within firms operating in the primary sector, internal labour markets exist through which individuals are shifted between jobs or promoted to superior ones. They further assert that entry to the firm from the outside market is limited to certain entry ports usually at the bottom of the hierarchy (ibid: 147). As noted in Creedy and Thomas (1982: 147) the primary sector is marked by high job security, low employee turnover and male dominance (ibid: 147; Karsten, 1994:16).

The secondary sector, on the other hand, offers jobs that are less attractive (Piore, 1970). In Piore's (ibid) view secondary sector jobs tend to involve low wages, poor working conditions, and considerable variability in employment, harsh and often arbitrary discipline, and little opportunity for advancement. This sector is statistically dominated by females (Karsten, 1994: 16). As provided by Creedy and Thomas (1982:147) turnover in this sector is high and job stability low. They assert that high turnover coupled with the barriers to entry to the primary sector imposed by limited ports of entry means that once in the secondary sector, workers tend to remain there

throughout their lives (ibid). It is further claimed that even if workers in the secondary sector have qualifications, they do not gain enough experience and specific training in any one job to obtain the age-earnings profile usually associated with better education and training (ibid:147).

2.6.3.2 Labour Market Segmentation (LMS) Approach

Edwards (1979), architect of this approach, visualizes the labour market as being divided into three parts: The secondary sector; the subordinate primary (lower tier sector); and independent primary (upper tier sector). The secondary market is said to be identical to the secondary sector in the dual approach. Their difference lies in the presence of workers unions in the subordinate primary and their absence in the secondary sector (ibid). In the view of Edwards (1979) the subordinate segment is associated with blue collar jobs. The independent primary sector, on the other hand, consists of white collar and some skilled jobs (ibid). As given in Rosenberg, 1989: 382) the existence of market segments reflects differences in the managerial control strategies employed in a firm. As stated in Mallier and Shafto (1989:150) jobs associated with the independent primary sector have creative, problem solving and self initiating characteristics. As given in Rosenberg (1989: 366) professional and managerial jobs comprise the upper tier of the primary market.

Labour market segmentation and dual labour market approaches are largely employed to explain the impact of the labour market structure on wage differences between men and women. Nevertheless they will help to provide explanation on causes gender of discrimination in public service organizations rooted in the structure of the labour market.

Briefly, findings of this study are guided by human capital theory; dual labour market/labour market segmentation approaches; and radical feminism.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter, in general, has established that there is little information available to explain the failure of the 30% critical mass for women in top management positions in the Malawi Public Service. It has also revealed a tendency by most scholars to emphasize on women's engagement in political bodies like parliament than in public service entities. Finally the chapter has outlined the theories that guide the interpretation of the findings. These are the human capital theory; dual labour market approach; and radical feminism.

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Chapter 3

Research Design and Methodology

3.0 Introduction

The foregoing chapter justified the necessity of undertaking this study by, among others, exposing the gray areas in the existing literature. This chapter provides an account on the study design; population sample; sampling techniques; data collection tools; method of data analysis; ethical considerations; and limitations of the study.

3.1 Study Design

The study examined issues using the case study approach. Case studies selected for this study were the Ministries of Education; Health; Natural Resources, Energy and Environment, on one hand and MBC, ESCOM, ADMARC, and MRA, on the other hand. The results collected from these Public Service entities helped to explain the failure of the 30% critical mass in the Public Service. In addition, it attempted to contextualize prospects, problems facing efforts aimed at achieving the 30% target for women in strategic management. A cross comparative analysis of the findings has been employed in order to find answers to the objectives of the study.

3.2 Population Sample

Originally, five Government Ministries and five Parastatals were selected for the study. In the end, as shown in table 3.1, five Government Ministries and four Parastatals

were involved. A total of 35 informants were targeted for this study. Thirty of these were to be chosen from the five Government Ministries and Parastatals respectively.

Table 3.0: Number of Respondents Involved in the Research Study

Organization	Male	Female	Male (HRM)	Female (HRM)	Totals
Ministry of Education	1	1	-	-	2
Ministry of Health	1	1	-	1	3
Ministry of Local Govt & Rural Development	1	1	1	-	3
Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security	1	1	1	-	3
Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy & Environment	1	1	1	-	3
MBC	-	1	1	-	2
ESCOM	1	1	-	1	3
MRA	-	1	1	-	2
ADMARC	1	1	-	1	3
OPC	1	-	-	-	1
DHRMD	1	-	-	-	1
National Gender Machinery	1	1	-	-	2
Civil Service Commission	1	-	-	-	1
Total	11	10	5	3	29

Source: Researcher’s Survey at Head Offices of the Named Public Service Organizations

As indicated in table 3.1, the other five were to be selected from the OPC; DHRMD; Civil Service Commission, and the National Gender Machinery. In the end, 29 respondents were contacted. These translated into a proportion of 83% of the 35

respondents originally targeted for the study. Twenty four of these came from Government Ministries and Parastatals while five were key informants from other organizations named earlier. Of the 29, 16 were men and 13 women representing 55% and 45% respectively of men and women involved in the study. In theory each Ministry and Parastatal was to provide three informants; two from top management positions of P4/S4 to P2/S2 grades or their equivalents, divided along gender lines and one from the human resources section. In practice, some respondents were not contacted because of pressure of work and a general unwillingness to be interviewed. Most respondents from Government Ministries were quite willing to get interviewed. A third informant for each Government Ministry or Parastatals came from the human resources of each organizational entity.

3.3 Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling technique was employed in this study. Purposive or judgemental sampling was used because of flexibility in the selection predetermined units of analysis (Marshall, 1996). This element of flexibility enabled the researcher to select organizations and interviewees with special characteristics, a feat difficult to accomplish with other sampling techniques. In all, five Government Ministries and four Parastatals and twenty-nine respondents, were chosen purposively.

3.4.0 Data Collection Tools

Data collection tools used included self administered questionnaires; in depth interviews; documentary reviews; internet sources; books; and newspaper articles.

3.4.1 Self Administered Questionnaires

Self administered questionnaires were given to human resources personnel of the nine selected organizations. These were chosen because they were better placed to supply statistical information on employees in the organization. Questions captured in the questionnaire addressed a number of issues. These include employee statistics; measures employed to achieve the gender policy; problems facing efforts towards the attainment of the 30% critical mass; and training opportunities to women working personnel. (See Appendix A)

3.4.2 In-depth Interviews

In depth interviews involving key informants were guided by written questions (Refer to Appendices B, C, and D). Key informants came from the nine selected organizations including DHRMD, OPC, and the Civil Service Commission and Ministry of Gender, Women Affairs and Community Development. Questions captured in the questionnaires ranged from semi-structured to open ended questions. In general, questions sought to elicit reasons for the failure of the 30% critical mass; measures employed to promote 30% women's participation in the top management; obstacles to women's attainment of the critical mass; ways of overcoming the obstacles; and strengths and weaknesses of the measures.

3.4.3 Documentary Reviews

Various forms of documents were reviewed in order to get information to supplement and cross check information obtained through self administered questionnaire and in-depth interviews. Valuable official documents were obtained from the Centre for Social Research, University of Malawi; and DHRMD, UNFPA; Capital

City Library, Ministry of Gender, Ministry of Statutory Corporation, and the Office of the President and Cabinet, in Lilongwe.

3.4.4 Internet Sources

Some additional data was downloaded from internet at Chancellor College to supplement the information gathered.

3.4.5 Books

Books from various libraries were also consulted. Libraries used included University libraries such as Chancellor College; Polytechnic; and Mzuzu libraries. National Libraries used included Zomba City; Blantyre City; and Lilongwe City Libraries.

3.4.6 Newspaper Articles

Newspaper articles were also used to get some of the current information not readily available in libraries. Most of these were press review reports by Centre For Social Concern (CFSC) obtained at the National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) Library in Zomba.

3.5 Data Analysis

This study largely employed the qualitative approach to analyse evidence from selected Public Service organizations. In order to identify answers to the objectives of the study from the evidence gathered from the targeted organizations, content analysis was employed. Holski (1969: 41) defines content analysis as any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages. Content analysis is best suited to this study because it permits the researcher to make inferences from the evidence gathered from the nine selected organizations in

order to determine problems and prospects facing women's attainment of the 30% target in politically appointed positions.

Units of analysis include individuals and institutions involved in the formal employment situation. Individuals involved are men and women operating in positions ranging from P4/S4 to P2/S2 and their equivalents in the selected organizations. Institutions are understood as established forms or conditions of procedure characteristic of group activity (Hamilton in MacIver and Page, 1949: 15).

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Appropriate rules of ethics were followed in this study. These included getting authority from appropriate authorities for the interview and being courteous to respondents. In addition, this study has kept details about names and positions of respondents private in order to maintain an element of confidentiality promised to respondents before the interview. Where information is very sensitive, names of organizations involved have also been kept private.

3.7 Limitations of the Study

Several handicaps hampered the data collection exercise. The first one relates to limited funds which at times delayed data collection. Secondly, it was not easy to conduct interviews as planned because some potential key informants were committed to other duties. Further, the use of self administered questionnaires delayed data collection because most respondents took time to complete them. Lastly, some respondents refused to be interviewed resulting in failure to get data from one Parastatal. In spite of these problems, a considerable amount of data was gathered which helped to address the objectives of the study.

3.8 Conclusion.

In general, the chapter outlined various research tools used in the data collection exercise. These include use of self administered questionnaire; in-depth interviews; documentary reviews; internet sources; newspapers; and published books. The chapter also outlined the study limitations which include inability of the researcher to interview some respondents due to their commitment to other duties and delays by some to complete the self administered questionnaires. Lastly, the chapter indicated that appropriate rules of ethics governing the data collecting exercise were followed.

Chapter 4

Analysis and Discussion of Research Findings

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the research design and methodological aspects of the study. This chapter, which comprises of three sections, analyses evidence from five Government Ministries and four Parastatals. The first section examines trends in women's participation in politically appointed positions in the post 2000 era. The next section outlines measures used by the nine organizations to promote the participation of women in appointive positions. This is followed by a section on the implementation of the measures by Government Ministries and Parastatals. Next is a section analyzing problems that hindered women's attainment of the 30% critical mass in top-level positions of the selected organizations. The last section discusses prospects on the attainment of the 30% target in strategic management positions of the selected organizations and the Public Service in general.

4.1.0 Trends in Women's Participation in Politically Appointed Positions in Government Ministries and Parastatals Since 2000

This section analyses trends in women's participation in appointive positions in the selected Government Ministries and Parastatals and the Malawi Public Service in general.

4.1.1.0 Trends in Government Ministries

Evidence used in this section relates to Ministries of Education; Health; Natural Resources, Energy and Environment; Agriculture and Food Security; and Local Government and Rural Development.

4.1.1.1 Ministry of Education

Statistical evidence from Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare & Community Services and DHRMD (2005), provided in table 4.1, indicates that by November 2005, there were seven men and four women from P4/S4 to P2/S2 grades in the Ministry of Education. This means that, of the total number of top-level managers in the Ministry, 36% were women. Men accounted for 64% of the management positions.

