

https://dspace.org/

THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS IN MALAWI

Machado, Francis

2012-11-14
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/12187

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS IN MALAWI

Francis Machado

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Management (in the field of Public and Development Management)

28 June 2010

ABSTRACT

This is a report on the participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi as told by themselves and stakeholders that are involved in efforts to bring equal representation to parliamentary politics and decision making structures.

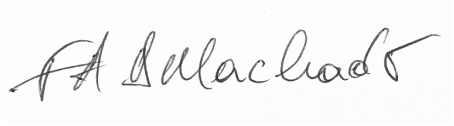
The study focuses on the parliament of Malawi, in particular, on the underlying reasons that contribute to the low participation of women in politics. Malawi is still unable to reach the minimum 30% representation for women in parliament as propagated by SADC. The underlying assumption is that women, who are in the majority in Malawi, cannot be left out in politics which is important in development and the shaping of priorities for government.

The research uses document analysis and in-depth interviews with current and previous women members of parliament and stakeholders that are involved in campaigns that aim at bringing about equal representation in parliamentary politics .In the research, qualitative methodology is largely used but there are also instances where quantitative tools are used in the presentation and analysis of the data.

The major finding is that access to parliament for women is gradually improving but almost always it is linked to a political party which wins an election. This rise is therefore fragile and it cannot be sustained if women are not empowered and do not have leadership positions in political parties and in parliament. Importantly, political gatekeepers need to be convinced of the need for equal representation for men and women in politics. Furthermore, women in parliament alone cannot adequately bring about changes without the continuous collaboration with women movements.

DECLARATION

I declare that this report is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Management in the field of Public and Development Management in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. It has not been submitted before for any examination in any other University.



_____

Francis Machado

28 June 2010

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research report to my family who will be proud of me and to my wife Pamela and my two children Chikhulupiliro and Madalitso, for their patience and support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to my supervisor, Dr Johnny Matshabaphala for his guidance and patience during the research process.

I am indebted to my government through the parliament of Malawi for financing my studies. My gratitude also goes to all respondents in this research for their time and insights. I am grateful to all institutions that provided me with data for my research.

Special thanks go to all my friends for their unwavering support and encouragement during the entire period of this research and for proof reading my work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ii

DECLARATION iii

DEDICATION iv

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS v

TABLE OF CONTENTS vi

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS xi

CHAPTER ONE 1

INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY 3

1.2 Background to the problem 7

1.3 Problem statement 9

1.4 Purpose statement 10

1.5 Research questions 10

1.6 Structure of the research 10

1.7 Conclusion 12

CHAPTER TWO 14

LITERATURE REVIEW 14

2.1 Introduction 14

2.2 Participation and development 15

2.3 Obstacles to participation of women in politics 21

2.4 Examples of effective political participation 23

2.5 Political participation 25

2.6 How women can improve political participation 26

2.6.1 Using quotas to increase women numbers in parliament 27
2.7 Conclusion 28
CHAPTER THREE 29
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 29
3.1 Introduction 29
3.2 General approach to the research 30
3.3 Research design 31
3.4 Data collection 33
3.4.1 Primary data 33
3.4.2 Secondary data 36
3.5 Sampling 36
3.6 Data analysis 37
3.7 Validity and reliability 38
3.8 Significance of the research 39
3.9 Limitations of the study 40
3.10 Conclusion 40
CHAPTER FOUR 41
DATA PRESENTATION 41
4.1 Introduction 41
4.2 Women in parliamentary politics 41
4.2.1 General trends for participation of women in parliamentary politics 41
4.2.2 Women in parliament from selected countries 44
4.3 Presence of women in the parliament of Malawi 45
4.4 The 50:50 campaign in Malawi 49

4.4.1 Challenges of the 50:50 campaign.....49
4.4.2 Successes of the 50:50 campaign 50
4.4.3 Involvement of civil society organisations in the 2009 presidential and parliamentary elections 50
4.4.4 Experiences of women candidates while canvassing for political support 52
4.5 Underlying reasons for low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi 53
4.6 Challenges and issues which discourage women in politics 54
4.7 Issues affecting participation and what women want in politics.....55
4.8 Strategies for improving the low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi.....57
4.9 Conclusion.....58
CHAPTER FIVE.....60
ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH 60
5.1 Introduction.....60
5.2 Challenges that limit women to join parliamentary politics 61
5.3 Challenges that women face when in parliamentary politics 65
5.4 Proposed strategies to improve parliamentary participation for women through entry to parliament and reduction of challenges they face when in politics 67
5.5 Conclusion.....68
CHAPTER SIX.....70
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....70

6.1 Introduction....70
6.2 Conclusion....72
6.2.1 The problem of the electoral system....72
6.2.2 The electoral code of conduct....72
6.2.3 The role of government in the 50:50 campaign....73
6.2.4 Empowerment of women parliamentarians....73
6.3 Recommendations....73
6.3.1 The parliament of Malawi....74
6.3.2 Areas for more research....74
6.3.3 Concerns for a few countries in SADC and donors....75
REFERENCES....76

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1: World classification of women in parliaments Lower or single House.....42

Table 2: SADC classification of women in parliaments Lower or single House.....43

Table 3: Participation of women in the 1994 parliamentary elections of Malawi.....46

Table 4: Participation of women in the 1999 parliamentary elections of Malawi.....46

Table 5: Participation of women in the 2004 parliamentary elections of Malawi.....47

Table 6: Participation of women in the 2009 parliamentary elections of Malawi.....48

Figure 1: Map of Malawi.....6

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFORD	Alliance for Democracy
ANC	African National Congress
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHRR	Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party
FRELIMO	Front for the Liberation of Mozambique
FPTP	First-past-the-post electoral system, used in constituency election
GCN	Gender Coordination Network
GSN	Gender Support Network
IDEA	Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
JSC	Judicial Service Commission
MCP	Malawi Congress Party
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
PAC	Public Appointments Committee
PACENET	Pan African Civic Educators Network
PR	Proportional Representation, under which political parties submit lists of candidates to contest elections
RWPC	Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADC PF	Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum
UDF	United Democratic Front
UN	United Nations

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The challenge to increase the participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi is of deep-seated importance. This is understandably so given that the majority of the population consists of women. Malawi's population and housing census of 2008 pegged the population at 13.1 million people with women accounting for 6.7 million people and males constituting 6.4 million people. Increased numbers of women in parliamentary politics is important for the development of any country. However, in Malawi and in most countries in the world, the numbers of women do not correlate with their representation in parliament.

It has been noted by De Beer and Swanepoel (1996), Jahan (1996), Korten (1984) that participation and the need to control development is important in the discussions of development.

Women are important in development and their participation in politics is crucial as Snyder and Tadesse (1995, p.6) have noted that "because women comprise more than half of the world's human resources and are central to the economic as well as to the social wellbeing of societies, development goals cannot be reached without their participation."

In this regard, Jahan (1996, p. 829) has argued that "women need to participate in decision making process structures which will need to be made democratic and participatory. Only through a voice in decision making can women aspire to shape the objectives, priorities and strategies of development and start to transform the development agenda."

The seizure of the political space by women therefore translates to development and against this backdrop this report is examining why the participation of women

in politics continues to be low in Malawi. The research report is examining factors that are limiting women to participate in parliamentary politics in Malawi. The examination is based on experiences of women parliamentarians as told by themselves and touches on lessons that they have acquired in the participation of leadership positions.

This report notes and believes that the participation of women in decision making processes is a human right and vital to emancipation of women from the general problems that affect them especially in poor countries. Participation of women in decision making positions is important, and taking cognizance of this, in the 1997 Southern African Development Community (SADC) Declaration on Gender and Women, Heads of State and Government in Blantyre, Malawi, committed themselves to "Ensuring the equal representation of women and men in the decision making of member states and SADC structures at all levels, and the achievement of at least a thirty percent target of women in political and decision making structures by year 2005" (SADC, 2000, p.5).

In the aftermath of the United Nations (UN) Decade for Women, 1976-1985, the United Nations World Conference of Women in Beijing in 1995 hailed trends moving towards supporting women in the participation of politics, increased networking of women and their participation in decision making positions (UN Report, 1995).

In Malawi many stakeholders including the government, political parties, lobby groups, donors, the faith groups and women themselves have campaigned for increased inclusion of women in parliamentary politics during presidential and parliamentary elections which are held after every five years in May of each election year. This has been the trend since the ushering in of multiparty politics in 1994.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1.1 The political history of Malawi

Malawi was put on the world map prominently following the proliferation of slave trade around the 19th century. Following the arrival of David Livingstone, a Scottish missionary around 1858, the present day Malawi was declared a British Central African protectorate in 1893 and was later called Nyasaland.

The country attained independence on 6 July 1964 and had a one party dictatorship system of government under Hastings Kamuzu Banda for 30 years. Political dissent was ruthlessly crushed and political opponents were either hanged or jailed in notorious prisons and the constitution did not have a bill of human rights. Initially people could periodically contest for parliamentary seats but later the constitution was amended to allow the president to appoint as many members of parliament as he wished. Following pressure by the international donor community, Malawi accepted multiparty politics in 1994.

1.1.2 Parliamentary elections in Malawi

Presidential and parliamentary elections are held concurrently every five years and the electoral system uses “First Past The Post” (FPTP) to determine a winner just like most countries in the SADC region.

The elections are overseen by an independent electoral body. Section 75 (1) of the constitution of Malawi provides that the chairperson of the electoral commission should be a court Judge who is nominated in that capacity by the Judicial Service Commission (JSC). It also furthermore provided that members of the commission may be removed from office by the president on the recommendation of the parliamentary Public Appointments Committee (PAC) (Malawi Government Republican Constitution, 1994).

Section 76 (2) of the constitution of Malawi provides duties of the commissioners which include determination of constituency boundaries based on population

densities and ensuring that there are approximately equal numbers of eligible voters registered to vote. Taking into account population densities, ease of communication, geographical features and existing administrative structures, parliament is mandated to confirm any new constituency boundaries (Malawi Government Republican Constitution, 1994).

Since 1994, there has been a steady increase in the number of women that make it to parliament. In the 1994 cohort of parliamentarians, there were 10 women members of parliament out of 177 seats, in the 1999 cohort, there were 17 women members of parliament out of 193 seats, in 2004 there were 24 women members out of 193 seats and in 2009, there were 42 women members of parliament out of 193 seats (Malawi Electoral Commission, 2009). Currently therefore 21.7% of the parliamentarians are women and this is higher than 14% of the previous parliament. However the numbers are still lower than the targeted 30% mark of representation as propagated by SADC. It is also unclear if the trend will be sustained.

1.1.3 An overview of Malawi

This section provides an overview of Malawi which was under study and provides a general picture of the country in terms of history, population distributions and socio-economic activities. This section will therefore give a broad picture of Malawi as a country.

Malawi attained independence from Britain in 1964 and moved its administrative capital from Zomba to Lilongwe in 1965 which is centrally located.

Malawi administratively has three regions, called the Northern region, the Central region and the Southern region. The regions are further subdivided into twenty eight districts.

According to the 2008 Population and Housing Census of Malawi, 15.3 % of the population lives in urban areas while 84.7 % of the population lives in rural areas.