Table 4.1: Ministry of Education-2005

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
P2-P4	11	7	64	4	36

Source: Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare & Community Services and DHRMD (2005)

Data sourced from the Department of Human Resources and Management Development (DHRMD) captured in table 4.2, on the other hand, indicates that by 2009 Ministry of Education had 28 men in the top management representing 74% compared to 10 women who accounted for 26% of their participation in the strategic management. At P4/3 level for 2009, there were 19 men accounting for 66% of men's participation at that level against 10 women which translate into 26% of women's participation. The two top most levels were an exclusive domain of men.

Table 4.2: Ministry of Education-2009

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
P2/C/CC	4	4	100	0	0
CD/P2/D	5	5	100	0	0
E/CE/P4/3	29	19	66	10	34
	38	28	74	10	26

Source: Researcher's Survey at DHRMD Headquarters

From the data given in table 4.1, it is evident that by 2005 Ministry of Education not only reached the 30% critical mass but also exceeded the target by six percent. By 2009, however, as reflected in table 4.2, the number of women dropped to 26% in 2005. Further, a comparison of the number of women at grade level also shows that within the top management, women were concentrated in the bottom level. There was no woman in the top most level.

4.1.1.2 Ministry of Health

As noted in table 4.3, Ministry of Health in 2005 had 32 men compared to 12 women operating at P4/S4 to P2/S2 grades representing 73% and 27% of men's and women's participation in politically appointed positions in this Ministry (Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare & Community Services and DHRMD, 2005: 8).

Table 4.3: Ministry of Health-2005

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
P2-P4	44	32	73	12	27

Source: Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare & Community Services and DHRMD (2005)

By 2009, basing on statistics from DHRMD appearing in table 4.4, there were 30 men and seven women from P4/S4 to P2/S2 grades in the Ministry Health. Thus, at top level of the Ministry, men's participation accounted for 81% to women's 19 percent. At

P4/3 level according to evidence in table 4.4, there were 21 men and four women representing 84% and 16% respectively of their participation. At P2, there were nine men and three women translating into 75% representation for men compared to women at 25%. Men exclusively dominated the topmost P2/C/CC grade.

Table 4.4: Ministry of Health (2009)

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
P2/C/CC	2	2	100	0	0
CD/P2/D	10	7	70	3	30
E/CE/P4/3	25	21	84	4	16
	37	30	81	7	19

Source: Researcher's Survey at DHRMD Headquarters

From the evidence given, it is clear that by 2005, Ministry of Health was close to the attainment of the 30% critical mass with women's representation at 27%. However, by 2009, gains made in 2005 dwindled to 19%.

4.1.1.3 Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment

Evidence from the Ministry of Natural Resources shown in table 4.5, indicates that there were 12 men at the top level of this Ministry who controlled all positions from P4/S4 to P2/S2 grades. Women were completely absent in top management positions of this Ministry.

Table 4.5: Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy & Environment-2005

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
P2-P4	12	12	100	0	0

Source: Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare & Community Services and DHRMD (2005).

In 2009, according to DHRMD data captured in table 4.6, 11 men virtually occupied all positions from P4 to P2 in the Ministry of Natural Resources Energy and

Environment. Women were not represented at any of the top-level positions. Between 2005 and 2009 there was no progress in women’s status in the top management since all positions remained men’s exclusive domain.

Table 4.6: Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy & Environment-2009

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
P2/C/CC	1	1	100	0	0
CD/P2/D	3	3	100	0	0
E/CE/P4/3	7	7	100	0	0
	11	11	100	0	0

Source: Researcher’s Survey at DHRMD Headquarters

4.1.1.4 Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security

In the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, evidence captured in table 4.7, indicates that by 2005, there were 46 men and five women in the strategic management. Men accounted for 90% of the positions compared to 10% for women. This means that the top-level decisions-making positions were, to a large part, male dominated (Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare & Community Services and DHRMD, 2005:8).

Table 4.7: Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security-2005

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
P2-P4	51	46	90	5	10

Source: Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare & Community Services and DHRMD (2005)

In 2009, according to DHRMD statistics, the top level of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security had 36 men and 12 women. Men’s participation was at 75% against women at 12 percent. At P4/3 level, as provided in table 4.8, there were 28 men and 11 women representing a proportion of 72% and 28% respectively of their participation. Within the P2 grade, there were differences with no woman at the top most P2/C/CC grade and one woman at CD/P2/D Grade.

Table 4.8: Ministry of Agriculture& Food Security-2009

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
P2/C/CC	1	1	100	0	0
CD/P2/D	8	7	87.5	1	12.5
E/CE/P4/3	39	28	72	11	28
	48	36	75	12	25

Source: Researcher's Survey at DHRMD Headquarters

A general observation made on the evidence is that women were concentrated in the lower ranks of the strategic management. The top most level was man's exclusive domain.

4.1.1.5 Ministry of Local Government & Rural Development

Statistical evidence from the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development captured in table 4.9 indicates that there were 12 men and one woman in the top management in 2005 representing a proportion of 92% for men and seven percent for women. The topmost P2/S2 grade had six men and no woman. The bottom P4/3 grade, on the other hand, had one woman. Here again the top most positions had no room for women. Women were noticeable only in lower levels of top management positions.

Table 4.9: Dept of Local Government-2005

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
P2/S2	6	6	100	0	0
P4/S4/3	7	6	86	1	14
	13	12	92	1	8

Source: Researcher's Survey at Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development Headquarters

In 2009, as noted in table 4.1.0, the top management of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development registered 10 men and two women representing 83% and 17% respectively of men's and women's representation at the strategic

decision-making level. The top most level had no woman. Women were only represented at the lower level of the strategic management.

Table 4.1.0: Ministry of Local Government & Rural Development-2009

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
P2/C/CC	1	1	100	0	0
CD/P2/D	3	3	100	0	0
E/CE/P4/3	8	6	75	2	25
	12	10	83	2	17

Source: Researcher's Survey at DHRMD Headquarters

4.1.1.6 Trends in Government Ministries: Aggregate View

An aggregate view of data for all the Ministries as reflected in table 4.1.1 indicates that in 2005 there were a total of 109 men and 22 women in the top management of the five Ministries. Men's participation in the top management was at 83% compared to 17% for women.

In 2009, as shown in table 4.1.2, there were 115 men in the strategic management compared to 31 women for the five Government Ministries. Men's percentage proportional participation in top-level positions stood at 79% compared to 21% for women.

Table 4.1.1: Government Ministries in 2005

Ministry	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
Education	11	7	64	4	36
Health	44	32	73	12	27
Natural Resources	12	12	100	0	0
Local Govt	13	12	92	1	8
Agriculture	51	46	90	5	10
	131	109	83	22	12

Source: Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare & Community Services and DHRMD (2005); Researchers Survey at DHRMD Headquarters.

Table 4.1.2: Government Ministries in 2009

Ministry	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
Education	38	28	74	10	26
Health	37	30	81	7	19
Natural Resources	11	11	100	0	0
Local Govt	12	10	75	2	25
Agriculture	48	36	75	12	25
	146	115	79	31	21

Source: Researcher's Survey at DHRMD; Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare & Community Services and DHRMD (2005).

4.1.2.0 Trends in the Parastatals

Evidence on the Parastatals was drawn from Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC); Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (ADMARC); Malawi Revenue Authority (MRA); and Electricity Supply Commission of Malawi (ESCOM).

4.1.2.1 Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC)

Statistical evidence from Malawi Broadcasting Corporation depicted in table 4.1.3 indicates that in 2005, there were six men and one woman in the top management. This means that men dominated top-level positions of Directors (MB6) and Director General (DG/MB8). Women were only represented at Deputy Director Level by a proportion of 17%.

Table 4.1.3: MBC- 2005

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
DG/MB8	1	1	100	0	0
DDG/MB7	1	0	0	1	100
MB6	4	4	100	0	0
	6	5	83	1	17

Source: Researcher's Survey at MBC Head Office

In 2009, as noted in table 4.14, things in the MBC management had not changed with men taking control of all politically appointed positions in the strategic management.

Table 4.1.4: MBC- 2009

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
DG/MB8	1	1	100	0	0
DDG/MB7	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant
MB6	3	3	100	0	0
	4	4	100	0	0

Source: Researcher's Survey at MBC Head Office

4.1.2.2 Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (ADMARC)

In case of ADMARC evidence on table 4.1.5 suggests that by 2005 there were 20 men and one woman in the strategic management. This translated into a proportion of 95% of men's participation compared to five percent for women. The two topmost positions of General Managers (GM) and Deputy General Managers (DGM) were men's exclusive domain. At the bottom level, there were 17 men and one woman, representing 95% and five percent proportions of their participation. In general, the top management was largely dominated by men while women's participation left a lot to be desired.

Table 4.1.5: ADMARC-2005

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
GM	1	1	100	0	0
DGM	2	2	100	0	0
Managers	18	17	94	1	6
	21	20	95	1	5

Source: Researcher's Survey ADMARC Head Office

In 2009, as is evident in table 4.1.6, there was no change in the two top most positions of ADMARC with men still dominating. It is only at lower managerial grade where some improvements were registered with women's level of participation rising above the 30% critical mass to a record 37.5% from six percent in 2005.

Table 4.1.6: ADMARC-2009

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
GM	1	1	100	0	0
DGM	3	3	100	0	0
Managers	8	5	62.5	3	37.5
	12	9	75	3	25

Source: Researcher's Survey at ADMARC Head Office

4.1.2.3 Malawi Revenue Authority (MRA)

In case of the Malawi Revenue Authority (MRA) evidence in table 4.17, indicates that by 2005, two top most positions of Commissioner General (MR1/CG) and Deputy Commissioner General (MR2/DCG) were entirely controlled by men. The bottom level comprising of Directors (MR3) had five men and one woman, representing 83% and 17% respectively of participation for men and women at this grade.

Table 4.1.7: MRA-2005

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
GM	1	1	100	0	0
DGM	1	1	100	0	0
Managers	6	5	83	1	17
	8	7	87.5	1	12.5

Source: Researcher's Survey at MRA Head Office

In 2009, as is evident in table 4.1.8, no change was registered in the two topmost positions, which remained men's exclusive domain. At the bottom level of managers for MRA, however, things were different. There were five men and one woman accounting for 83% and 17% of men's and women's participation at this level.

Table 4.1.8: MRA-2009

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
GM	1	1	100	0	0
DGM	1	1	100	0	0
Managers	6	5	83	1	17
	8	7	87.5	1	12.5

Source: Researcher's Survey at MRA Head Office

4.1.2.4 Electricity Supply Commission of Malawi (ESCOM)

In case of ESCOM, according to evidence in table 4.1.9, all positions in the top management from Directors through Deputy Chief Executive (DCEO) to the Chief Executive (CEO) at the top in 2005, were men's domain. The top management team had seven men but no woman.

Table 4.1.9: ESCOM-2005

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
GM	1	1	100	0	0
DGM	1	1	100	0	0
Managers	5	5	100	0	0
	7	7	100	0	0

Source: Researcher's Survey at ESCOM Head Office

The picture emerging in 2009 depicted in table 4.2.0 for ESCOM was similar to the one in 2005 with all top-level positions completely controlled by men.