In terms of population distribution per region, the Northern region is least populated with 13.1% of the population, the Central region has 42.1% of the population and the Southern region has 44.8% of the population. In terms of religion, 10.8 million people are Christians representing 83% of the population, 1.7 million people representing 13% of the people are Muslims, and 2% belong to other religions while 2% do not belong to any religion. The population is youthful with 7% being infants aged less than 1, 22% is aged below five and 46 % is aged 18 and older while 4% is aged 65 and older (Malawi Housing and Population Census, 2008).

Population density stands at 184 persons per square kilometre for the Southern region, 155 for the Centre and 63 people per square kilometre for the Northern region. Foreign population in 2008 was less than 1% which is equivalent to 51,554 people. Out of these, the highest were Mozambicans who accounted for 37% of the people. Furthermore, the country has 64% of its people being literate (Malawi Housing and Population Census, 2008).

Agriculture is the hub of economic activity and the majority of the people are subsistence farmers who rely on rain-fed agriculture to sustain their economic activities. Tobacco is a major foreign exchange earner though currently there are moves to improve the mining sector.

Figure 1: Map of Malawi



Source: www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/malawi

1.2 Background to the problem

Women started to meaningfully participate in politics during the 1994 presidential and parliamentary elections. This was when multi-party democracy was introduced after three decades of a single party dictatorship.

Since 1995, following the Beijing conference on women, world trends are moving towards increased participation of women in political and decision making positions.

The electoral system in Malawi is First Past The Post (FPTP). This makes it open to all players in the political arena to compete as individuals. Later in the study, this is one of the factors which based on literature is emerging as being contributory to the disadvantaging of women in the country to improve their participation. This is true because women generally have many problems that include poverty and perceptions that “women are incapable” of holding leadership positions (SADC, 2000).

Women in Malawi constitute about 52% of the population, yet their numbers are not reflected in their participation of parliamentary politics. The numbers of the women in the country point that they are important in the development of Malawi.

It has been argued that “politics have a profound influence on development and vice versa. If people become owners of development, it means that they have political power over development-they make political decisions about development action and funding (De Beer and Swanepoel, 1998, p. 78). Therefore, scholars have placed a high premium on the role of politics as being contributory to development.

Studies have noted, as is reflected in SADC (2000) that “the real tragedy of women being out of power might not just be an issue of equitable participation in leadership although it is crucial. The real tragedy lies in the consequence to women and to society of women being out of power and leadership (as it)

translates into them being subject to violence, rape, abuse, and exploitation with impunity."

In recent times, notably by 2008, some governments in SADC are already advocating an equal representation in decision- making positions and another protocol in this regard has already been signed by some countries. An example of a country which is achieving this representation is the Republic of South Africa.

For a number of years, there have been calls for equal representation of women in politics and leadership positions. Article 36, of the Beijing Declaration, among other things calls for "equal participation of women and men in all national, regional and international bodies and policy making processes" (UN, 1995).

Questions which arise, for Malawi are as to whether an increased number of women in parliament can lead to an increased participation of women in politics resulting in meaningful outcomes in social and economic issues.

Furthermore should the transformation of women that results in the improvement of their lives in Malawi be premised on the increased numbers of women in parliament alone? In the fight to have more women members of parliament, Malawi may lose focus on what this increased number of women parliamentarians will achieve in as far as their participation entails.

Apart from the SADC Protocol on Gender to have at least an equal representation between men and women in decision making positions, the Ministry of Gender, Child Development and Community Development in Malawi, prior to the 2009 May general elections, launched a donor funded campaign to encourage more female candidates to participate in the elections with the goal of achieving at least half the results, a plan which was called the 50: 50 campaign.

Malawi also has a grouping of women members of parliament called the Women's Caucus which tries to address and discuss issues which affect women in general.

1.3 Problem statement

In spite of efforts by government, donors and lobby groups to increase the participation of women in politics in Malawi, the number of women that are elected to parliament is still low; for example in the 2009 elections only 21.7% of the elected parliamentarians were women while in 2004, 14% of elected parliamentarians were women. Although there is a substantial increase in the numbers, the participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi is still low. This fails to meet the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development adopted and signed by SADC Heads of State and Government on 18th August, 2008 in Johannesburg South Africa, calling for equal representation for men and women in decision making positions. This also falls short of the initial Protocol of 1997 which called for 30% representation of women in decision making positions in SADC by 2005. Currently in Malawi efforts are geared towards assisting women to overcome obstacles that hinder their election to parliamentary politics with the aim of improving their participation in politics (SADC, 2000; UN Report, 1995).

But efforts to stop the trend of having fewer women parliamentarians than the expected SADC minimum of 30% representation have not yielded the desired results. Little is known as to why more women don't make it to parliament despite efforts by government and lobby groups to meet the minimum 30% representation. The low participation of women in parliamentary politics is a matter of concern to the country and stakeholders. The participation of women in parliamentary politics is very important because women play a crucial role in development which is intertwined with politics. Therefore this report is examining reasons for this low participation in politics because women are very important in development in the modern era.

1.4 Purpose statement

The purpose of this research was to investigate the reasons for low participation of women in parliament politics of Malawi. The research explored ways on how participation of women in parliamentary politics could be improved and it offered its recommendations. Unless it is understood how the participation of women continues to be low in Malawi, efforts to assist those that want to make it to parliament would not achieve the desired results.

1.5 Research questions

The research explored reasons that limit the participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi and it addressed the following questions.

a) What are the underlying reasons for low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi?
b) How do these reasons affect participation of women in parliamentary politics?
c) How can the low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi be improved?

1.6 Structure of the research

The research report comprises of six chapters:

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter provides the background to the study, the research problem, purpose of the research, as well as the research questions. The main issue discussed is that women are generally in majority in Malawi and in most countries. The chapter is arguing that women are very important in development and that to determine development it is important to put those that are affected by

it in decision making positions. The chapter ends with a chapter outline of the whole report.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter outlines the literature noting theories of patriarchy, participation and development. Other conflicting arguments are noted for example that increased numbers of women does not necessarily result in improved participation of women in politics and that women do not have the same agenda in politics. The chapter is discussing trends in the debate of participation of women in politics and looks at obstacles in the participation of women in parliamentary politics. The chapter points that self reliance in development initiatives as opposed to outsiders finding solutions to problems for example the low participation of women in politics, could be a way forward in solving the problem of low participation of women. The section also explores how women themselves can provide solutions to their problems.

Chapter III: Research Methodology

This section discusses the research methodology as well its approach and design. It discusses the approach used, techniques used and the rationale for the choice in light of the research questions. Limitations of the research as well as significance of the study are also discussed. The data collection strategies are presented and justified in this section. Profiles of people being interviewed in the research are also presented.

Chapter IV: Data Presentation

This section is reflecting on the research questions and identifying possible solutions. The section is dwelling on the participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi. The section is presenting data which is derived from in-depth interviews and document analysis. Data collected on the research is used to

verify the participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi. The section also serves to remind the reader where the research is coming from.

Chapter V: Data Analysis

This chapter brings out the analysis of the data. This section provides an interpretation of the raw data that was collected in the research. Quotes and findings are interpreted with support from the available data. The data which was collected largely due to semi-structured questions is interpreted in this section and it is given a meaning. Data collected from documents is also analysed.

Chapter VI: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter outlines areas that need further research, and makes recommendations on the gaps that have been identified with regard to low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi. The conclusion comes from the findings of the research as well as the different opinions that have been expressed in theoretical debates as well practical experiences of the women members of parliament who were interviewed.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the research topic as well as the background information to the study. It touched on the political history of Malawi and gave an overview of the country in terms of its population characteristics.

The chapter also gave the problem statement of the research report, the purpose statement and outlined the research questions. The chapter ended by outlining the structure of the research by presenting a chronological arrangement of the chapters of the report. The chapter points out that the debate regarding the increased participation of women in politics is affecting many countries and various groupings to which these countries belong. The chapter has pointed out that there seems to be an increase in the numbers of women making it to

parliament in Malawi but that the figures still fall far below the agreed benchmarks at regional and international groupings to which Malawi is affiliated to.

Noting therefore that women are important in development, the continued low participation of women in parliamentary politics is a big setback to Malawi's participatory and inclusive development agenda.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

There is wide literature on women, their participation in parliamentary politics and development. The literature review section will dwell on existing knowledge as discussed by various academics on the issue of low participation of women in politics and these debates will be related to the research questions which this study is addressing.

Several issues pertaining to participation, development, the obstacles that women face in politics, political participation theories, trends in political participation and examples on how political participation could be improved will be discussed. It has been argued for example by Neuman (2006) that literature review accords an opportunity to demonstrate a familiarity with a body of knowledge and helps to establish credibility.

The literature will offer insights to the complex relationship between increased numbers of women members of parliament and participation.

A literature offers an opportunity to learn from others and to stimulate new ideas. In this regard, a researcher is able to benefit from what others have found in the area of the research (Neuman, 2006, p. 111).

Guided by the research questions, the literature review will address three areas namely; (a) political obstacles to women (b) effective participation (c) strategies which can be employed to improve the participation of women in parliamentary politics.

2.2 Participation and development

Discussions on development have been noted to be peppered with many terms and its understanding to evolve over time. A scholar on participatory development and self reliance notes some of the following expressions:

> 'Modernisation', 'community development', 'dependency theory', 'structural adjustment', 'ecodevelopment', 'appropriate technology', 'self reliance', 'participation', 'women in development', (now called 'gender awareness'), and 'vulnerable groups' (Burkey,1993, p.27).

A high premium has therefore been placed on the need to go beyond economic advancements, in order to understand what development entails as further noted by Burkey:

> "In order to determine whether a society is developing, one must go beyond criteria based on indices of per capita income, (which, expressed in statistical form, are misleading) as well as those which concentrate on the study of gross income. The basic, elementary criterion is whether or not the society is 'being for itself', i.e. its political, economic and cultural decision-making power is located within" (Burkey, 1993, p. 30).

Others like De Beer and Swanepoel (2000) in their studies on development have noted that "the development process should be an empowering and capacity building process for everyone involved." They have further noted that "the important point is that the process of participation should be managed in an open –ended way to ensure that there is continued space for new inputs in the process. People have shown repeatedly that they have the capacity to map and to plan their own areas. They should have the choice to determine their own destiny."

The scholars have further noted that poverty is all- encompassing and therefore all attempts to address it must be all encompassing and in other words, development strides must be holistic.

Furthermore, De Beer and Swanepoel (2000) have advocated for a "total systems approach" in order to address various forms of poverty. They have noted various players in the development field, like the government, Non Government Organisation(s) (NGO), and the local community and note that development is dependent on various variables including politics and note that political roles are the enabling factor for development and that "the structure of government should be of a character that encourages responsible political action and facilitates the involvement of a wide cross section of the citizens in the development process."

In this regard, it has been noted that political leadership is essential in order to determine the direction of development as follows:

> "…political leadership determines goals, selects methods and gives direction. Society develops or fails to develop according to the extent to which political leadership is intelligent, creative, skilful and committed. Without this requisite function of political leadership, there will be no increase in administrative capability, no progress, no direction, no development" (De Beer and Swanepoel, 2000, p. 78).