Table 4.2.0: ESCOM-2009

Grade	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
GM	1	1	100	0	0
DGM	1	1	100	0	0
Managers	5	5	100	0	0
	7	7	100	0	0

Source: Researcher's Survey at ESCOM Head Office

4.1.2.5 Trends in the Parastatals: Aggregate View

An aggregate view of the data for the selected parastatals captured in table 4.2.1 indicates that in 2005 there were 43 people in the top management. Of these, 40 were men and three women translating into 93% and seven percent respectively of their representation at top management level.

Table 4.2.1: Parastatals in 2005

Parastatal	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
MBC	7	6	86	1	14
ADMARC	21	20	95	1	5
MRA	8	7	87.5	1	12.5
ESCOM	7	7	100	0	0
	43	40	93	3	7

Source: Researcher's Survey at MBC, ADMARC, MRA, and ESCOM Head Offices

As regards evidence in table 4.2.2, men's representation in the strategic management in the given Parastatals in 2009 stood at 86% compared to women at 14%. Between 2005 and 2009, therefore, women's level of participation in appointed positions in the Parastatals had risen by seven percent.

Table 4.2.2: Parastatals in 2009

Parastatal	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
MBC	4	4	100	0	0
ADMARC	12	9	75	3	25
MRA	8	7	87.5	1	12.5
ESCOM	5	5	100	0	0
	29	25	86	4	14

Source: Researcher's Survey at MBC, ADMARC, MRA, and ESCOM Head Office.

4.1.3 Trends in the Nine Organizations vis-à-vis Malawi Public Service

When figures for all the nine organizations are aggregated, women's level of participation displays an increasing trend. Women's participation in 2005 as indicated in table 4.2.3, stood at 24 out of 143 personnel in the top management. In 2009, as

shown in table 4.2.4, there were 35 women in the top management out of a total of 173 top management personnel in all the nine organizations. By 2009, therefore, women's participation in politically appointed positions of the nine organizations had increased by six percent in 2009 from a proportion of 14% in 2005 to 20% in 2009.

Table 4.2.3: Parastatals & Government Ministries in 2005

Organization	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
Parastatals	42	40	95	2	5
Govt Ministries	131	109	83	22	17
	173	149	86	24	14

Source: Researcher's Survey at DHRMD, MBC, ADMARC, MRA, and ESCOM; Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare & Community Services and DHRMD (2005).

Table 4.2.4: Parastatals & Government Ministries in 2009

Organization	Men & Women	Men	%	Women	%
Parastatals	29	25	86	4	14
Govt Ministries	146	115	79	31	21
	175	149	80	35	20

Source: Researcher's Survey at DHRMD, MBC, ADMARC, MRA, and ESCOM; Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare & Community Services and DHRMD (2005).

Briefly, women's aggregate levels of participation reveals an increasing trend in women's engagement in politically appointed positions in the organizations involved and by extension the Malawi Public Service.

4.2.0 Measures Used by Government Ministries and Parastatals to Promote 30

Percent Women Participation in Politically Appointed Positions.

A number of measures for promoting the attainment of women's 30% target in appointed positions were named by respondents from the nine selected organizations. These include training of women in some programmes; training of some personnel on

gender issues; affirmative action; transfer between post arrangements; role modeling; and the use of the 'women are encouraged to apply rubric' in vacancy adverts.

4.2.1 Training of Women in Various Programmes

Basing on the number of respondents, training of women in various programmes appears to be the most predominant measure applied. Training institutions offering various programmes cited by respondents include the Polytechnic; Chancellor College; Mzuzu University; Bunda College of Agriculture; Kamuzu College of Nursing; Staff Development Institute (SDI); Malawi Institute of Management (MIM); and Eastern and Southern Africa Management Institute (ESAMI). Respondents citing SDI; MIM; and ESAMI came from the Ministries of Local Government and Rural Development; Natural Resources, Energy and Environment; and Agriculture, and the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation. When asked to name the courses offered in these colleges to working women, courses cited varied from those concerned with management issues to those dealing with general skills. Information sourced from the Ministry of Health using a self administered questionnaire and a key female informant indicated that courses offered include human resources management; midwifery and secretarial duties. A female respondent at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security cited technical agricultural courses, and administrative and secretarial courses. At MBC, a female respondent cited training in the human resources management.

From the foregoing account, there are indications that training is being offered to women. On the surface, one can conclude that in general, training is being used to promote women into top level positions in order to achieve the 30% critical mass for women as espoused in the National Gender Policy. However, a close observation

reveals that this assumption is far from true. From the list of courses given, it is only management and its related courses that can promote leadership and assertiveness skills in women to prepare them for top management positions. Courses like secretarial duties, messenger duties and midwifery may not be effective in developing leadership skills in women.

4.2.2 In-Service Training Sessions on Gender Issues

The use of in service training of personnel on gender issues was also mentioned as a measure for boosting the level of women's participation in the Public Service. But very few indicated that their organizations were doing this. Of the five Government Ministries targeted in this study only Ministries of Agriculture and Food Security; and Natural Resources, Energy and Environment, indicated that their personnel were at times offered special training on gender issues. A respondent from the Ministry of Health claimed that the idea of having gender workshops 'is still on the table but is planned for implementation this year'.² A male informant from the Ministry of Local Government argued that his Ministry did not conduct any workshops on gender because that was the responsibility of the Department of Human Resources and Management Development (DHRMD). A male respondent from the DHRMD countered this, contending that special gender trainings were being conducted in various Ministries. He claimed that the trainings were undertaken by gender focal points operating in respective Government Ministries. He claimed that these were responsible for gender issues in Government Ministries and reported to the coordinating gender focal point at the DHRMD. A male respondent from the Ministry of Gender, Women Affairs and

² View of a Key Informant at Ministry of Health Headquarters in Lilongwe

Community Development (the National Gender Machinery) collaborated the foregoing claims when he asserted that that gender focal points were not only in place in all Government Ministries but had received training as well. He said that 'their (focal points) duty is to ensure that most programmes are mainstreamed in gender.' He claimed that his Ministry: '... Conducts regular meetings with focal points where focal points submit reports on gender issues from their Ministries...These meetings are held quarterly and they are a forum where information on gender issues is shared.'³

Of the four parastatals visited, only MBC indicated being able to conduct special workshops on gender issue for it's working personnel. The rest said this was not done. A female respondent at MRA claimed her organization did not pay much attention to issue of gender because 'our main priority is revenue collection which is part of the objectives of MRA and MRA is a new organization having been set up nine years ago.'⁴

4.2.3 Affirmative Action

Affirmative action is another measure that was named in the research study. Of all the respondents interviewed it is a female respondent from the Ministry of Education who cited affirmative action as being used by her Ministry to increase women's participation in the strategic management. She contended that although there were no formal guidelines for the application of affirmative action its application was implicit in the way positions were being distributed in the Ministry. She claimed that 'there is a tendency in the Ministry to alternate decision-making positions between men and

³ Views of a Key Informant at Ministry of Gender, Women Affairs & Community Headquarters in Lilongwe

⁴ View of a Key Informant at MRA Headquarters in Blantyre

women... For instance, where a director is male you are likely to find a female deputy... where a head teacher is female the deputy is likely to be male.’⁵

When respondents from the human resources departments within respective Government Ministries and Parastatals were asked whether special treatment was accorded to women during the recruitment or promotion or appointment process, only few were of the view that this was being done. A male respondent from MBC spoke of special treatment being used where a female and male interviewee had obtained a tied score. He claimed that when this happened preference was given to a female interviewee. This was echoed in the views of a male respondent from the Civil Service Commission. In general, when asked to explain why no special measures were in place for women, most respondents pointed to a merit based recruitment, promotion and appointment process. A male respondent from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, for instance contended that ‘there is no provision for special treatment because we are following guidelines that are applicable to the entire Civil Service which provide for recruitment on merit.’⁶ This resonates with the views of a male respondent from the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC), who said:

No special measures are employed when making appointments into top management positions...For your information, appointments are made by the Minister-In-Charge of the Public Service who is the President...When making appointments the Minister is guided by recommendations made by the managements of respective Ministries; Boards of Directorates; and our Office (OPC)...Our recommendations take into account one’s qualifications and relevant experience.⁷

⁵ Views of a Key Informant at Ministry of Education Headquarters in Lilongwe

⁶ Key Informant views at Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security Headquarters in Lilongwe

⁷ Views of a Key Informant at the OPC Headquarters in Lilongwe

The informant from OPC further claimed that appointments into top level positions by the Minister-In-Charge of the Public Service were guided by Section 4 of the 1994 Public Service Act which stipulates that: 'entry into and advancement within the Public Service shall be determined solely on the basis of merit, namely, relative ability, knowledge, skill and aptitude after a fair and open competition which assures that all citizens receive equal opportunity' (Malawi Government, 1994). It is evident therefore that although affirmative action was cited its application has been extremely limited.

4.2.4 Transfer Between Posts

Transfer between posts as a measure of promoting women into top managerial positions was mentioned by two male respondents from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and Local Government and Rural Development respectively. An informant from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security claimed that it was difficult to attract women to the Ministry because most positions required qualification in non-traditional fields which few women had. Therefore, in order to attract more women, the Ministry created service departments requiring traditional qualifications. These include the Agri-business; Agri-gender and Nutrition departments. The informant claimed that these departments were mostly filled through inter departmental transfers. A male informant from the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development also mentioned 'transfer between the posts' arrangements as a means employed by his Ministry to beef up women personnel.

4.2.5 Role Modeling

Role modeling was cited by a female respondent from the Ministry of Agriculture. In the considered view of the informant, this measure was championed by a female

Deputy Secretary who through periodic visits to Bunda College of Agriculture encouraged female students to aspire for top managerial positions upon the completion of their degree programmes.

4.2.6 The 'Women Are Encouraged to Apply' Rubric

The 'Women are encouraged to apply' rubric was mentioned by a female informant from the Ministry of Agriculture. The informant claimed that the phrase was used in post advertisements to attract more female applications to the posts. A male respondent from the Civil Service Commission also reported a similar practice being used in his organization.

Briefly, measures cited by various respondents aimed at achieving the 30% critical mass in appointive positions include training of women; affirmative action; 'transfer between posts'; the 'women are encouraged to apply rubric'; and role modeling.

4.3.0 Problems Facing the Attempt to Promote 30% Women's Participation in Politically Appointed Positions in Government Ministries and Parastatals: Views of Key Informants

A number of reasons have been established from the evidence from the selected Government Ministries and Parastatals to explain the failure of women's 30% participation in politically appointed positions. These include cultural socialization; political appointments; attitude of men and women in the employment situation; lack of technically qualified women; high labour turn over; misconceptions on gender issues, and lack of legal provisions of gender policy enforcement.