In noting the critical role of politics in development, the scholars caution that politics is not the only variable in development and that it is not only limited to the national political leadership.

De Beer and Swanepoel (2000) have noted a myriad of strategies that are essential for development to take place. They note, for example that development approaches can be two-fold, namely "growth centred and people centred". However, "the difference between the two perspectives lies in the extent to which one stresses economic issues and the other emphasises human factors."

However, in their discussions of community development, they note that it "promotes human development", and that it is "aimed at empowering communities and strengthening their capacity for self sustaining development."

Similarly, De Beer and Swanepoel (2000) have noted that "community members have always worked together, one way or the other, to promote their common welfare. In this way, community development is as old as human societies themselves."

The scholars note that problems of development are multifaceted and that they should be tackled in a co-ordinated fashion. This, they note, refutes the prevalent connotation that economic development is the most important aspect of development. They note that "social, political and cultural aspects of development should be treated together with economic aspects of development because they are all interrelated" and that government, NGOs and local communities should work together to maximise their efforts, and to avoid duplication of efforts and conflicts.

De Beer and Swanepoel (2000) note that while it is important for communities to identify their needs, it may be necessary to guide them in clarifying their wishes. This is because sometimes communities may not be well informed about outside factors. However, they stress that communities should not be manipulated to embrace needs that are not theirs. The scholars argue that by actively participating in their community projects, people, should determine their own needs and be in some form of organisation. In order to reach objectives of community development, "it must be an educative process; it must continuously improve the ability of the people to deal with challenges confronting them."

Citing Rowlands (1995, p.102) and Monaheng (1998, p. 38), De Beer and Swanepoel (2000) recognise the need for empowerment and participation for effective development to take place.

> "People's participation in development implies empowerment and vice versa. Without empowerment, participation becomes ineffective. All different aspects of empowerment (political, economic and institutional) must be present for participation to be meaningful. Human centred development requires that people whose lives are affected must have the power to influence the process of development, and participate fully in determining their own needs. Human development recognises the interrelationship between social, political and economic goals of development" (De Beer and Swanepoel, 2000, p. 135).

Similarly, Burkey (1993) is a believer that any "meaningful development must begin with, and within, the individual." The scholar has therefore looked at the human, social, economic and political development and has provided some definitions based on views of rural based development workers in Uganda.

> "Human (personal) development is a process by which an individual develops self respect, and becomes more self- confident, self reliant, cooperative and tolerant of others through becoming aware of his/her shortcomings as well as his /her potential for positive change. This takes place through working with others, acquiring new skills and knowledge and active participation in the economic, social and political development of their community…Economic development entails that people through their own individual and or joint efforts boost production for direct consumption to have a surplus to sell for cash. It means that they must plan, implement and manage their own economic activities...
>
> "In political development, there is gradual change over time in which the people increase the awareness of their own capabilities, their rights and their responsibilities; acquire real political power in order to (1) participate in decision making at local level to choose their own representatives at higher levels of government who are accountable to them (2) plan and share power democratically (3) create and allocate resources equitably (fairly) and

> efficiently among individual groups in order to avoid corruption and exploitation and realise social and economic development, political stability and peace and create a politicised population within the context of their own culture and their own political system...Social development is where people increase their awareness of their own capabilities and common interests and use this knowledge to analyse their needs, decide on solutions, mobilise their own human, financial and natural resources to improve, establish and maintain their own social services and institutions within the context of their own culture and their own political system" (Burkey,1993, p. 35-39).

Burkey propagates self reliance and participatory methods in trying to understand the complex subject of development and participation.

In this regard, Burkey (1993, p. 56) states that "participation is an essential part of human growth, that is the development of self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility, cooperation. Without such a development within the people themselves all efforts to alleviate their poverty will be immensely more difficult, if not impossible. This process whereby people learn to take charge of their own lives and solve their own problems is the essence of development." This refers to participation in relation to development.

Furthermore, Burkey (1993) points out that participation takes place when the people themselves are aware of the socio-economic situations and the causes of their problems and decide on their measures to take themselves out of their problems.

Burkey (1993) points out that participation is about collective action and reflection and in relation to a process it is what belongs to a people "as opposed to the people being mobilised, led or directed by outside forces." This results in people being in control of their own situations. In this regard, Burkey (1993) after quoting an Indian farmer agrees and observes that "the people do know their problems. After all they are their problems, they live with them. How can it be that they do

not know them? If they do not express their views openly it is because they have no power of an organisation behind them."

In development studies, De Beer and Swanepoel (1998) argue that "a weak interpretation equates participation with involvement," which they point out results in the "mobilization of people to action not initiated by them." This is where government and aid agencies identify needs, planning action for groups to become involved. They point out that a strong interpretation of participation does "not aim at relief from poverty but rather it is an instrument of transformation."

De Beer and Swanepoel (1996) argue that "transformation efforts do not aim to bring relief to people in the poverty trap, but to free them from the trap so that they can gradually improve the situation themselves as free and self reliant people."

Furthermore, the works of Robert Chambers have received much attention in development circles. He advocates that local people should take control of their own development and that the approach to emancipate people from poverty using participation should take a bottom-up approach and not a top-down approach.

Chambers (1983, p. 103) notes that outsiders' view of disadvantaged people especially rural poor which include women is often distorted; he notes common beliefs of such people as being "improvident, lazy fatalistic, ignorant, stupid and responsible for their poverty," and notes that such views are wrong because case studies have shown that the poor are "usually tough, hard working, ingenious and resilient. They have to be able to struggle five interlocking disadvantages which trap them in deprivation (the deprivation trap); poverty itself, physical weakness, isolation, vulnerability and powerlessness."

Chambers notes that often outsiders want actions and prescriptions which gratify them and which yield quick results to the poor. For example, urban elites give enthusiastic support to eye camps where the blind receive sight, feeding

programmes for the children, but they often attack symptoms and not causes. Therefore without an organised power base, and without outside support, the poor remain vulnerable and may end up sliding deeper into deprivation (Chambers, 1983, p. 164-166).

Many scholars agree that to move people out of deprivation, the role of women and their participation in development is crucial.

In this regard, Snyder and Tadesse (1995, p. 10) have, for example, noted that women, who constitute the majority of people in countries, cannot be left out in development. They note that women's needs are intrinsically bound up with the priority needs and aspirations of the nation, and must necessarily be viewed as features of overall national development and advancement of the total society.

Snyder and Tadesse (1995) have noted key policy premises which can help women in development, namely, participation without which development would be an illusion; grassroots solidarity, where there is a need for cooperative action; transformed attitudes, where both women and men should not be obstacles in their perceptions to the development of women; productivity and social progress, where the failure to acknowledge the women's economic activities put brakes on the development process and institutional building where there is a need for long term institutional support at national and different levels of society. Quoting the former President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, the scholars agree that "the struggle for women's development has to be conducted by women, not in opposition to men, but as part of the social development of the whole people."

2.3 Obstacles to participation of women in politics

SADC (2000) notes that an electoral system of a country can affect the number of women that make it to parliament. It has been noted that Malawi with its FPTP greatly disadvantages women parliamentary candidates because of their

vulnerability as opposed to Proportional Representation (PR) which for example is practised by Mozambique and the Republic of South Africa.

The challenges for women in Malawi as well as in most African countries when it comes to taking up leadership positions are enormous given the context within which women operate and function in society. It has been recognised that women often face a double-day, balancing career and family responsibilities, thus limiting their opportunities for career advancement (Beckham and D' Amico, 1994, p.76).

It has been noted by SADC (2000) that "parliament is patriarchal as many other institutions in society." Furthermore, SADC (2000) citing Karam (1998) and IPU (1995) contends that women face obstacles even inside parliament itself that include patriarchy, political and institutional constraints, cultural attitudes, lack of support, skills and resources. Other constraints to women identified on an individual basis by SADC (2000) include little experience and skills on procedures in public office, little professional experience, lack of education, lack of resources, lack of knowledge on issues and low self esteem. External problems include lack of support from other women, political party affiliation and ethnicity problems.

Britton (2005) notes that there are also issues of sexual harassment and gender discrimination with some indications showing that some women are unwilling to criticise their male compatriots publicly.

Britton (2005), after observing the electoral trends in South Africa with regard to the 1999 and 2004 female cohorts of members of parliament, noted the active recruitment of women from increasingly professional backgrounds which indicates that the South African parliament is rapidly becoming similar to parliaments globally, that is, the tendency to over-represent individuals from higher socioeconomic classes and backgrounds. In Malawi, with the last elections that took place in May 2009, high profile women made it to parliament a few of them having postgraduate qualifications.

Ashfar (1996) notes that “women political activities have, for far too long been seen as marginal or non-existent.” In the West for example, there have been fewer numbers of women participating in positions of power and leadership. Therefore, scholars tended not to write about the participation of women in politics.

Reynolds (1999) argues that even in countries that are deemed to be developed and having established democracies, they also face the challenge of women participation in politics. Reynolds indicates that entry of women to parliament while being good does not generally increase the participation of the women.

Furthermore, women are noted to have certain characteristics and are expected to advance health and educational issues in parliament (SADC, 2000). However in reality, Taylor and Conradie (1997) warn that not all women share the ideals of political transformation and other issues that they are generally associated with, for example, gender issues.

Tamale (1999) cautions that before analysing reasons for joining of politics for women are given the general circumstances under which the majority of women legislators run for office must be well appreciated.

Tamale (1999, p. 93) while pointing out the case for Uganda, during political campaigns notes that “mud” for most men constitutes issues concerning corruption, political ineptitude, and affiliations that have come to be viewed as pejorative; women on the other hand encountered slurs regarding their marital status, sexuality and in(fidelity). The reality of this campaign is perhaps one of the reflections that hinder participation in parliamentary politics including Malawi.

2.4 Examples of effective political participation

Others like (Lowe-Morna, 1996; SADC, 2000) have argued that to meaningfully have increased numbers of women in parliament, a parliamentary representative

electoral system of government or even party determined systems may prove effective at this as is the case with South Africa and Mozambique.

However, increasing the numbers of women in such a manner as having them on quotas has attracted criticism because such women tend not to engage in useful participation (Lowe-Morna, 1996).

Elgie and Devlin (2008) contend that "increasing the number of women in parliament is often justified on the basis that it is simply more just to have equal proportions of men and women in a representative body. However this is not the basis of electing women to parliament. Women are for example seen to have a different approach to politics and that with increased numbers, parliament will be changed and their influence will be seen in changed policies and legislation."

Elgie and Devlin (2008) after looking at the House of Commons noted that women generally tend to work more behind the scenes rather than engaging directly in the debating chamber and generally are seen to being loyal. However this loyalty has not been "shown whether it is a sign of distinctive female consensual style of politics or the result of negative pressure on the women to conform." Furthermore, increased numbers of female parliamentarians have also moved the debate to be on gender "rather than being on women."

Without really discussing why other countries especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, notably Rwanda, have probably the best increased women participation in the World, Britton (2005) notes that African women parliamentarians "have an agenda that is demonstrably broader than the legislative platforms of their counterparts in the North." Given their contexts, issues like land rights, poverty alleviation, HIV/AIDS, sexual freedoms, violence against women, have taken centre stage, because these issues are more pressing to the women in Africa unlike in the West. In South Africa, for example, a feminist legislative record saw changes to law in areas of abortion, employment equality and cooperation

between the women deputies and activists resulting in the passing of the 1998 Domestic Violence Bill.

IPU (1995) while acknowledging the issues of culture and values as being limiting to the participation of women; also notes the rules of parliaments' in general as limiting effective participation in women.

SADC (2000) has noted several strategies that have been used to improve the participation of women in politics. The strategies include advocacy within the political parties, which has been done in Malawi, capacity building where new members of parliament have been trained into office, coalition building with the media and NGOs, and the direct support to women candidates, in some instances with financial resources.

Snyder and Tadesse (1995) are advocating for increased educational opportunities for women and girls, economic empowerment of women, establishment of coalitions among women in various sectors like savings, production, marketing, the need of transformed institutions where the needs of women are on the agenda of governments, and that the road ahead is where women everywhere, not just in Africa, should demand a fair share, operate from positions of strength in both gender-specific and intergraded institutions.

2.5 Political participation

Teorell (2006) citing Verba and Nie (1972, p. 2) says "political participation refers to those activities by private citizens that aim at influencing the government, either by affecting the choice of government personnel or by affecting the choices made by government personnel." In this regard, participation is seen as "influencing attempts." This has been noted to dominate the sphere of studies on participation.

Verba (1996) notes that participation is a means "by which governing officials are informed of the preferences and the needs of the public and are induced to

respond to those preferences and needs. In this regard, participation is an act through which citizens “attempt to make political systems to respond to their will.”

A second view, as propagated by Teorell (2006, p. 789-790) using the etymological point of view, recognises “participation” from a democratic point of view as being an act where a person takes part in person in the decision-making process.

Gould (1988) notes that in practice, there is direct and immediate involvement in the process of decision making by individuals concerned and that this authority is not delegated to anybody else.

Teorell (2006) also sees participation as a political discussion and this is a ‘deliberative model of democracy,’ and citing Miller (1992) it is shown that the aim of democracy is to aggregate individual preferences into a collective choice.

2.6 How women can improve political participation

Conway (2001) notes that despite increased political involvement of women in politics, they are still less likely to be elected to office.

A theory she notes is a sociological one which emphasizes cultural considerations where a dominant patriarchal culture does not support women candidates. Given such a culture therefore, it is important to work with the attitudes of people in order to improve the participation of women.

Conway (2001) also blames gatekeepers in politics who determine who has to be chosen in politics. These are the people who also make it hard for women candidates to excel in politics especially during the nomination stages. In order to improve their participation, the gatekeepers of politics should believe in women and give them a chance to participate.

Romm (2001) in his discussions of the critical theory notes that “communication holds the key to a revolutionary enlightened future, in which all individuals must participate.” This is where people are measured by what they are and not by what they possess.

Critical theory recognises that people themselves should be involved in the process of development and it highlights the need to revitalise participatory practices, in order to nurture the development process and to ensure that it is more equitable and meaningful to the members concerned.

SADC (2000) among other actions, propagates political will where political leadership is committed to broad based political participation, an effective policy environment, affirmative action by stakeholders, increased awareness among women of their potential and notes the role of civil society as being crucial to the election of women to parliament.

2.6.1 Using quotas to increase women numbers in parliament

IDEA (2005) has pointed out that for several decades the highest numbers of women in parliamentary politics has been in Nordic countries. However their increase was not attributed to laws or any constitutional clauses but rather it was due to consistent pressure by women’s groups within parties as well as from women’s movement in general. Therefore the pressure was applied to all political parties and they in turn made necessary decisions themselves.

Quotas for women however result in increased numbers for women and are propagated in view of the existence of exclusionary politics. In this regard there may be candidate quotas where they apply to political party lists for elections and may be laid down in the constitution or political party laws where they are often voluntary. There may be reserved seats although others argue that these are not quotas for example with Uganda which has 56 reserved seats, Rwanda which has 30% of seats reserved for women and Tanzania which reserves 20% for

women or like in Kenya and in some Arab states where some women may be appointed into cabinet. Quotas have also been used as a fast track for women to gain entry into politics or to accommodate women where historically they have been marginalised (IDEA, 2005).

2.7 Conclusion

The literature review has shown that political obstacles to women hinder their participation in politics. Women are gender stereotyped, they face prejudices and they need an enabling framework within which to function effectively.

It has been shown that increased numbers of women does not necessarily mean improved participation. However, especially in Africa, higher numbers of women have been shown to have positive results by dealing with issues that women face, for example gender based violence, rape, HIV/AIDS, poverty alleviation and land rights. However, even within Africa, there are differences which show how increased numbers of women affect policy and legislation.

The literature has shown that women also do not exactly share the same views on issues as they are likely to differ in some instances with regard to ideological and ethnic backgrounds.

Participation of women should also be propagated by the women themselves and that they should in the long run become self reliant and take charge of their destinies after finding solutions to their problems.

It has also been shown that quotas are not the only means to improve the participation of women, but that with active involvement of women movements, gatekeepers in politics like party leaders may be pressured to include women in their party candidates' lists. However quotas can fast track entry of women into politics and serve to consolidate gains which women have achieved.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is discussing how the methodology was used to collect data for the study. The research methodology includes the general approach to the research, the research design, and methods of collecting data which are primary and secondary data. The chapter is also discussing methods for data analysis as well as issues of reliability and validity in the conduct of the study.

The purpose of the study is an investigation in the low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi. The study is looking at the underlying reasons for low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi and aims at finding strategies on how this low participation can be improved.

The research methodology therefore aims to address the following questions:-

a) What are the underlying reasons for low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi?
b) How do these reasons affect participation of women in parliamentary politics?
c) How can the low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi be improved?

Apart from discussing the data analysis in the research methodology, the study also looks at the general research approach and the design.

3.2 General approach to the research

The approach to the research was qualitative in nature. The research was using the qualitative research methodology in the analysis of data with regard to the participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi. There are also some instances where the data presentation and analysis took a quantitative form.

Merriam (2002) says that a qualitative research provides room for orientations which are interpretive and critical.

Creswell (2003) has noted that there are several characteristics for qualitative research. For example the research takes place in the natural setting. The researcher often goes to the site (home, office) of the participant to conduct the research. Furthermore qualitative research seeks to build a rapport and credibility with the individuals in the study. It is emergent rather than tightly figured; the data collection process might change as the inquirer learns the best sites at which to learn about the central phenomenon of interests.

Furthermore, Creswell (2003) notes that in qualitative research, the researcher systematically reflects on who he or she is in the inquiry and is sensitive to his or her personal biography and how it shapes the study. This introspection and acknowledgement of biases, values and interests (or reflexivity) typifies qualitative research today. It represents honesty to research and openness to research. The scholar further points out four basic types of data which include, observations, interviews which have a disadvantage of the researcher being seen as intrusive, thirdly there is usage of documents and lastly there is usage of audiovisual materials like usage of photographs, videotapes, art objects, computer software and films.

Furthermore, Merriam (2002) points out that qualitative research is effective when dealing with a small number of interviewees.

Neuman (2006) has noted that in a qualitative research, the researcher is the most important person in the research and therefore is at the helm of data collection and analysis. In this regard, there is a lot of flexibility depending on the turn of events as the research progresses which can enable the researcher to make necessary amendments.

This research is also in agreement with observations of Silverman (2004) regarding interviews in qualitative research in that the primary issue is to generate data which gives an authentic insight into people's experiences.

Merriam (2002) has noted that a qualitative research provides a room to describe and to understand the research questions as well as to establish facts that are being investigated.

This study has used the Interpretive Social Science technique which embodies a detailed reading of text to discover the meanings that are embedded within it (Neuman, 2006).

The research provides for a discussion with women members of parliament and therefore it is narrative from the point of the parliamentarians.

3.3 Research design

Using the qualitative research paradigm approach, the phenomenological study has been chosen in this research in order to understand the participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi. The phenomenological study approach, according to Creswell (1998) describes the meaning of lived experiences for several individuals about a concept or the phenomenon.

Creswell (1998) points out that researchers search for the essential, invariant structure (or essence) or the central underlying meaning of the experience and emphasize the intentionality of consciousness. Furthermore there is the

methodology of reduction and analysis of themes and specific statements and a search for possible meanings. It is said the method has roots in the philosophical perspectives of Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) and that it has been used in social and human sciences especially in sociology.

It has been pointed out that the researcher needs to carefully choose participants who have experienced the phenomenon, that the bracketing of experiences may be difficult, and that the researcher needs to decide how and in what ways his or her personal experiences will be introduced into the study (Creswell, 1998).

The approach in the research was the usage of the of the Interpretive Social Science (ISS) technique.

According to Neuman (2006) ISS often uses participant observation and field techniques which require that the researcher has to spend many hours with those being interviewed. It is concerned with how people interact and get along with each other. It aims at finding how people find meaning in their natural settings. However according to Neuman (2006, p. 95), ISS is criticised for treating people's ideas as more important than actual conditions they live under and focuses on localised, short-term context ignoring the long-term context.

Creswell (2003) notes that the idea behind qualitative research is to "purposefully select participants or sites (or documents or visual material) that will best help the researcher to understand the problem and research questions." This does not mean random sampling or even the selecting of a large number of participants.

This research has employed semi-structured in depth interviews in order to collect and analyse data and this has been noted to rely on the expertise of the interviewer. The technique therefore needs to be well handled in order to be effective (Boyce and Neale, 2006).

In this regard, women members of parliament were purposefully targeted and approached through the women's parliamentary caucus which is a grouping to which they belong. They were purposefully chosen for the research, interviews were conducted, the information was stored and those that were previously women members of parliament were also interviewed.

3.4 Data collection

In this research, data collection methods involved the usage of semi-structured interview questions with participants that were purposefully chosen for the interviews and they included current members of parliament, past members of parliament and key stakeholders from civil society organisations, in particular those that were involved in the 50-50 campaign that was meant to ensure equitable participation of men and women in political representation.

The major way of collecting data was through face to face interviews using a set questionnaire and documents analysis. The documents analysis is based on available literature and it relied on the experiences of stakeholders who were involved in efforts to reverse trends of low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi.

Merriam (2002) points that qualitative researchers are interested in understanding "how individuals experience and interact with the social world, and the meaning it has for them," and that this is called the interpretive qualitative approach. The nature of qualitative research is that it is largely descriptive and that words and pictures are used to explain what the researcher learnt about a phenomenon.

3.4.1 Primary data

Primary data was collected directly from the respondents, for example through interviews and observations. Primary data was sourced through various ways

including interviews which according to Neuman (2006) allow a researcher to probe and to gather information directly from respondents.

a) Semi-structured interviews

Interviews may take various forms but this research undertook semi-structured interviews which is a combination of structured questions where key and particular information is sought and unstructured questions which allow for more probing and clarity on an issue (Merriam, 2002).