4.3.1 Cultural Socialization

Cultural socialization was seen as an obstacle to the attempt to promote women's 30% target in the top management in the evidence from five organizations namely by MBC; ESCOM; and Ministries of Education; Local Government and Rural Development; and Agriculture and Food Security. In general, it was argued that cultural socialization perpetuated the belief that men were superior to women. This belief in turn made parents to treat male and female children differently. It was asserted, for instance, that parents were more supportive of boy's access to educational opportunities than girls who were oriented towards performance of nurturing roles in the home. The result of this was shortage of suitably qualified female labour available for absorption in the formal employment sector. Views of respondents from the five targeted organizations were echoed by a female informant from MBC who made the following observation:

Malawi's history has for long favoured boys than girls. Boys are empowered from a tender age. Boys are called "achimwene" (brother) but girls are not given similar respect. For a long time girls have been neglected in matters of education.⁸

In general, cultural socialization was blamed for contributing to lower education levels for girls/women leading to lack or shortage of qualified female labour available for absorption in the labour in the formal employment sector.

4.3.2 Political Appointments

Evidence from five organizations explained the failure of women's attainment of 30% representation in top management positions in terms of political appointments. According to a female informant from a Parastatal organization, political leadership was biased in favour of men when making appointments into top level positions in the

⁸ Views of a Key Informant at MBC Headquarters in Blantyre

Public Service. A female respondent from a Parastatal organization asserted that positions in the top management are filled by political appointments. The respondent claimed that it was difficult for women to be considered for appointment into politically appointed positions because politicians who made such appointments were men who tended to favour their fellow male counterparts. Additional evidence from a male respondent from a Government Ministry indicates that the centralization of appointments into top management positions by the President was a major obstacle to the task of raising the levels of women in top management positions. The respondent contended that since the appointments were made by the president, the ministry was unable to appoint more women into top level positions. He asserted that the President was far removed from the ministry for the effective implementation of gender policy measures. He suggested that if the power of appointments was shared to Public Service managements, it would be easier to promote women in appointive positions.

Evidence from the Office of the President and Cabinet indicated that the President was not the only party involved in appointment of officers into top management positions of the Public Service. A male Informant from OPC asserted that presidential appointments were made upon the basis of recommendations from Government Ministries; and Parastatal Boards.

4.3.3 Attitudes of Men and Women in the Employment Situation

Evidence from Ministries of Education; Agriculture and Food Security; and Local Government and Rural Development explained the failure of the 30% target in appointive positions in terms of attitudes of men and women in the formal employment setting. Evidence from the Ministry of Education suggested that beliefs in the

maintenance of social distance between men and women limited interactions between male bosses and their female subordinates in the formal office setting. This, in the view of a female informant from the Ministry, worked to the benefit of junior male staff with more access to male bosses in both the formal and informal settings than to junior female personnel. The informant asserted that access to male bosses made it easier for junior male working staff to obtain promotions through informal means.

Evidence from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security blamed the failure of the attainment of the 30% target on 'misconceptions that women are incapable of performing better than men.'⁹ In the view of a female informant from this Ministry, such misconceptions made male bosses to ignore women when making recommendations for appointment into politically appointed positions. In the view of evidence from the Ministry of Local Government, women's underrepresentation in the top management stemmed from women's tendency to shy away from top level positions due to challenges associated with such positions.

4.3.4 Lack of Suitably Qualified Female Personnel

Evidence from ESCOM and Ministries of Agriculture and Food Security; Natural Resources, Energy and Environment; and Local Government indicated that inadequate female labour in possession of technical qualifications hindered the attainment of the 30% target for women in top level positions. A male informant from Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment said:

Most departments in our Ministry require technical qualifications. Departments like Geology; Mining; and Surveys, require training in non-traditional fields. Most women don't have training in such courses. Most

⁹ A Key Informant at Ministry of Agriculture Headquarters in Lilongwe

women shun these courses. It is therefore difficult to find technically qualified women for recruitment into the Ministry.¹⁰

A male informant from the Ministry of Natural Resources Energy and Environment claimed that the technical section of the Ministry had no woman in the top sections compared to the non technical sections. Another male informant from ESCOM claimed that there were no women in the top management because positions involved required possession of engineering qualifications which few women had.

4.3.5 High Female Labour Turnover

Evidence from MBC explained the failure of the 30% target in the top management in terms of high female labour turnover. High female labour turnover was blamed on availability of training opportunities for women operating in the organization. A female informant from MBC claimed that training was robbing the organization of its female personnel through labour mobility for better jobs upon the completion of such trainings. In the view of the informant, high female labour turnover made MBC management discouraged with the whole idea of sending women for training.

4.3.6 Misconceptions on Gender Issues

A further problem raised was misconceptions on gender issues. This, like high female labour turnover, was also cited by a female informant from MBC. The informant claimed that the majority of men working in MBC misconstrued the real purpose of the gender equality promotion campaign. She asserted that men thought that the ultimate goal of the gender awareness campaign was to promote female domination. This idea, according to the informant, was implanted in men by the Women in Development

¹⁰ Views of a Key Informant at Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy & Environment Headquarters in Lilongwe

Approach (WID) which excluded men in matters of women empowerment. Women's underrepresentation therefore was an outcome of men's failure to recommend more women into top level positions for fear of promoting female domination.

4.3.7 Lack of Legal Provisions for Gender Policy Enforcement

Lack of legal provisions for enforcing the gender policy was cited in the evidence from the Ministry of Local Government. According to a male informant from this ministry, Malawi lacked specific legal provisions for the enforcement of the gender policy. The informant claimed that the provisions of the National Gender Policy could only work if special laws stipulating penalties for non compliance were in place.

From the foregoing account, it is evident that cultural factors and political appointments were the most predominant problems leading to the failure of women's 30% target in appointive positions since they were cited by most of the organizations involved in this study. Next to these were attitudes of men and women in the employment situation and lack of technically qualified women. At the bottom were high female labour turnover; misconceptions on gender issues; and lack of legal provisions.

4.4.0 Problems Leading to the Failure of the 30% Critical Mass in Politically

Appointed Positions in the Malawi Public Service: A Critical Analysis

Analysis of findings from the selected case studies established several reasons accounting for the failure of women's 30% critical mass in appointive positions in the Malawi Public Service. These are cultural socialization; political appointments; lack of legal provisions to enforce the gender policy; misconceptions on gender issues; high female labour turnover; attitude of men and women in the employment situation; and limitations in the implementation of the measures. This section examines these reasons

in order to establish an overriding explanation to the failure of women's 30% target in appointive positions in the selected organizations and the Malawi Public Service as a whole.

4.4.1 Cultural Socialization

Evidence from five selected organizations attributed the failure of women's 30% engagement in appointive positions to cultural socialization. Cultural socialization was blamed for discouraging girl's education through promotion of feelings of inferiority in girls. Feelings of inferiority in turn worked against girls' attainment of educational qualifications leading to lower levels of qualified female personnel available for absorption into appointive positions. Boserup (1989: 168) concurs with the evidence when he notes that girls in general are taught to be obedient and modest, and to undertake routine jobs without protest while boys are encouraged to be enterprising, aggressive and more self confident. He asserts that inferiority of feelings in girls may induce them to invest less in education and training than boys (ibid: 168). Boserup (ibid) provides further that even if they have the same formal education and training as male competitors, women are likely to lose in the competition with males in the labour market (ibid: 168-169). He claims that girls, who are socialized to accept routine jobs, to be modest, and obedient, are unlikely to demand good jobs and advancement, even when there are few prejudices against them (ibid:169).

Human capital theory explains women's marginalized condition in the labour market by women's taste and preference for domestic rather than formal employment responsibilities. In Becker's (1964) view women invest less in human capital (formal education) because of their preference and taste for domestic work. This results in lower

levels of educated female labour force. Becker's view that women's marginalized position in the labour market is a result of women's limited investment in human capital is to some extent true because of women's reported lower literacy levels than men. This is also reflected in fewer levels of women in top management positions in all the nine selected organizations. The assertion that women's marginalization stems from women's own rational choice, however, is at variance with evidence from respondents which blames lower literacy levels for women on cultural socialization rather than women's choice and preference.

Dual labour market and labour market segmentation approaches explain women's underrepresentation in the labour market in terms of worker differences in the levels of educational qualifications and on-the-job skills (Creedy and Thomas, 1982: 146-7). As noted in Creedy and Thomas (*ibid*), formal educational qualifications serve as screening devices at ports of entry which exist at lower levels of the labour market. It is further noted that within the labour market itself it is on-the-job skill rather than formal education which determines workers upward mobility in form of promotion (*ibid*: 146-7). These approaches postulate that the primary sector has internal markets through which individuals are shifted between jobs or promoted to superior ones (*ibid*: 147). Internal labour markets are defined as employment structures where the pricing and allocation of labour is governed by administrative and institutional rules rather than by market forces (McNabb and Ryan, 1990: 153). Positions of P2/S2 to P4/S4 and their equivalents could be equated to internal labour markets since they constitute promotional ladders through which workers are shifted in Public Service organizations. In addition, labour allocation into these positions is governed by administrative

provisions laid down in the 1994 Malawi Public Service Act (Malawi Gazette Supplement, 1994). The linkage of internal labour markets to the primary segment as noted in Creedy and Whitefield (1999: 464) and McNabb and Ryan (1990: 153) makes positions of P4/S4 to P2/S2 and their equivalents to fall under the primary segment.

Closer examination of the evidence vis-a-vis the theoretical underpinnings highlighted in the foregoing account indicates that there are some cases that cannot be explained by cultural socialization and the resulting lower levels of education for women. Women's performance in Ministries of Education and Health presents such a case. Between 2005 and 2009, for instance, the level of women's participation in the two Ministries sharply declined. In the case of Ministry of Education, women's level fell by 10% from 36% in 2005 to 26% in 2009. For the Ministry of Health, it declined by eight percent from 27% in 2005 to 19% in 2009. Women's performance in the two ministries raises some questions that cannot be addressed by cultural socialization vis-à-vis lower levels of educated female labour. Both ministries recorded high levels of women's representation in 2005. Ministry of Education had even gone above the 30% critical mass while Ministry of Health was on the fringes of its attainment. But within the space of five years the level of women's participation had sharply declined. The question is: What explains this sudden decline in these ministries over such a brief period? Clearly, cultural socialization has no adequate explanation on this. As is evident in most written scholarship on gender issues, cultural socialization encourages girls to aspire for traditional rather than non-traditional careers. The expectation therefore is to see an increasing trend in levels of women's engagement in organizations associated with traditional fields, if one considers only cultural socialization. The declining trend

in levels of women in Ministries of Health and Education within a brief of time suggests the complicity of other factors besides cultural socialization.

Another point worth considering is the position of women in top management positions of the nine organizations. Evidence indicates that by 2009 all top most positions of P/C/CC for Government Ministries and General Manager/Commissioner General/ Director General for the Parastatals, were men's exclusive domain. The question is: Why were women virtually absent in these positions? While cultural socialization may provide an answer based on evidence from organizations associated with non-traditional fields like ESCOM and Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment, the same is not true of organizations associated with traditional occupations such as Ministries of Education and Health. These Ministries were amongst organizations that registered larger levels of women's participation in the top management. Strangely, however, even in these organizations women were confined to two lower levels and none could make it to the very top. If education is the passport for one's appointment into top most positions, then why are women who are already in the top management failing to occupy topmost positions? Cultural socialization has no answer to this question. This validates the assertion that there may be other factors limiting women's levels of engagement in the appointive positions. In radical feminist thinking, for instance, women virtual absence in these positions could stem from patriarchy which is evident in men's complete dominance of top most positions of the nine targeted Public Service organizations.