The same questions were asked to the interviewees to ensure that there was consistency in their responses. In this regard there was a list of questions which respondents were answering (See appendix 1 for a list of the questions).

By the very nature of the research being qualitative, questions were probed further to seek clarity on an issue that was being discussed. The questions were the primary source of data collection.

This study used semi-structured questions to collect data from six respondents.

They were:

1. A current female member of parliament, who is the chairperson of the parliamentary committee on International Relations and the vice chairperson of the parliamentary committee on HIV and AIDS. Previously, she was the director of the World Health Organisation for Africa. Out of a total of 14 parliamentary committees, she is the only woman who chairs a committee.
2. A current female member of parliament and a member of the parliamentary committee on HIV and AIDS.
3. A former female member of parliament, who works as a spokesperson of the Malawi Congress Party (MCP), the biggest opposition party in Malawi at the time of the interview.

4. A former female member of parliament and a deputy speaker of parliament between 2003-2004 who was also the leader of the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD) party in parliament from 2004-2009 and the first female presidential contender in the 2009 elections of Malawi.
5. Chairperson of the Malawi Electoral Support Network (MESN) a grouping of seventy-five Non Governmental Organisations responsible for national elections and democratic governance and the current chairperson of the SADC Electoral Support Network which deals with electoral networks for all Southern African countries.
6. National Coordinator of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) an organisation that was tasked by donors to monitor and evaluate Malawi's 50:50 campaign that was aimed at achieving equal representation for men and women in parliament.

All the respondents above did not mind being quoted in the research. One respondent did not want direct quotes. Therefore, during data presentation, for consistence, I will refer to them as Anita, Milca, Abigail, Patricia, Charles and Fraser respectively (See appendix 2 for a full list of the interviewees).

The above interviewees were chosen for the following reasons:-

a) Issues with regard to the participation of women directly affect the women themselves therefore they are best placed to understand what it takes to participate in parliamentary politics.
b) CSOs interact directly with the grassroots and best understand the issues that they work on all the time. Furthermore, they are likely to play a neutral role in the work of improving the participation of women in politics therefore their representatives were chosen.
c) The experiences of women members of parliament are not limited only to those in current positions, but those that served in those capacities in the past due to the rich experience of what parliamentary participation in politics entails. Therefore past members of parliament were also chosen.

d) The participation of women in politics should come from women who held different responsibilities in politics. Therefore those with leadership experiences were chosen alongside those who though they are participating in politics do not have senior leadership positions.

3.4.2 Secondary data

The researcher was able to collect secondary data from parliamentary records, the library, as well as internet and newspaper sources. More data was collected from what was written by CSOs that have campaigned for increased participation of women in parliament in Malawi. Data was also collected from books, journals and other documents like minutes of meetings and parliamentary reports so long as these were in relation to the research topic and questions (Creswell, 2003).

3.5 Sampling

Merriam (2002) says qualitative sampling helps to identify necessary interviewees who will assist to get necessary information in order to come up with recommendations to a study. Usually, qualitative sampling is purposeful and when this is the case, a researcher is able to gain more insights on the topic and the important aspects of his/her study.

Neuman (2006) defines a sample as a “smaller set of cases a researcher selects from a larger pool and generalizes to the population.”

Neuman (2006) notes that qualitative and quantitative researchers approach sampling differently. Qualitative researchers focus on a sample’s representativeness than on how the sample or small collection of cases, units, or activities illuminates social life. “The primary purpose of sampling is to collect specific cases, events, or actions that can clarify and deepen understanding about social life in a specific context.”

Furthermore, Neuman (2006, p. 222) says purposive sampling is used in exploratory or in field research. Cases are selected with a specific purpose in mind. But the researcher, “never knows whether the case selected represent the population.” With purposive sampling a researcher is able to reach as many respondents as possible using the sample.

Furthermore Creswell (2003) notes that “the idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites that will best help the researcher understand the problem and research questions.”

In this research, the sampling was purposive and it identified six respondents including women parliamentarians that were involved directly with politics as well as Civil Society Organisations personnel who were involved directly with issues related to participation of women in politics.

3.6 Data analysis

Analysis of data usually takes place throughout the period the research is being conducted (Neuman, 2006).

Furthermore, the analysis helps the researcher to understand the data, interpret it, and offer recommendations based on the findings.

Analysis of data was premised on the critical areas of the research questions and was in relation to areas of underlying reasons for low participation of women in parliamentary politics, how these reasons affected the low participation of women in politics and how the low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi could be improved.

In this regard, there were constant modifications to the categories that emerged after data was collected. The categories that emerged from the interviewees were analysed based on their patterns, convergence and divergence and these were

interpreted in relation to relevant theories, a process which is called coding (Neuman, 2006). This analysis occurred together with other research processes like data collection and literature review.

However, Strauss (1987, p. 55) cautions that coding is the most difficult operation for inexperienced researchers to understand and to master.

3.7 Validity and reliability

Neuman (2006) defines reliability as “dependability and consistency.” It is further noted that in qualitative research, a wide range of techniques are used, for example, interviews, participation, photographs and document studies. This type of method according to qualitative researchers gives an opportunity of having many approaches and therefore provides for many or diverse aspects that are present in a social world.

Noting therefore, the need to ensure reliability of the study, a wide range of techniques were used in the study in order to gather information.

Furthermore, Neuman (2006) defines validity as being “truthful”. Qualitative research therefore will push for what is “authentic” as opposed to having a single version of a truth. Reliability is also easier to achieve than validity. For example, Neuman (2006) notes that a measure can be reliable but invalid. It has been noted that usually the concepts are complementary but that in some circumstances they conflict each other.

To ensure that data was reliable and valid, the researcher was constantly verifying the data that was available and was relying on official documents, and seeking clarifications from respondents if in doubt of a response that was given. Permission was sought from the parliament of Malawi to conduct the research and respondents were informed that they would be allowed to access the findings once the research would be concluded.

Merriam (2002) has advocated for different techniques at different stages of the research to ensure reliability and validity by, *inter alia*, using different sources of data in order to have consistent information. For example triangulation which is "having several sources of data", for example interviews and documents which were used in this research, availability of member and peer checking, and provision of feedback during the research and thorough data collection and analysis.

As a researcher who works with Members of Parliament, I was, in my view privileged to have rapport with the women Parliamentarians and to have a deeper understanding of issues under consideration and this proved essential in the reliability and validity of the research.

3.8 Significance of the research

The research may prove useful to women and stakeholders that are interested to see an increased participation of women in parliament.

The research will try to answer why there is still low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi. The research is striving to offer insights to the problem of low participation of women parliamentarians based on their experiences.

The research provides room to stakeholder groups in Malawi interested with increasing participation of women to see how to meaningfully increase the numbers of women in parliament as well as their participation.

3.9 Limitations of the study

In order to have reliable and valid data, the research relied in part, on the cooperation of the women members of parliament and usage of ethical considerations like maintaining confidentiality.

The researcher has taken an oath of secrecy and a commitment to maintain confidentiality in his work of offering advice to members of parliament in portfolio committees on practices, procedures, oversight and official information. Herein lies a fear of being misunderstood of what the intentions of the research maybe given that the researcher should be perceived to be apolitical at all times. In this regard, a crucial woman member of parliament, who was earmarked for an interview by the researcher on account of her past leadership role and experiences, refused to be interviewed saying the subject under discussion was political in nature and that she was no longer practising politics.

The study also notes that some of the respondents could provide information which could not be tallying with the reality on the ground.

3.10 Conclusion

The Chapter highlighted the methods of the study in light of the research questions used.

The chapter has explained the data collection methods and how the research has been designed. It has explained how reliable and valid the research is. The chapter has outlined the significance of the study and the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data which was gathered in relation to the participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi.

The data was gathered through analysis of documents, as well as through in-depth interviews which were conducted with six respondents. As stated in the previous chapter, the respondents will be identified as Anita, Milca, Abigail, Patricia, Charles and Fraser although all of them did not mind being mentioned by their names in the research.

This chapter will dwell on the findings from both interviews and document analysis in relation to underlying reasons for low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi, how these reasons affect the participation of the women as well as general problems that women encounter in Malawi and strategies that can be used to improve the participation of women in parliamentary politics in the country. Document analysis will be dwelt with initially, followed by an analysis of the interviews which were conducted.

4.2 Women in parliamentary politics

4.2.1 General trends for participation of women in parliamentary politics

Parliaments perform many functions including the ratification of treaties and their jurisdictions may vary, but this study is in agreement with observations that their role is to ensure that citizens are represented, legislation is enacted and an oversight role on the executive branch of government is effectively conducted

(Richardson, 2001). Women have been noted to make inroads worldwide in as far as their participation in parliamentary politics is concerned. It has been noted that by 2005, the participation of women in national parliaments had a meteoric rise, averaging 16.3% globally, an upward increase of 50% over the preceding decade. This however, has been attributed "to special measures, including quotas-either in the form of reserved seats, electoral quotas or voluntary party quotas and usage of proportional electoral systems as opposed to the FPTP system." In general terms, however, "the gains have been noted to be concentrated in a relatively small number of countries" *(*IPU, 2006). In this regard, by October 2009, the global presence of women in parliamentary politics had reached 18.6% of members of parliament (IPU, 2009).

Using statistical data, which details the numbers of women in parliaments, the table below shows the best represented parliaments by women in terms of numbers as of March 31, 2010 out of 186 countries:

Table 1: World classification of women in parliaments-Lower or single House

Rank	Country	Elections	Seats	Women	% W
1	Rwanda	9/ 2008	80	45	56.3%
2	Sweden	9/2006	349	162	46.4%
3	South Africa	4/2009	400	178	44.5%
4	Cuba	1/2008	614	265	43.2%
5	Iceland	4/2009	63	27	42.9%
6	Netherlands	11/2006	150	63	42.0%
7	Finland	3/2007	200	80	40.0%
8	Norway	9/2009	169	67	39.6%
9	Mozambique	10/2009	250	98	39.2%
10	Angola	9/2008	220	85	38.6%
11	Costa Rica	2/2010	57	22	38.6%
12	Argentina	6/2009	257	99	38.5%

Source: Adapted from IPU, 2010.

For the representations in the table above detailing the best represented countries in the world, it should be noted that the electoral systems are not uniform; therefore the percentages are just a pointer to how women are represented in the world.

The table below details how women are represented in SADC as of March 31 2010.

Table 2: SADC classification of women in parliaments-Lower or single House

SADC Rank	Country	Elections	Seats	Women	%W
1	South Africa	4/2009	400	178	44.5%
2	Mozambique	10/2009	250	98	39.2%
3	Angola	9/2008	220	85	38.6%
4	United Republic of Tanzania	12/2005	323	99	30.7%
5	Namibia	11/2009	67	18	26.9%
6	Lesotho	2/2007	120	29	24.2%
7	Malawi	5/2009	193	42	21.7%
8	Mauritius	7/2005	70	12	17.1%
9	Zimbabwe	3/2008	214	32	15.0%
10	Zambia	9/2006	157	22	14.0%
11	Swaziland	9/2008	66	9	13.6%
12	Democratic republic of Congo	7/2006	500	42	8.4%
13	Botswana	10/2009	63	5	7.9%

Source: Adapted from IPU, 2010

The table above shows how women are represented in parliamentary politics in different countries in SADC. South Africa has the best representation in the region and is among countries that have the best representation in the world. Malawi ranks seventh in the region and the participation of women in parliamentary politics is still low given that it still falls below the minimum 30 % representation as propagated by SADC.

4.2.2 Women in parliament from selected countries

Rwanda, though unfortunately, best known for the April to July 1994 genocide that resulted in the death of 800 000 Tutsi and moderate Hutu, ranks as the best country in the world in the numbers of women in parliament.

Classified as “authoritarian”, Rwanda is known for having many active groups of women, which form probably the most vibrant sector of the Rwandan civil society. Women are active and the rise in their numbers in parliament has been rapid. In 1994, out of 70 parliamentary seats, 8 women or 11.4% of the seats were held by women, the chamber of deputies rose to 17.1% by January 1997 and 25.7% by November 2000. The constitution of Rwanda in 2003 included a quota providing 30% of parliamentary seats to women translating to 24 seats where two seats per province and two seats for Kigali were reserved for women (Elgie and Devlin, 2008).

IDEA (2005) points out that Rwanda has had a gender imbalance that tilts women in majority in the aftermath of the genocide and with it, the subsequent swapping of gender roles where women take up household and general leadership positions. Furthermore, its gender sensitive constitution championed by women’s groups to ensure equitable participation in development, has resulted in a three pronged approach, where, an umbrella grouping of women CSOs coordinated by the Pro-Femmes, collaborates its work with the legislative branch of government

in the forum of women parliamentarians and the executive branch represented by the ministry of gender and women in development.

And in the SADC, the Republic of South Africa since 1994 uses an electoral model called the List Proportional Representation and the 1996 constitution provides that the country should have a proportional representation electoral system. However, when it comes to local government elections, a hybrid system which combines the constituency based FPTP electoral model and the PR applies. This, it has been argued, serves to increase representation at national and provincial legislatures. However, FPTP has been noted to be exclusionary (Matlosa, 2008).

Furthermore, a SADC PF official, Bookie Kethusegile-Juru noted in Pretoria in November 2004, that most challenges in increasing the participation of women in politics remain with Malawi, Mauritius, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. She said the trends in Southern Africa have been towards introducing quotas and often with positive yields.

She pointed out that quotas could be mandatory, legislated or political party quotas. Political party quotas exist in Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe. However she noted that voluntary party quotas used with PR electoral system where there is good political leadership have yielded positive results for the ANC in South Africa and for the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) whereas party quotas in constituency based systems have been less successful in Botswana and Zimbabwe (IDEA, 2004).

4.3 Presence of women in the parliament of Malawi

Following the ushering in of the first multiparty politics in 1994, women started to meaningfully participate in politics. During the 1994 elections, there were ten women who were elected to parliament. The presence of women in parliament in 1994 was as follows:

Table 3: Participation of women in the 1994 parliamentary elections of Malawi

UDF	MCP	AFORD	Total women candidates	% of women ruling party candidates with seats	Total contested seats	% of women MPs in the 1994 elections
5	4	1	10	50%	177	5.6%

Source: Adapted from Malawi Electoral Commission, 1994

The table above shows that the participation of women in the first elections was very low. Only 5.6% of the seats were occupied by women. However, the party which won the elections had up to 50% of the women seats scooped by them; in this case it was the UDF party.

Table 4: Participation of women in the 1999 parliamentary elections of Malawi

UDF	MCP	AFORD	Independent	Total women candidates	% of women ruling party candidates with seats	Total contested seats	% of women MPs in the 1999 elections
12	3	1	1	17	70.5%	193	8.8%

Source: Adapted from Malawi Electoral Commission, 1999

The table above shows that the participation of women in politics in percentage terms improved from 5.6% to 8.8%. However, the ruling party had a dramatic increase in terms of women numbers which moved from 50% to 70.5%. In general terms, the ruling party substantially increased its numbers of women in parliament by 20% whereas in general terms the numbers of women members of parliament declined from 50% in the 1994 elections to about 30%, a decline of about 20%.

Table 5: Participation of women in the 2004 parliamentary elections of Malawi

UDF	Independents and other political parties	Total women candidates	% of women ruling party candidates with seats	Total contested seats (at the time of the election)	% of women MPs in the 2004 elections
11	16	27	40.7%	188	14.3%

Source: Adapted from Malawi Electoral Commission, 2004

The table above depicts that numbers for women members of parliament continued to rise and in general terms they moved upwards by approximately four percentage points. At the time of the election, the ruling party realised a drop in terms of its women members of parliament which declined to 40.7% whereas, the previous elections it monopolised up to 70.5% share of the women candidates in parliament.

Hastily, it should be noted that in overall terms, the UDF was at its weakest in the 2004 election results and it registered a total of 26% for all its elected members of parliament against a combined opposition and independents total of 74% members of parliament. In a bitterly contested election result, whose technicalities

are not the subject of this study; the UDF was able to form a coalition government with the help of some of the opposition political parties after a memorandum of understanding was signed. The UDF candidate, Dr Bingu wa Mutharika, formed a government having been declared a winner with 36% of the presidential vote, against a fragmented opposition which shared the rest of the votes (Dulani, 2008; Malawi Electoral Commission, 2004).

Table 6: Participation of women in the 2009 parliamentary elections of Malawi

DPP	Independents	UDF	MCP	Total women candidates	% of women ruling party candidates with seats	Total contested seats	% of women MPs in the 2004 elections
32	6	1	3	42	76.1	193	21.7%

Source: Adapted from Malawi Electoral Commission, 2009

As a political party, the DDP was formed by president Bingu wa Mutharika while in office after he had dumped the UDF that propelled him to power. It emerged the ruling party and its women members of parliament are the highest accounting for 76.1% of the female parliamentarians.

The table above indicates a general upward increase in numbers for the women members of parliament in general. In terms of women members of parliament it has increased to 21.7%, the highest since 1994.

4.4 The 50:50 campaign in Malawi

The 50:50 campaign was adopted by the government of Malawi in 2008 in order to increase the number of women in politics and decision making positions. The campaign was therefore being implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and was coordinated by a group of CSOs under NGO Gender Coordination Network (GCN).

Each woman aspirant was given K91, 000 (ZAR 4550) from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) basket fund, and 208 women contested in the elections. The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) was tasked by donors to monitor the implementation of the campaign and to document its challenges and its experiences. In its review report, which covers the Malawi May 2009 elections, CCJP documented several successes and challenges:

4.4.1 Challenges of the 50:50 campaign

It was noted that there were too many women candidates and therefore it was difficult to provide assistance to all of them. There were generally unfair party political primaries to select candidates which would contest on party tickets and the campaigns were characterised by violence and abusive language against women candidates who were called “prostitutes”. Women were tied up with family commitments and there was enormous resistance from local traditional chiefs who did not want women to contest as candidates (CCJP, 2009a).

Past women members of parliament were perceived to have failed the electorate in their performance and people were resisting new women candidates. The involvement of government in the campaign raised concerns that it was supporting aspirants of the ruling party, and in some instances implementing partners from CSOs were also accused of advancing their political ambitions. Some women aspirants lacked formal education and some just wanted to receive

financial assistance for personal gains. Religious leaders and not traditional leaders accommodated women candidates and the culture of giving handouts to the electorate by parliamentary aspirants greatly disadvantaged women. Political leaders in general, were also not accommodating to their women candidates (CCJP, 2009a).

4.4.2 Successes of the 50:50 campaign

The landmark election of a woman Vice President, Joyce Banda, who was elected alongside Bingu wa Mutharika, Malawi's President, is touted as a positive step in the 50:50 campaign. With this election, alongside the election of 42 women members of parliament, people can appreciate that women are also up to the task of decision making positions. With the campaign, the debate is being steered in the direction of persuading political leaders to create space for women by allowing them to contest in winnable seats and for the need to provide legislative support to women (CCJP, 2009a).

4.4.3 Involvement of civil society organisations in the 2009 presidential and parliamentary elections

Between the months of November 2008 and January 2009, CCJP produced a report covering the activities of CSOs with regard to the 50:50 campaign, as reported in Malawi's print media which covered *(The Nation, The Daily Times, Malawi News, Weekend Nation, Sunday Times and Nation on Sunday)* and electronic media which covered *Television Malawi* and other radio stations. The CSOs activities were being championed by GCN which consisted of 42 NGOs and was being coordinated by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (CCJP, 2009b).

CCJP documented several activities, notably by GCN which noted that out of 450 women who had shown initial interest to contest, many dropped out due to "poor financial resource base, lack of interest due to abusive language where women

are called prostitutes even in parliament and a tendency by some political parties to impose candidates in primary elections" (CCJP, 2009c).

The report, noted that Gender Support Network (GSN) reported that local leaders received bribes from some male aspirants in order to frustrate women candidates and to prevent them from campaigning. The Ministry of Gender, Child Development and Community Development organised a training workshop in Blantyre, Malawi and asked the media to report on women issues and to raise government's obligation to the SADC protocol on gender and development (CCJP, 2009c)

According to the report, other NGOs like Pan African Civic Educators Network (PACENET), Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation (CHRR), Action Aid International noted that only a few women won primary elections in part due to lack of support from some political leaders. They also noted that democratic values were neglected during the primaries. There was also lack of transparency in the conduct of the primaries (CCJP, 2009c).

During a week-long visit to Malawi from 21 January 2009, members of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus (RWPC) met all political parties in Malawi, all lady aspirants and the Minister of Gender, Child Development and Community Development on the need to have more women in parliament. SADC's senior women legislators from RWPC encouraged political parties to include women in their ranks and told the women who were being frustrated by their political parties to stand as independent candidates (CCJP, 2009c).

CCJP noted that there is also no mechanism to ensure that political parties should adhere to the 50:50 campaign and the thinking behind ensuring equal participation of men and women in decision making positions and that this was a setback to efforts of realising equitable participation (CCJP, 2009c).

4.4.4 Experiences of women candidates while canvassing for political support

Some of the women aspirants were being forced by their political parties to sign forms indicating that once they lose primaries, they would support the winning candidate, a development that made CSOs like CHRR to step in and tell the women candidates that such commitments were not legally binding (CCJP, 2009b).

Other women candidates withdrew from the primaries because some voters were demanding money as a condition for contesting on a party ticket, some women candidates were called prostitutes and in some instances the expectations of some people were unrealistic as they thought parliamentary candidates were meant to end all their financial problems. Women candidates said the expectation that women would achieve at least half the results, was too ambitious in the absence of an enabling legal framework that would fast track women's participation in politics (CCJP, 2009b).

Furthermore, there were instances of lack of support among women themselves in order to have their numbers increased in parliament.

A delegation report presented to the Malawi National Assembly for debate and noting by members of parliament following an IPU seminar in Geneva, Switzerland in September 2009, for chairpersons and members of parliamentary bodies dealing with gender equality observed that in general, predominant cultural challenges were an impediment for women to make inroads into parliament, that women underwent a higher and harder scrutiny than their male compatriots in order to determine their eligibility for parliamentary seats and that women were burdened with the duty of balancing public and private lives (Malawi National Assembly Delegation Report, 2009).