4.4.2 Lack of Technically Qualified Female Labour

Evidence from ESCOM and Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment attributes women's virtual absence in the top management to lack of technically qualified female personnel. Statistical evidence suggests that between 2005 and 2009, ESCOM and Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining had no woman in the top management. Incidentally, these organizations are largely associated with non-traditional occupations. Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment has departments that engage in engineering, surveys and mining activities while ESCOM is mostly involved in engineering works. Women's virtual absence in the two organizations between 2005 and 2009 could thus be attributed to lack of women in possession of relevant qualifications in non-traditional fields. Women's state in ESCOM and Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment is in sharp contrast with women's position in the Ministries of Health and Education. These ministries which are associated with traditional nursing and teaching careers respectively posted larger levels of women's engagement in the strategic management compared to the former ministries. This suggests that lack of qualifications in non-traditional fields may be responsible for women's complete absence in organizations associated with non-traditional occupations. The same may also be true of MBC and Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security because their involvement in non-traditional engineering activities.

A comparison of organizations associated with the non-traditional fields and those associated with traditional careers leads to questions for which lack of technically qualified female labour has no answer. Evidence from the nine organizations suggests

that women were in a worse shape in terms of their participation at top management level in organizations involved in non-traditional occupations than in those associated with traditional fields. Between 2005 and 2009, for instance, ESCOM and Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment had no woman in the top management. MBC saw women's level of participation plummeting by 17% between 2005 and 2009. These developments could be blamed on lack of technically qualified female labour. Developments in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, however, make such an explanation deficient. In 2005, for example, the level of women's participation in the top management of this ministry stood at 10%. By 2009, however, this had risen to 25%. The question is: Why did women's level rise in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and stagnate or decline in ESCOM; Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining; and MBC, and yet all these are associated with non-traditional fields which generally lack qualified female labour? In other words, why did the trend differ amongst organizations that are associated with non-traditional occupations? Evidently, lack of technically qualified female labour has no adequate explanation on this. This suggests the existence of alternative explanations to the failure of women's 30% target. One explanation relates to the limited application of the measures. Since evidence suggests that Ministry of Agriculture applied more measures for promoting women's engagement at top level, one might speculate that significant gains in women's participation in the Ministry stemmed from application of more measures.

Further, lack of technically qualified female labour cannot fully explain men's complete dominance in pinnacle positions of organizations associated with traditional careers. Ministries of Education and Health, for example, had no woman at the topmost

level and yet each of them posted higher levels of women's engagement in the top management. While lack of technically qualified female labour explains women's virtual absence in top most positions of organizations like Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment which had no women in the top management in the first place, it fails to provide answers for organizations which had larger levels of women in the top management like Ministries of Education and Health.

In Labour market segmentation tradition, women's dismal state could be a factor of differences in the levels of human capital between male and female employees. Labour market segmentation approach asserts that formal educational qualifications matter only at ports of entry into the labour market which lie at the bottom of the organizational hierarchy (Mallier and Shafto, 1989: 203). The approach postulates that educational qualifications are used as screening devices during labour recruitment into the labour market (Creedy, 1999: 149-50,163). But once in the labour market, it is firm specific skill derived through the on-the-job training that determine worker's internal upward mobility (Creedy, 1999: 149-50,163). In this regard, women's underrepresentation in the top management of the selected organizations stems not only from differences in the levels of formal educational qualifications between men and women operating in the labour market but also from worker's differences in the levels of firm specific skills (Creedy, 1999: 150). Firm specific skills, as noted in Creedy (ibid: 149), are not acquired through formal education but through the on-the-job training.

It is thus evident that while lack of technically qualified female labour contributed to the failure of women's 30% target, it is not the only factor associated with human capital which had an effect on levels of women's engagement in positions..

4.4.3 Political Appointments

Evidence from five public service organizations explained the failure of women's 30% target in top management positions in terms of political appointments. Political appointments were implicated on two grounds. Firstly, it was claimed that they were biased in favour of men at the expense of women. Secondly, it was asserted that since appointments were controlled by the president, managements of Public Service organizations had no authority to appoint women into top management positions.

In radical feminist thinking, biased political appointments stem from patriarchy. Examination of evidence from the targeted organizations as well as the provisions of the 1994 Malawi Public Service Act gives an indication of an element of bias in the appointments into top management positions. Two elements of patriarchy which are apparent in the Public Service are male dominance and male identification. Male dominance, as noted in Johnson (2005: 5), refers to a situation where positions of authority-political, economic, legal, religious, educational, military, domestic-are generally reserved for men. Male dominance is evident in men's dominating role in top management positions of organizations considered in this study. In 2009, for example, all the top most positions of these organizations were men's exclusive domain suggesting that male dominance was at play. In the view of radical feminism, therefore, the failure of women's 30% target in appointive positions stems from biased political appointments characterized by male dominance in top most positions of the nine targeted Public Service organizations.

Male identification, on the other hand, is a state where cultural ideas about what is considered good, desirable, preferable, or normal are associated with how we think

about men or masculinity (Johnson,2005:7). One indication of male identification as noted in Johnson (2005:7) is where men are put in the foreground and women in the background. An indication of this is the widespread use of male pronouns and nouns to represent people in general (ibid: 7). Use of pronouns and nouns to represent people in general is still much evident in Malawi today. The Malawi Public Service Act, for instance, uses 'he' or 'his' in reference to positions such as Secretary to the Cabinet, Principal secretary and Public officer (Malawi Government Gazette Supplement,1994: 4-5, 8-9). Ironically, Government through the Ministry of Gender and DHRMD, called for the use of gender inclusive language in all forms of communication including official documents (Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare & Community Development, 2005: 16).

Male identification which is evident in the provisions of the Malawi Public Service Act suggests that the failure of women's 30% target may be a factor of male bias influenced by patriarchy. While this may be true, it would be naive to explain the failure of women's 30% target entirely on the basis of biased political appointments considering the fact that other equally important factors were also involved. For instance, women's virtual absence in organizations associated with non traditional fields has been blamed on lack of technically qualified labour. It is evident that even if gender responsive language were used in the provisions of the 1994 Malawi Public Service Act, without a technically qualified female labour pool it would be difficult to achieve the 30% critical mass.

Further, while it may be true that biased political appointments contributed to the failure of women's 30% critical mass in politically appointed positions as radical

feminism would have us to believe, there are indications that political appointments are not entirely responsible. Women's status in Public Service organizations associated with non-traditional fields, for instance, cannot be entirely explained on the basis of political appointments alone. For example, women's virtual absence in the top managements of ESCOM and Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment has also been attributed to lack of women in possession of qualifications in non-traditional fields like engineering, surveys and mining. As noted in Dzimbiri and Pendame (2008: 130) few women engage in non-traditional careers like engineering and law. Women's absence in policy making positions of ESCOM and Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment therefore also stems from lack of women in possession of relevant technical qualifications besides the influence of political appointments.

Further, the assertion that appointments into appointive positions are controlled by the President is true since Part II Section 6 of the Malawi Public Service Act vests the power to make appointments in positions upwards of the rank of undersecretary in the President (Malawi Gazette Supplement, 1994: 3). Radical feminism, would explain the implications of centralized political appointments on women's status in terms of privilege of control which characterizes patriarchy (Johnson, 2005: 14). As noted in Johnson (ibid: 14-15) privilege of control elevates men over women and makes men as controllers to see themselves as subjects who intend and decide what will happen and to see women as objects to act upon. As further provided in Johnson (ibid: 14) men maintain their privilege by controlling women and anyone who might threaten it. Centralized political appointments therefore appear to be responsible for women's

underrepresentation in politically appointed positions in that they seem to be aimed at protecting male privilege of control by entrusting all key positions to men as is evident in 2009 statistical evidence for the targeted organizations.

While centralized appointments explain women's underrepresentation in appointive positions as demonstrated in the foregoing account, it is evident that they are not entirely responsible. Evidence from a key informant from the OPC indicates that when making appointments, the President is guided by recommendations from managements of government ministries, Boards of Directorates and the Office of the President and Cabinet. This means that although it is the President who makes the final choice of who is to move into the top management, other parties are also involved in this process. It would thus be simplistic to explain the failure of women's 30% target entirely on the basis of one party when it is obvious that more than one party is involved in the appointment process.

4.4.4 Lack of legal Provisions to Enforce the Gender Policy

Evidence from Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, suggests that the failure of women's advancement lay in the absence of legal provisions for the enforcement of the National Gender Policy. Malera (2005: 49, 67) upholds this view when she asserts that the Malawi Constitution lacks a provision carrying an obligation on the state to deal with the issue of women representation in Public Offices. Examination of constitutional provisions and labour laws validate Malera's assertions. Chapter III Section 13(a) and Chapter IV Section 20 (1) and (2) of the 1994 Malawi Constitution which deal with gender equality and discrimination, for instance, lack provisions for the enforcement of gender policy provisions (Republic of Malawi, 1994).

Chapter III Section 13(a) of the Constitution stipulates that the state shall actively promote the welfare and development of the people of Malawi by progressively adopting and implementing policies and legislation aimed at achieving gender equality for women with men through:

- i. Full participation of women in all spheres of Malawian society on the basis of equality with men
- ii. The implementation of the principles of non-discrimination and such other measures as may be required and
- iii. The implementation of policies to address social issues such as domestic violence, security of the person, lack of maternity benefits, economic exploitation and rights to property (Republic of Malawi, 1994).

Chapter IV Section 20 (1) and (2) stipulates that

1. Discrimination of persons in any form is prohibited and all persons are, under any law, guaranteed equal and effective protection against discrimination on the grounds of ...sex...social origin...or other status.
2. Legislation may be passed addressing inequalities in society and prohibiting discriminatory practices and the propagation of such practices and may render such practices criminally punishable by courts.

Further, Part II Sections 5(1), (3); 6(1), (2); and Part VII Section 57 (3)(a) of the 2000 Malawi Employment Act carry provisions which among others outlaw employee discrimination and issues of equity in the formal employment sector. Part II Section 5 (1) and (3), for example, provide that:

- 1 No person shall discriminate against any employee or prospective employee on the grounds of ...sex...social origin... or other status in respect of recruitment, training, promotion, terms and conditions of employment or other matters arising out of the employment relationship
- 2 Any person who contravenes this section shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a fine... and imprisonment... (International Labour Organization (2000).

Part 6 (1) and (2) stipulate that:

1. Every employer shall pay employees equal remuneration for work of equal value without discrimination of any kind, in particular on the basis of ...sex...social origin...or other status

2. Where a complaint alleging infringement of rights contained in this part has been proved, the court shall make such order as it deems necessary to ensure compliance with the provisions of this part...(ibid:2000)

Finally, Part VII Section 57 (3) (a) provide that sex among others does not constitute a valid reason for ones dismissal from formal employment. A closer look at the legal provisions cited in the foregoing shows that while issues of gender discrimination and gender equity in the formal employment have been given attention, there is no provision on the enforcement measures aimed at promoting gender balance in general and the 30% target in politically appointed positions in particular. Despite this deficiency, however, it is still possible for special measures like affirmative action to be implemented.