It was noted that global figures of having women in parliaments at around 18% with an average growth of about 1% year was still unacceptable and still far

below internationally agreed targets. It was observed, for example, that leaders of political parties viewed it as risky to field women candidates and that the role of CSOs was minimal and almost non-existent in most countries including Malawi and just gained prominence during election years (Malawi National Assembly Delegation Report, 2009).

The above findings detail findings found from an analysis of documents and in the following section the focus will be on the data which was gained through in-depth interviews.

4.5 Underlying reasons for low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi

All the six respondents, pointed out that Malawi is a patriarchal society therefore it cannot readily accept to have women in decision making positions. They also pointed out that most women lack financial resources which can enable them to compete favourably with their male counterparts who often have a lot of money. They said elections involve a lot of money.

All agreed that when women want to join politics, they are heavily de-campaigned and the campaign trails can be brutal and characterised by smear campaigns where women canvassing for political office are touted as "prostitutes". Fraser pointed out that even in religion, men lead it therefore it is hard to change mindsets of people.[1]

Fraser and Charles said although political parties talk about supporting women in their party manifestos, the reality is that this lacks implementation. They noted that primaries are very difficult to manage and that women are not given winnable seats. Fraser noted that "major political parties want women if they are capable of

[1] Interview with "Fraser", 4 November 2009

fighting on their own." They noted that even for the women that succeed, most of them have the backing of men.[2]

Abigail said that "most women are not part of the decision making processes," on issues that affect them hence they are likely to be sidelined in leadership positions which are dominated by their male counterparts.[3]

Anita said education has been a major factor where culturally, boys have been preferred while girls are left at home to work and this idea was echoed by Patricia. This, they attributed to being contributory to having limited numbers of women vying for political office which also requires various skills like mobilising resources which can be enhanced if a person is well educated.[4]

4.6 Challenges and issues which discourage women in politics

One respondent, Fraser, pointed out that parliament can be "frightening" and that engaging in vigorous debates in the chamber is a hard task.[5]

In this regard, Milca said women do not want to lead and do not know most people of influence and lamented that they are not adequately covered in the media. She said whenever women make mistakes; their issues are blown out of proportion. Women, she said, also lack networking skills.[6]

Anita said for women to effectively participate in politics, they need the support of other women to stand by them; hence there is a need for civic education. She said there are no ready guidelines on these issues and that there is no hands-on support for women as they proceed in political roles.[7]

---

[2] Interview with "Charles" 2 November 2009 and "Fraser", 4 November 2009
[3] Interview with "Abigail", 7 December 2009
[4] Interview with "Anita", 13 January 2010 and "Patricia" on 11 January 2010
[5] Interview with "Fraser" on 4 November 2009
[6] Interview with "Milca" 9 December 2009
[7] Interview with "Anita" on 13 January 2009

Anita said most women are not involved in political responsibilities. She observed as follows:

> "There is a need to share political responsibilities and a need to be gender balanced. Therefore, there should be a partnership between men and women. There is need for a win-win situation, not that women should deal with women issues only. We need to have women to deal with issues, therefore a need to have a partnership between men and women. This is a transitional period. We want to balance in terms of numbers. The current trend must continue. All have to partner, have to complement and join forces, face issues together just like in a family (father and mother) we all have to be there for democracy to work."[8]

Fraser pointed out that husbands and traditional leaders need to be convinced of the need to have women take up leadership roles and that women "need to see the need for increased participation in politics."[9] All respondents observed that there is a need to have laws in place that can ensure to have many women in parliamentary politics and decision making positions and that in this way women may not be discouraged when in politics.

4.7 Issues affecting participation and what women want in politics

On the question of what women want in politics, all respondents were in agreement that they want to change peoples' lives for the better. Milca observed that women are better placed to bring positive changes to peoples' lives because "women know the daily problems of people, such as the need to have good water facilities, good roads because they have many experiences from their homes and their villages." She said women are the "first sufferers" and understand problems well.[10]

[8] Interview with "Anita" on 13 January 2009
[9] Interview with "Fraser" on 4 November 2009

One woman, Abigail, put it bluntly: "if you want to be part of development, you need to be in politics."[11]

However, Fraser observed that while everybody talks about being motivated to bring about development as the reason for joining politics, ironically, "it has been taken as a career path for earning a living."[12]

Asked how women want to have their challenges in politics improved, respondents believed that affirmative action can help and that this can be enhanced with changed legislation where women can join politics through quotas. Anita said there is a need for monitoring and evaluation of issues regarding women in politics, working together of men and women as well as the need to increase the knowledge of women in order to be able to participate in national issues.[13]

On why women have been unable to improve their participation, Milca attributed this to insufficient sensitisation regarding women issues, insufficient networking and lack of empowerment among women.[14] Fraser observed that there is a need for men to champion the cause of women if their issues have to succeed. He further observed that no lobby group talks about the environment in parliament under which the women work which might also affect their participation.[15]

Asked how and what women have pushed for change using their influence as female members of parliament, the women respondents mentioned that they belong to the women's caucus a grouping which enables them to discuss their issues, to network and to learn from each other on how to deal with issues. Charles pointed that some issues for women in parliament are not very clear

[10] Interview with "Milca" 9 December 2009
[11] Interview with "Abigail" 7 December 2009
[12] Interview with "Fraser" 4 November 2009
[13] Interview with "Anita" 13 January 2010
[14] Interview with "Milca" 9 December 2009
[15] Interview with "Fraser" 4 November 2009

because “women are usually under political party direction and do not implement their initiatives in the House.”[16]

However all were in agreement that the interest to push for the development agenda for the people that they represent ranked as the highest issue in terms of importance to the women.

4.8 Strategies for improving the low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi

All respondents agreed that women parliamentary candidates have been assisted in different ways by various stakeholders like NGOs but observed that the assistance does not reach all women and that there is more to be done with regard, for example, to capacity building. Fraser noted that the 50:50 campaign was a good thing but that there was need for affirmative action. He noted that the 50:50 campaign helped in that it made it possible to have numbers for interested aspirants to increase.[17]

Among the strategies that have helped to improve the participation of women in politics in Malawi, respondents pointed out that the 50:50 campaign was a step in the right direction. In some instances, women parliamentary aspirants have been provided with training by CSOs. However, the 50:50 campaign was just hailed as a step in the right direction which needs to be improved because all respondents noted that it was plagued by problems.

For example, among the strategies that have not proved effective in improving the participation of women, Fraser and Charles noted that it needs to be a continuous process and Fraser said it could be effective if done when people are sober and not attached to any emotions that surface during campaigns. He added that

[16] Interview with “Charles” 2 November 2009
[17] Interview with “Charles” 2 November 2009

lessons learnt from the 50:50 campaign need to be known and stakeholders' concerns in elections need to be taken into account when planning.[18]

Anita noted that women need to be taught about the need to be self reliant. She observed that the issue of having women in politics was a social one and that generally the world was changing and that it could be possible for men and women to work together. She said women also need to be adapting to each other, for example through the women's caucus of parliament and that by appreciating and learning from each other, strategies that could result in gender balanced issues could be achieved.[19]

Charles said political parties need to be convinced long before party conventions take place on the need to have women in positions of power and Milca emphasized that girls need to be empowered, need to have good education and said "likely they would join politics" in future.[20]

4.9 Conclusion

Following the presentation of data in this chapter, it emerged that there are challenges that limit women to join parliamentary politics in Malawi. A second theme that emerged was about challenges which affect the participation of women when in parliamentary politics and the last theme dealt with strategies that could be employed to improve the low participation of women in parliamentary politics.

In the theme dealing with factors that limit women to join parliamentary politics, it transpired that there is agreement that Malawi is a patriarchal society where women culturally are not expected to take up leadership positions. Furthermore, women candidates are abused and de-campaigned during election campaigns as

[18] Interview with "Charles" 2 November 2009 and "Fraser", 4 November 2009
[19] Interview with "Anita" 13 January 2010
[20] Interview with "Charles" 2 November 2009

having weak morals and that generally women lack education and financial muscles which are crucial factors for making inroads into politics.

Women respondents as well as CSOs activists agreed that it is crucial to have women to take up leadership positions in order to spearhead development; however there are also issues of people joining politics to reap financial rewards, an issue, which is often not discussed. It also emerged that generally women do not push for their agenda in parliament but that instead they generally rely on political party leadership for direction. However, women want to improve their skills and to participate in development.

On the theme regarding strategies of improving the participation of women in politics, CSOs have been shown to take active roles only during campaign times and that often some of their interests are misunderstood in the wake of some activists vying for political office. The strategies can rely on continuously engaging with those who matter in allowing women to take part in politics like party and traditional leaders. Change of legislation may also be enacted coupled with empowerment of women where they take charge of their own interests and become self reliant.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research was to investigate reasons for low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi and to examine how this could be improved. This chapter will therefore seek to provide answers to the key research questions raised in the first chapter of the research.

Therefore an analysis of the findings of the research will be presented and will be examined. Data which was collected in relation to the research questions' interviews and documents analysis as well as the researcher's reflections on the issues will be presented in light of the themes that have emerged from the study. A way forward in terms of how to improve the low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi will be presented and an attempt to tie up loose ends in relation to known information on the matter will be sought.

The following were the questions which the research attempted to address:

a) What are the underlying reasons for low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi?

b) How do these reasons affect participation of women in parliamentary politics?

c) How can the low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi be improved?

In the course of engaging with literature, as well as presentation of data from documents analysis and in-depth interviews, the following themes emerged:

a) Challenges that limit women to join parliamentary politics;

b) Challenges that women face when in parliamentary politics;

c) Proposed strategies to improve parliamentary participation for women through entry to parliament and reduction of challenges they face when in politics.

5.2 Challenges that limit women to join parliamentary politics

In response to the question, is the parliament of Malawi making significant strides to improve the space for women, the answer would be both in the affirmative and negative. The affirmation emanates from the upward increase in numbers of women in parliament from 1994 to 2009. For example, during the 1994 presidential and parliamentary elections, there were 10 women members of parliament representing 5.6% of the total numbers of members of parliament. By 2009, the number of women in parliament had shot up to 42, representing 21.7% of the total number of members of parliament. This rise is significant and cannot brusquely be dismissed as trivial.

The negative response to the question whether the parliament of Malawi has improved by making it open to women, stems from the fact that the numbers are still below the SADC requirement of a minimum of 30% representation for women in parliament. The numbers also fall short of the expectations set as far back as 1979 during the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) which called for equal rights for men and men and various treaties and agreements including those from the fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. Furthermore, backed by literature and data, an analysis in subsequent arguments has been weighted towards a negative response to the question whether the Malawi parliament is open to

women. The author is also compelled to believe that this rise, is fragile and the study will argue that the increase so far has not yet been consolidated.