Part II Section 6 of the 1994 Malawi Public Service Act, for instance, stipulates that: "Subject to the constitution, the power to appoint any person in the public service to a post above the rank of Under-Secretary shall vest in the President" (Malawi Gazette, Supplement, 1994). This provision does not specify the exact number of men and women that the president could appoint into the top management. Such an element of flexibility, however, gives the president a chance to appoint 30% of women into top management positions where qualified female labour permits.

Women's virtual absence in top most positions of organizations boasting of relatively higher levels of women's engagement in the top management suggests that lack of legal provisions may not be the only factor responsible for the failure of women's 30% target. In the view of radical feminism men's total dominance of all topmost positions as per the 2009 statistical evidence from the targeted organizations, suggests the influence of patriarchy (Johnson, 2005: 14).

A further reason for women's underrepresentation in appointed positions which falls short of the 30% critical mass is lack of technically qualified female labour. Women's virtual absence in organizations associated with non-traditional fields such as ESCOM and Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment is also attributed to absence of technically qualified female labour. It can thus be contended that even if legal provisions for the enforcement of gender policy measures were in place, without adequate supply of technically qualified female labour it would still be difficult to raise the levels of women's engagement in top management positions by the 30% critical mass. This makes it unfair to apportion a greater part of the blame on lack of legal provisions for the enforcement of special measures like affirmative action.

4.4.5 Misconceptions on Gender Issues

Evidence from MBC suggests that the failure of women's progress in appointive positions lay in men's misconceptions of gender issues. In the view of a key informant, men withheld their support to the cause of women because they wrongly concluded that it was aimed at promoting female domination. Men's misconceptions were attributed to the failings of the Women in Development Approach (WID).

Women in Development Approach, was a UN development approach adopted during the first UN Decade for Women (1975-1985) (Mookodi, 2004:33). As noted by Mookodi (ibid: 33), WID was aimed at accomplishing three things: Firstly, to make women more 'visible' within national statistics, particularly as they related to their labour force participation. Secondly, it was designed to reduce the productivity gap between men and women through education and training. Lastly, it sought to provide policy measures for greater participation of women in decision-making positions in

their respective governments. WID approach was, however, abandoned in 2002 because it tended to leave men out of the analysis while having an isolated view of women as socially, economically and politically homogenous group (ibid: 33).

WID's exclusive focus on women was evident in the emergence of organizations that prioritized women's economic concerns. The National Commission on Women in Development (NCWID) and Chitukuko Cha Amayi M'Malawi (CCM) are cases in point (United Nations, 2002:7). The shift from Women In Development (WID) Approach to Gender And Development (GAD) Approach in Malawi, was noted in the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (MPRSP) presented in April 2002 (ibid: 7). MPRSP called for a shift focus from WID to GAD in order to fully grasp the existing power relations between men and women and to ensure the empowerment and active participation of both gender groups in the development groups (ibid: 7).

The assertion that men's misconceptions vis-à-vis the shortcomings of the WID led to women's underrepresentation in top-level positions to some extent appears true when closer reflection is made on levels of women and men's engagement in the top management for the nine targeted organizations. A comparison of aggregate levels of women's participation in the top management of these organizations from 2005 and 2009 indicates that there were fewer women in the top management in the former year than in the latter. Since 2005 was closer to 2002 when WID was abandoned than 2009, one could contend that lower levels of women's engagement in the top management of the nine organizations, stemmed from a stronger influence of WID. On the other hand, increased levels of women's engagement in 2009 may be attributed to a declining WID influence due to the longer period from 2002 and a greater influence of the GAD

approach. While this argument seems plausible when one considers women's aggregate engagement in the top management of the nine organizations, it fails to hold true for some individual cases. In 2005, for example, MBC had one woman in the top management representing 17% of women's engagement in top management positions. By 2009, however, women were virtually absent in the top management. Misconceptions from WID cannot explain why women were represented in the MBC top management in 2005 which was close to 2002 and they were completely absent in 2009 which was further away from 2002 when WID was abandoned.

Further, the assertion that men's misconceptions on gender issues were responsible for the failure of women's advancement fails to provide an adequate explanation because it only singles out men as the culprits leaving out women who may also be responsible for their own underrepresentation in appointive positions. As noted in Mavin (2006: 76) some women in management positions termed as 'Queen Bees' are actively opposed to issues of gender inequalities as reflected in their tendency to deny the existence of systematic discrimination against women. As noted in Mavin (2006: 760) 'Queen Bees' do not accept that women who are capable of a management career are unable to progress due to discrimination.

4.4.6 High Female Labour Turnover

Evidence from MBC explained the failure of the 30% target for women in politically appointed positions in terms of high female labour turnover. Labour turnover refers to a measure of the proportion of the labour force that leaves within a given period (Bowey, 1974: 37). A female informant from MBC claimed that upon the acquisition of better qualifications, most women abandoned their posts for other jobs

leading to shortage of qualified female personnel available for appointment into top management positions. Human capital theory asserts that there is a link between training and labour mobility (Becker, 1964; Becker, 1992: 7). Becker (1964) indicates that the level of labour turnover is dependent upon the nature of training one undertakes. Becker (ibid), identifies two forms training which workers in the labour market undertake: firm specific and general training. He asserts that the level of labour turnover is higher for firm specific training than for general training. He (ibid) claims that firm specific training is useful only in firms providing it, whereas general training is useful also in other firms. This, in Becker's (1992:7) view, explains why workers with highly specific skills are less likely to quit their jobs. A research in Britain involving employees and employers in a selected number of firms tried to establish the impact of training on labour turnover (Green et al, 2000: 261-262, 267-268). The results indicated that general training, to some extent, leads to labour turnover although not as high as assumed by Gary Becker (ibid).

Becker's (1992:7) assumptions and the findings of the research study strengthen the claim that training to some extent contributed to female labour turnover in MBC. Closer examination of women's participation in MBC between 2005 and 2009, however, suggests that other factors besides high female labour turnover were also responsible for the failure of women's 30% target. In 2005, for example, there was one woman in the MBC top management representing 17% of women's participation. By 2009, however, this level had fallen to women's virtual absence. This development cannot be adequately explained by high female labour turnover.

In the view of radical feminist's women's virtual absence in top managements of MBC and other organizations involved in this study stems from patriarchy (Johnson, 2005: 5). In the view of radical feminism, men's exclusive dominance in top most positions of the nine targeted organizations as reflected in the statistical evidence for 2009, suggests that patriarchy characterized by male dominance was also responsible for women's failure to achieve the 30% target (ibid).

Further, since MBC is also associated with non-traditional fields like engineering, one could speculate that women's underrepresentation also stems from lack of technically qualified female personnel. This may also apply to other organizations involved in no traditional occupations in the Public Service in general.

4.4.7 Attitudes of Men and Women in the Employment Situation

Evidence from ESCOM; MBC; MRA; and Ministry of Education explained the failure of women's 30% target in appointive positions in terms of attitudes of men and women in the formal employment situation.

In one case, it was argued that women were unable to be considered for promotion into top level positions due to beliefs in the maintenance of social distance between men and women that worked to the benefit of junior male working personnel. Belief in social distance was blamed for blocking women's access to male bosses in the formal and informal settings. It was claimed that since most of the bosses were men it is only junior male personnel who had more access to them. Greater access to bosses in turn enabled junior male officers to obtain favours in form of promotions which made men to have an edge over women in terms of promotion into politically appointed positions.

Assertions made in the foregoing account have been validated by Morrison and Glinow (1990: 14) who noted that despite lower performance ratings than women, men received more promotions than women due to their increased dependence on informal networks (ibid: 14). Morrison and Glinow (ibid) further established that male executives' lack of comfort working with women as peers in US firms was a result of their relating to them as wives or mothers and not as business colleagues (ibid: 17). Views of Morrison and Glinow (ibid: 14) strengthen the claim that social distance between men and women may be responsible for women's underrepresentation in the formal employment sector. This means that social distance is to some extent responsible for women's underrepresentation in appointive positions in the Public Service. Social distance between men and women, however, fails to provide explanation on some developments involving women representation in top management in the selected organizations. A case in point is women's virtual absence in the top management between 2005 and 2009 in the Ministry of Natural Resources Energy and Environment. Women's virtual absence in this organization cannot be adequately explained by social distance between men and women since there are no women in the first place.

In another case, the failure of women's 30% target was attributed to women's reluctance to engage in challenging top management positions. It was claimed that women tended to avoid taking up challenging tasks hence their underrepresentation in politically appointed positions. Studies cited in Singh and Vinncombe (2006: 133-4) seem to disagree with the evidence when they established that women in directorate boards were better performers than their male counterparts. A study in Canada, for instance, noted that companies with multiple women Directors showed significantly

higher performance than those with all-male Boards (ibid: 133). In the UK, the Female FTSE studies revealed that top companies with women on board had higher overall scores on good corporate governance than those with all-male Boards (ibid: 134). Women's outstanding performance in top management positions suggests that women are also capable of participating in challenging top management positions.

4.4.8 Limitations in the Application of the Measures

Implementation of the measures for promoting women's attainment of the 30% critical reveals a number of limitations. These range from inconsistencies in the application of the measures to variable application of the measures in the targeted organizations

Inconsistencies in the application of the measures is evident in the implementation of the measures such as affirmative action; leadership/assertiveness/ managerial training; lobbying campaigns; and gender sensitization campaigns. The provision of training to promote the development of leadership skills in women, for instance, has not been consistently applied. In some cases women have been sent for training in courses that are not designed for promoting leadership skills. These include courses in secretarial and messenger duties. In other instances, however, women have been sent for courses that help to develop leadership and managerial skills. Inconsistencies in the application of the measures suggest a lack of coordination in the enforcement of the gender policy measures. Lack of coordination in the application of the strategies may be blamed on parties responsible for policy coordination, deployment, utilization, and evaluation. These activities of the policy-making process involve a number of

stakeholders. These include the Minister of the Public Service; the Secretary to the Cabinet; the National Gender Machinery; Government Ministries; and Parastatals.

The National Gender Machinery plays an overseeing role in the implementation of the gender policy in the Civil Service. Evidence from a key informant from the Ministry of Gender, however, blamed the failure by the National Gender Machinery to effectively play its overseeing role on inadequate budgetary allocations.

The Secretary to the Cabinet, who reports to the Minister of the Public Service, is responsible for the coordination and evaluation of policy performance in the Public Service. This is stipulated in part iii, section 17(a) of the 1994 Public Service Act which says:

Subject to this act and any general or specific directives of the Minister, the Secretary to the Cabinet, as head of the Public Service, shall be responsible for the overall management and administration of the Public Service and, without restriction on generality of the foregoing, he shall-

- (a) With the approval of the Minister, formulate, direct and co-ordinate the overall national policy in relation to the Public Service respecting-
- (b) Deployment, utilization and performance evaluation (Malawi Government Gazette Supplement, 1994).

Lack of consistency in application of the measures therefore implies failure on the part of the Secretary to perform his/her coordinating role as stipulated in the Public Service Act. Since the Secretary cannot discharge his/her responsibilities without the express approval of the Minister In-charge of the Public Service, the problem rests with the Minister to whom the Secretary is answerable. This makes the Minister also responsible for the failure for the 30% critical mass.

The Minister in-charge of the Public Service, who also doubles as State President, performs an overarching role in the policy-making process. This is implicit in the foregoing act which vests powers of approval on anything relating to policy

formulation, coordination, deployment, utilization, and evaluation in the Minister. The expression “approval of the Minister”, captured in the act, for instance, implies that the Secretary cannot carry out the responsibilities laid down in this act unless there is express approval from the Minister. This means that although the Secretary heads the Public Service, his/her powers are subject to the powers of the office of the Minister-In-Charge of the Public Service. The expression “coordinate the overall national policy in relation to the Public Service” implies that the Minister is directly responsible for the co-ordination of national policies which includes the National Gender Policy. This role involves the policy deployment, application and performance evaluation. Involvement of many actors in the policy making process, makes it unfair to pin down the failure of women’s 30% target on any single party or factor.

Non-application of the measures is another limitation worth considering. Evidence suggests that of the nine selected organizations, it is ESCOM and Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment which failed to implement any measure. These organizations had no woman in the top management during between 2005 and 2009. Women’s virtual absence in the top management could be attributed to the non-application of the measures. Non application of the measures, however, cannot provide adequate explanation for the failure of women’s 30% critical mass since other alternative explanations have been advanced to account for women’s dreary status. Evidence from key informants, for instance, attributes women’s virtual absence in the top management to political appointments and lack of technically qualified female personnel.

Another notable limitation is limited application of the measures. It is evident that some organizations applied only one measure of the gender policy. These include MBC; ESCOM; and Ministry of Health and ADMARC. Each of these organizations employed training of women in various programmes as a means of raising the level of women's engagement in the top management. With the exception of ADMARC, however, these organizations never experienced any gains in the level of women's participation in the top management if one considers statistical evidence for 2009. This development strengthens the view that limited application of the measures was, to some extent, responsible for the failure of women's 30% critical mass in these organizations. While this holds true for MBC, ESCOM, and Ministry of Health, however, the same is not true of ADMARC. Evidently, ADMARC, with only one measure applied, experienced significant gains in the level of women participation in the top management between 2005 and 2009 with women's engagement increasing from five percent in 2005 to 25% in 2009. Women's significant gains in the top management of ADMARC against the implementation of only measure, makes it simplistic to ascribe the failure of women's 30% target entirely on limited applications of the measures.

A comparative analysis of factors in the foregoing account leads to several observations on the question of whether any single factor largely explains the failure of women's 30% target in appointive positions in the Malawi Public Service. When one considers the number of organizations stating the problem, cultural socialization and political appointments appear to be predominant factors accounting for the failure of women's 30% target. Thus one could argue that since these factors were cited by a greater number of the selected organizations, they are overriding reasons explaining

women's failure to achieve the 30% target. A major limitation of making such a conclusion, however, is that it fails to take into account problems embedded in the implementation of the measures. Examination of the application of measures reveals several factors which may also have led to the failure of the critical mass. These include non-application of the measures and application of a few measures. It is evident that most of the organizations which applied one measure performed badly on levels of women's engagement in the top management. MBC, ESCOM and Ministry of Health, for example, each applied only one measure between 2005 and 2009 and experienced either stagnation or declining trends. This suggests that limited application of the measures did have some impact on dismal levels of women's engagement in the top management. This development makes it simplistic to explain the failure of the critical mass entirely on the basis of limited application of the measures because of evidence which show progress in the face of few measures applied. ADMARC, for example, recorded significant progress in the level of women's engagement at top level between 2005 and 2009 with only one measure applied. This development means that while application of few measures could be linked to the failure of women's 30% target in some organizations, it may not apply to all cases as evidence from ADMARC suggests. It can thus be contended that although cultural socialization and political appointments are predominant problems if one considers the fact that five of the nine organizations cited them, they fail to provide adequate explanation since they ignore the impact of limitations in the application of the measures.

Further, closer analysis of problems cited in this account suggests that there is no single factor which provides adequate explanation on reasons for the failure of women's

30% target. Cultural socialization, for instance, attributes the failure of women's 30% critical mass in appointive positions to lower levels of education for women. Closer analysis of the evidence, however, revealed that while this factor may indeed be responsible, it fails to provide adequate explanation on the failure of women's 30% target. Interrogation of the evidence within theoretical underpinnings suggests that women's dismal representation in top level positions was an outcome of more than one factor namely differences in the on-job-skills, women's rational choice and preferences, and patriarchy.

A similar observation is also noticeable when one considers lack of technically qualified female labour. Although lack of technically qualified female labour contributed to absence or inadequate female labour available for appointment into top management positions, it has an explanation deficit on women's gloomy plight in the top management. Examination of the evidence within the lens of labour market segmentation approach and radical feminism suggests that while formal education contributed to women's underrepresentation in the labour market, it is not the only factor relating to human capital which could be held responsible. Scholars of the market labour approach explain women's marginalized state in the labour market on the basis of differences in the on-the-job skill besides formal educational qualifications.

Political appointments were also blamed for the failure of the critical mass in appointive positions in the Public Service. The President, who effects the appointments, was seen as biased against women resulting in men's total dominance in the top most positions. Since Presidential appointments cannot be effected without recommendations from other parties like Boards of Directors and Principal Secretaries, it would be quite

unfair to attribute the failure of the critical mass to biased Presidential appointments. Further, existence of political will to appoint 30% women in appointed positions would be meaningless where technically qualified female labour is absent or nonexistent.

Lack of legal provisions for the enforcement of gender policy measures also fails to provide adequate explanation on women's unenviable plight in appointive positions. Absence of technically qualified female labour in organizations associated with non-traditional organizations, for instance, suggests that even if legal provisions for the enforcement of gender policy measures provisions were in place, it would still be difficult to appoint more women into top management positions.

Misconceptions on gender issues have their own fair share of limitations. Evidence from a key informant blamed misconceptions entirely on men suggesting that women are not involved. Available scholarship, however, indicates that some women termed as 'queen bees' fail to support the cause of fellow women once they are in the top management positions (Mavin, 2006: 760). This therefore makes it unfair to place the blame of the failure of the critical mass entirely on men.

High female labour turnover represents another case which fails to provide adequate explanation on the failure of women's 30% critical mass. While it is evident that labour turnover is responsible for women's underrepresentation in the top management, its impact may not be as high as evidence from a key informant suggests. This is because although human capital theory associates general training with high labour turnover, in reality the turnover is not as high basing on what studies in the UK established. Further, labour turnover cannot provide explanation on why all top most positions of the selected organizations proved to be a woman's frozen zone between

2005 and 2009. This development finds explanation in radical feminism which attributes male exclusive dominance in positions of power to patriarchy.

Finally, limitations in the application of the measures, also fail to provide adequate explanation on the failure of women's 30% critical mass. It is evident that non application and application of few measures led to women's underrepresentation in top management positions as shown by stagnation and declining trends in some Public Service organizations. While this is true, there are cases where application of few measures led to increased levels of women's engagement in the top management. The existence of such contradictions suggests that other factors were also responsible for women's failure to attain the critical mass.

From the forgoing account, it is evident that there is no single factor which offers an overriding explanation on the failure of women's 30% target in appointive positions of the selected organizations and by extension the Malawi Public Service

4.5.0 Prospects on the Achievement of the 30% Critical Mass in Politically

Appointed Positions in the Malawi Public Service

This section investigates the future prospects of the attainment of the 30% critical mass in appointive positions in the selected Government Ministries and Parastatals and the Malawi Public Service in general.

4.5.1 Prospects in the Individual Government Ministries

A closer reflection on the evidence indicates that the possibility of achieving the 30% critical mass varies when one considers individual cases. In some cases there is hope that the 30% critical mass will be achieved. In others the possibility of the attainment of 30% women's level of participation is remote.

Ministries of Agriculture and Food Security and Local Government and Rural Development, for instance, appear to be experiencing remarkable progress when one compares women's level of participation in 2005 and 2009 respectively. Women's participation for the Ministry Agriculture and Food Security, for instance, increased by 15% from 10% in 2005 to 25 % in 2009. Analysis of evidence from key informants suggests that increased levels of women's participation in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security lay in the application of more measures for the promotion of the 30% critical mass for women in politically appointed positions.

Ministry of Local Government and Food Security also registered significant progress in women's level of engagement in the top management with women's participation increasing by 19% from eight percent in 2005 to 25% in 2009. While improvements in women's level of participation in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security could be explained by application of more measures for promoting the 30% critical mass, the same cannot be said of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development since it implemented a few measures. Success registered with limited measures in this ministry, however, suggests that limited application of the measures laced with commitment could also yield positive results. For these ministries, therefore, it seems likely that the 30% target will be achieved.

While prospects of the attainment of the 30% critical mass seem to be high for Ministries of Agriculture and Food Security and Local Government and Rural Development, the same is not true of organizations that experienced either declining trends or stagnation. In this category are Ministries of Education; Health; and Natural Resources, Energy and Environment. As regards Ministry of Education, women's

participation fell by 10% from 36% in 2005 to 26 % in 2009. A similar trend is noticeable in the Ministry of Health where women's participation decreased by six percent from 27% 2005 to 19% in 2009. Declining levels of women's participation in the two ministries could be attributed to limited application of the gender policy measures. Declining levels of women's participation in these organizations rules out prospects in the attainment of women's 30% target in appointive positions unless measures are undertaken to reverse the trend.

In case of the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment, the possibility of reaching the 30% does not arise in the first place because since 2005, no woman has made it into top level positions which are completely occupied by men. Evidence from a male informant explains lack of progress in this ministry in terms of lack of women in possession of relevant technical qualifications and political appointments.

Thus, going by individual government cases, it seems likely that some Public Service organizations will achieve the 30% target, for others this seems quite unlikely.

4.5.2 Prospects in Government Ministries: Aggregate View

The picture in the foregoing account changes when aggregate proportions of women in appointive positions are taken into account. Aggregate percentages of women's participation in all the five Government Ministries, for instance, indicate that the level of female representation increased by four percent from 17% in 2005 to 21% in 2009. Basing on the level of such progress, it can be argued that there is a possibility that the 30% target will be achieved by the concerned Government Ministries.

4.5.3 Prospects in the Individual Parastatals

The possibility of achieving 30% women's participation in top management positions also varies when individual cases amongst the Parastatals are considered.

In the case of ADMARC, women's participation increased by 20% from five percent in 2005 to 25% in 2009. ADMARC represents an interesting case since it managed to register tremendous progress in women's level of participation with only one gender policy measure applied. Like Ministry of Local Government which also experienced significant improvements in women's level of engagement with only a few measures applied, progress in ADMARC suggests that with commitment, application of a few measures could lead to positive results. Thus, for ADMARC, prospects are high that the 30% target will be attained within the foreseeable future.

In case of ESCOM; MRA; and MBC, the prospect of reaching the 30% target is very remote. This is evident in the lack of progress on women's participation since 2005. None of the three organizations experienced any gains in the level of women's engagement in top management positions between 2005 and 2009. Lack of progress for the three organizations could be attributed to a number of factors which include limited application of the gender policy measures. Analysis of evidence from informants suggests that each of the three organizations only implemented one measures of the gender policy.

4.5.4 Prospects in the Parastatals: Aggregate View

The picture portrayed by individual cases in the foregoing account changes, when one takes a holistic view of the four Parastatals. Basing on aggregated data, women's participation in the four parastatals progressed by nine percent from five percent in

2005 to 14% in 2009. Women's progress suggests that it is possible for the parastatals to achieve the 30% target for women's engagement in top management positions.

4.5.5 Prospects in the Malawi Public Service

When figures for all the nine organizations are aggregated, women's level of participation progresses. Women's participation in 2005 stood at 24 out of a total of 143 personnel in the top management. In 2009, there were 40 women in the top management out of a total of 175 top management personnel in all the nine organizations.

By 2009, therefore, women's participation in top management positions of the nine organizations had increased by nine percent in 2009 from a proportion of five percent in 2005 to 14% from in 2005. Basing on this trend, therefore, it can be argued that there is a possibility that the 30% critical mass could be achieved in the future in the nine organizations and by extension in the Malawi Public Service. Despite such optimism, constancy and declining trends in women's levels of engagement in some organizations, especially those associated with non-traditional fields, suggests that the attainment of the 30% critical mass in appointed positions may take longer.

Briefly, when trends in women's participation in the nine organizations are examined from a broader perspective, participation of women increases. This is true for the aggregate performance of the nine Public Service organizations involved in this study. On the basis of such progress it can be contended that the 30% target may be attained by the organizations involved and by extension the Malawi Public Service.

4.6 Conclusion

From the foregoing account several conclusions could be drawn: Firstly, it is evident that several factors were responsible for the failure of women's 30% target in

politically appointed positions of the nine Public Service organizations. These include cultural socialization; political appointments; lack of legal provisions to enforce the gender policy; misconceptions on gender issues; high female labour turnover; attitude of men and women in the employment situation; and limitations in the implementation of the measures. Secondly, a critical analysis of the problems highlighted in the foregoing account suggests that no single factor largely explains the failure of the attainment of women's 30% target in appointive positions in the Malawi Public Service. This conclusion rejects the assumption that lack of political commitment towards the enforcement of the gender policy is a major factor responsible for the non-attainment of the 30% target in appointive positions in the Malawi Public Service. Thirdly and lastly, basing on women's progress in the top management for the nine organizations, the attainment of the 30% critical mass in the Malawi Public Service seems likely although this may take longer as suggested by constancy and declining trends. This conclusion nullifies the assumption suggesting that the achievement of the 30% critical mass in the Public Service strategic management is unlikely.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusions and Implications

5.0 Introduction

The foregoing chapter analysed and discussed findings from a selected number of Public Service organizations. This chapter provides summary and major conclusions drawn from the analysis and winds up the study with a brief account on the implications of the study.

5.1 Summary and Conclusions

The study analyzed trends and problems involving the failure of women's attainment of 30% participation in appointive positions in the Malawi Public Service. Analysis of evidence from the nine organizations, led to several conclusions on prospects of achieving the 30% target for women. At individual Ministry or Parastatal level the possibility of achieving the target varied from case to case. Organizations experiencing improvements such as ADMARC and Ministries of Agriculture and Food Security; and Local Government and Rural Development were seen as likely to achieve the 30% target. For organizations that were stagnating, such as the ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment, ESCOM, and MBC, the achievement of the 30% target was seen as quite unlikely to happen.

At a Public Service level there were indications that the 30% critical mass would be attained by the Malawi Public Service. A comparison of aggregate percentage

proportions of women in 2005 and 2009 showed women gaining steadily in the level of their participation in the top management. Aggregate proportional gains in the level of women's participation implied that the attainment of the 30% critical mass by the nine organizations in particular and the public service in general was possible. This conclusion rejects the assumption that women's 30% target in appointed positions in the Malawi Public Service will not be attained.

Further, the study identified a number of reasons to explain the failure of the 30% target. These include cultural socialization; political appointments; lack of technically qualified female personnel; attitudes of men and women in the formal employment situation; misconceptions on gender issues; female labour turnover; and limitations in the implementation of the measures. Closer examination of each of these factors indicates that no single factor could largely explain the failure of the 30% critical mass in appointed positions in the Malawi Public Service. Evidence, therefore, rejects the assumption that lack of commitment by political leadership of the executive to enforce the application of the measures of the gender policy was the main cause of the failure of the attainment of 30% women's participation in appointive positions in the Malawi Public Service.

5.2.Implications

This study established problems and prospects involving women's numerical engagement in appointive positions in the Malawi Public Service. The study, however, failed to identify any single factor that provides an overriding explanation on the failure of women's 30% target in appointive positions in the Malawi Public Service. To help achieve this, the study proposes further exploration of this issue. This should select a

greater number of organizations than has been the case in this study. Further, the study should emphasize on the on the use of the quantitative approach when analysing empirical evidence.

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Appendix A

Self Administered Questionnaire (Human Resources Personnel)

1. Generally there are calls for increased participation for Women in politically appointed positions. Are there any measures which your ministry/institution is employing to achieve this?
2. If yes is the answer to question 1 above, what are these measures?
3. If yes is the answer to question 1 above, what are these measures?
4. If no is the answer to question 1 above, why are there no measures employed?
5. One of the strategic objectives of the National Gender Policy was to increase the level of women participating in decision making by a 30% critical mass. In your view, has this objective been achieved in your organization?
6. If yes is the answer to question 5 above how has this been achieved?
7. If no is the answer to question to question 5 above why has this not been achieved?
8. Are there any written guidelines you follow when recruiting personnel?
9. If yes is the answer to question 8 above, is there any provision in your guidelines for preferential treatment when promoting or appointing women into management positions?
10. If yes is the answer to question 8 above, what form of special treatment is used when promoting or appointing women into management positions

11. If no is the answer to question 8 above, why is there no provision for preferential treatment for women?
12. How many men and women operated at P2/S2; P3/S3; P4/S4 Grades and their equivalents in 2005 and 2009 respectively?

Appendix B

Questionnaire for In-depth Interviews in Government Ministries and Parastatals

1. The 2000 Malawi National Gender Policy called for increased women's participation in decision-making at all levels by 30%. In your view, has this been attained at top level (P4/S4 to P2/S2) in your institution
2. If yes is the answer, what explains your organization's success?
3. If no is the answer, what explains the failure?
4. Are there any mechanisms that your organization has put in place to ensure that more women are appointed into top management positions?
5. Where yes is the answer, what are these measures?
6. What, in your view, are the strengths and weaknesses of using each of the measures given in promoting more women to decision-making positions?
7. Where no is the answer to question 4 above, why has the institution not put in place any mechanisms?
8. What criteria are used in your institution to appoint people to top level positions?
9. In your view, is the method of appointment suitable for increasing the number of women in top management positions by 30%?

10. If yes is the answer, what makes you think that the method used in your institution for promoting the 30% target?
11. If no is the answer, why in your view, makes the method unsuitable? What in your view are the obstacles to women's participation in top management positions in your institution?
12. How could these obstacles be overcome?
13. What has your institution done so far to check the obstacles?
14. Are there any opportunities in your institution for training in leadership and management?
15. Where are such trainings conducted?
16. If no is the answer, why are there no training opportunities in leadership and management?
17. Are workshops conducted to sensitize the working personnel in management on issues of gender in your institution?
18. The 2000 Malawi National Gender Policy called for increased women's participation in decision-making at all levels by 30%. In your view, has this been attained at top level (P4/S4 to P2/S2) in your institution?
19. If yes is the answer, what explains your organization's success?
20. If no is the answer, what explains the failure?

21. Are there any mechanisms that your organization has put in place to ensure that more women are appointed into top management positions?
22. Where yes is the answer, what are these measures?
23. What, in your view, are the strengths and weaknesses of using each of the measures given in promoting more women to decision-making positions?
24. Where no is the answer to question 4 above, why has the institution not put in place any mechanisms?
25. What criteria are used in your institution to appoint people to top level positions?
26. In your view, is the method of appointment suitable for increasing the number of women in top management positions by 30%?
27. If yes is the answer, what makes you think that the method used in your institution for promoting the 30% target?
28. If no is the answer, why in your view, makes the method unsuitable? What in your view are the obstacles to women's participation in top management positions in your institution?
29. How could these obstacles be overcome?
30. What has your institution done so far to check the obstacles?

31. Are there any opportunities in your institution for training in leadership and management?
32. Where are such trainings conducted?
33. If no is the answer, why are there no training opportunities in leadership and management?
34. Are workshops conducted to sensitize the working personnel in management on issues of gender in your institution?
35. If yes is the answer, on average how many times in a year are these workshops conducted?
36. Where no is the answer, why are such workshops not conducted?
37. In your view what could be the best way of ensuring that more women are appointed into top management positions of public service organizations?

Appendix C

Questionnaire for In-depth Interviews (National Gender Machinery)

1. What measures have the National Gender Machinery (Ministry of Women & Child Development) so far implemented to make sure that more women are appointed into decision-making positions in the top management of Government Ministries?
2. What in your view are the strengths and weaknesses of each of the measures employed?
3. Please, explain the reason for the answer to question 3 above.
4. Does the National Gender Machinery have the necessary capacity to enforce the measures of the gender policy?
5. If yes is the response, how does the National Gender Machinery enforce the compliance by other organizations?
6. What in your view are the obstacles that hinder women's accession into top management positions of public sector institutions?
7. How can the obstacles given in your answer to question 16 above be overcome?

8. What, in your view, could be the best strategy to employ to ensure that more women are appointed into decision-making positions of public sector institutions?
9. In most documents it is generally reported that the 30% critical mass of women representation in decision-making positions has not been achieved. What in your view are the reasons for the failure of women's 30% target?

Appendix D

Questionnaire for In-depth Interviews (DHRMD; Civil Service Commission; & OPC)

1. Who makes appointments into the top management positions (P2 to P4) of Government Ministries and Parastatals?
2. What is the minimum Educational Qualification for one's appointment into the top management?
3. What procedure is followed when making appointments into the top management level of decision-making in Government Ministries and Parastatals?
4. Is preferential treatment taken into account when appointing people into top management positions?
5. Do you provide training opportunities to women in management or leadership programmes?
6. Where no is the answer, where are these programmes offered?
7. If yes is the answer, why are such training opportunities not provided?
8. Since the advent of multiparty democracy, has your institution conducted any review of the terms and conditions of service to ensure that they are gender responsive?
9. If no, why has this not been the case?
10. If yes, when was this last carried out?