One hastily recognises the existence of the highest numbers of women parliamentarians from the ruling party at each election when political party representations for women are proportionally compared. For example, in 1994, 50% of the women parliamentarians came from the ruling UDF, in 1999, 70.5% of the women were from the ruling UDF and in 2004, 40.7% came from UDF which was declared a winner in the elections. It should be noted that in 2004, UDF was at its weakest politically and even given this low representation it still remained a party with the highest seats for women if all political parties including the first time huge presence of independent parliamentarians would be juxtaposed (Dulani, 2008). By 2009, the trend continued with the ruling DPP scooping 76.1% of the women members of parliament. Therefore, in the past sixteen years for Malawi, women that stood for the ruling party as candidates had a better chance of making it to parliament than their political counterparts in opposition or as independents.

In view of the above trends, one would be persuaded to conclude that if a political party which won elections had a deliberate policy to accommodate women, then women numbers in parliament would be higher. Furthermore, by extension, if political parties had deliberate policies to have women candidates for parliamentary seats, then the numbers of women would be higher in the parliament for Malawi. The absence of the implementation of this policy lends credence to assertions that political leadership which is male dominated is a challenge that limits women to enter parliament (CCJP, 2009a; Conway, 2001; SADC, 2000).

However it should be noted that there is a debate that women can easily make it to parliament in a proportional representation system where political parties are allocated seats with regard to the number of votes that they get in an election. In this case party leadership would be persuaded to include more women on their

party lists. Those that advocate for proportional representation like SADC (2000), Lowe-Morna (1996), Reynolds (1999) and CCJP (2009a) contend that it would result in significant increases in numbers of women in parliament. The absence of the proportional system is a challenge that is limiting women to increase their numbers in the parliament of Malawi.

However, the PR electoral system has not always been the panacea for increasing the access of women to parliament. Best performers like the Nordic countries and even for Rwanda, before it changed its constitution in 2003, have had the numbers of women increased by the efforts of vibrant women movements, some working within the political party structures (IDEA, 2005; Elgie and Devlin, 2008). Vibrant women movements and CSO movements is a viable alternative for Malawi which still uses FPTP if it has to meaningfully limit the challenge that women face when they want to join politics.

Conway (2001) argues that despite increased political involvement for women, they are still less likely to be elected to political office and cites a sociological theory where a dominant patriarchal society would not readily support women candidates. This prevalent attitude has been identified in the previous chapter by all respondents to the in-depth interviews. The responses of the interviewees support this theory, therefore in the presence of such attitudes; continuation of the FPTP electoral system puts the continued rise in the women numbers in parliament in jeopardy.

Another challenge which was mentioned in the previous chapter by all respondents was about the brutal campaign that characterises both party primaries and the general elections. Women are touted as “prostitutes” by their male contenders to parliamentary politics. This experience agrees with observations of (CCJP, 2009b; Tamale; 1999; Geisler; 2004), who have noted that women are attacked on account of their sexuality and not issues which they propagate during campaigns. In this regard, in Malawi, disheartened by these

experiences, women candidates are likely to pull out of contests as most of them did in the 2009 elections thereby limiting their chances of making it to parliament.

But the hurdles of the women candidates do not stop with unwarranted innuendos by their male counterparts during campaigns. Women have to get approval from their spouses and traditional leaders as noted by CCJP (2009b) and their career advancements may suffer. This agrees with the observation of Beckham and D' Amico (1994) who note that the opportunities for women in politics are thwarted because they have a further burden of balancing their careers and families.

Women, who are educated, are likely to have resources to finance their campaigns and to articulate issues better than those that are less educated. One respondent noted that political parties are likely to embrace women that are capable of fighting on their own. CCJP (2009a) lamented that many of the women candidates that had shown interest to contest elections were poorly educated and many of them were just interested to get some funding from NGOs but were not interested in politics.

All women respondents cited various ways by which they were let down by political parties, traditional leaders and an unfair electoral system. Paradoxically, since 2004 there have been a noticeable number of women members of parliament, who against all odds have made it to parliament as independents. In the 2009 elections for example, a total of 6 women won parliamentary seats as independent candidates. Dulani (2008) notes that political parties in 2004 tended to impose unpopular candidates on electorates against their will, and in frustration people opted to vote for independent candidates. However, this scenario does not apply to all women independent candidates. Those that can win on their own point to a notion that a person, who is capable to fight on her own, can take charge of her own destiny. This resonates with a theory about self reliance as advocated by scholars like (De Beer and Swanepoel, 1996; Burkey, 1993; Snyder & Tadesse, 1995).

Another factor that limits women to make it to parliament is the weak presence of the civil society grouping. By their own admission, civil society organisations have noted that they take an active role only during elections and some activists have been criticised of pursuing their own political interests hence being misunderstood. In the unfriendly environment of a patriarchal society, people cannot appreciate the need to have more women to parliament, if the campaign is done in an ad hoc manner. An organised civil society grouping has proven in many countries to be effective in increasing the number of women to parliament (IDEA, 2005).

The opinion of the researcher is that the presence of women in the parliament of Malawi has taken a positive direction. However, Malawi being a patriarchal society is burdened with having to accept women to take up leadership positions. In order to consolidate the gains with regard to the numbers of women in parliament, this has to be supported by political leadership that is persuaded of this need and implements policies that are meant to actualise these needs.

5.3 Challenges that women face when in parliamentary politics

As illustrated with regard to challenges that limit women to join parliamentary politics, the in-depth interviews also point out that the challenges of women are also carried over to parliament. These challenges also have an effect of limiting the number of women that make it to parliament.

One readily recognises that the implementation of ensuring equitable access to political positions and decision making positions for men and women, to which Malawi is a signatory, is not eagerly implemented in parliament. It is interesting to note, that out of a total of 14 parliamentary committees, at the time of the interviews for the respondents, only one woman was a chairperson of a parliamentary committee and one woman was a second deputy speaker of parliament.

The opinion of the researcher is that without having women in leadership positions, they will lack political visibility and cannot enjoy adequate media coverage. People will also mistakenly believe that women are incapable of holding political positions. Women will furthermore lack the ability to influence policy and legislation as they will be making their contributions from positions of weakness.

The absence of women in leadership positions agrees with assertions that parliament is patriarchal and this agrees with (SADC, 2000; Karam, 1998; IPU, 1995), who have pointed that women are also likely to face obstacles even in parliament.

By failing to take up leadership positions in parliament, it is a big challenge for women members of parliament because they are unable to effectively engage in political participation. This falls short of (Teorell, 2006; Verba, 1996) who respectively say political participation are activities that influence the government by affecting its choices and that participation is a means by which governing officials are induced to respond to the needs and preferences of the public. The strength of women lies in numbers through which they can influence their aspirations (Geisler, 2004, p. 174). The absence of the numbers therefore is a challenge for Malawi's parliament.

Caution, needs to be exercised in believing that numbers can influence change for women and that parliamentarians can share the same aspirations. Women, even from the same party can have conflicting aspirations (Geisler, 2004) and that not all women share ideals for which they are supposed to be associated with (SADC, 2000; Taylor and Conradie, 1997).

One respondent pointed out that much as all members of parliament talk about development, they are likely to toe party line and not push their own agenda as individuals or even as a group of women. This agrees with Elgie and Devlin

(2008) who have noted that women are likely to conform to political party direction.

In agreement with SADC (2000) women parliamentarians have admitted that they lack skills and even financial resources that can make them to participate effectively in politics. This is a big challenge to the women that are in parliament.

In general, much as the people view parliament and society as being patriarchal, often the women that win parliamentary seats are willing to contest at subsequent elections. Therefore, this means that there is always space for women in parliamentary politics in Malawi.

5.4 Proposed strategies to improve parliamentary participation for women through entry to parliament and reduction of challenges they face when in politics

This theme has emerged in order to identify strategies that could be implemented to improve the low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi.

The view of the respondents is that effective women organisations could play a huge role to change the patriarchal attitudes that are prevalent in political and traditional leaders. It has been demonstrated that political leaders while professing that they want to have women in power; neither do they readily accept to put women in leadership positions nor do they show willingness to change policies that could be favourable to increase women in parliament. The current involvement of the civil society in campaigns like the 50:50 that was aimed at ensuring equitable access to parliament and decision making positions was done on an ad hoc basis. This makes the gains that have been realised in the numbers of women to parliament to be fragile. The coming out of the Gender Coordination Network (GCN) for example, could be crucial in taking forward the 50:50 campaign. Lessons from the 50:50 campaign should be documented and properly addressed. If the donors are to continue supporting the programme, this should be done on a continuous manner and not only during elections. Furthermore,

problems within the women's movements could be addressed at appropriate times, when the election fever is long gone.

Political visibility needs to be enhanced for women, while in parliament so that the electorate should view that women are elected to parliament not just to add up numbers, but to participate in issues and to shape the priorities of government. While attitudes take a long time to change, women, if granted visibility would be seen as partners and not just as people that are meant to support the agenda of men in parliament. This could be achieved by giving positions to women in parliament and making the women's caucus, which is a grouping for all women members of parliament, to be vibrant and well coordinated with its interactions with government and other stakeholders like political leaders and donors.

A vibrant women's caucus could be a viable platform to articulate women's issues given its diversity in membership, because it constitutes all women members of parliament across the political divide and it also includes women cabinet ministers.

A long term strategy could be to empower women through business ventures as well as education. An empowered woman would likely be able to meaningfully take part in politics. This study, for example, among other issues has constantly agreed with various development theorists, that argue that self reliance and the need to take charge of one's own destiny including political careers, is crucial for development.

5.5 Conclusion

The analysis which was presented in this chapter was from data that was collected though in-depth interviews as well as an analysis of documents. The analysis was on three themes that emerged from the research, namely: challenges that limit women to join parliamentary politics, challenges that women face when in parliamentary politics and proposed strategies to improve

parliamentary participation for women through entry to parliament and reduction of challenges they face when in politics.

The analysis shows that the participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi is faced by many challenges. The patriarchal nature of political leaders in political parties as well as parliament itself being patriarchal featured highly in the analysis. A vibrant civil society which could change the attitudes of the leaders of political parties and help them to remove policies that restrict women participation was considered.

The last chapter will deal with recommendations that could be employed with regard to the problem of low participation of women in politics. A conclusion highlighting major findings from each chapter will also be made.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The research, as stated in chapter one was aimed at investigating reasons for the low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi in order to see how this could be improved.

In this regard, there were three research questions which this study was addressing. The following research questions were dealt with during the research:

a) What are the underlying reasons for low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi?

b) How do these reasons affect participation of women in parliamentary politics?

c) How can the low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi be improved?

It was shown that women are in majority and that development goals could not be reached without them and that the present global and regional trends are moving towards accommodating women in politics and decision making positions. SADC, for example is advocating for a minimum of 30 % representation in parliament and decision making positions with some countries already signing protocols to have an equitable distribution of political and decision making positions. Politics was shown to be a very important variable in development.

Issues of patriarchy in party and even in parliament emerged as lowering the participation of women in politics, coupled to a perceived unfair electoral system

and the failure of women movements to meaningfully assist women to gain access to parliament. Women themselves failed to assist each other due to differences in ideologies and the lack of necessary skills both before they join politics and when in politics.

Quotas were seen as a viable route to fast track access of women to parliament but were seen to work best in proportional representation electoral systems. However, it was noted that the best case studies with women parliamentary representations like Nordic countries achieved their feat due to lobbying efforts of women movements and not due to changed constitutions.

The data showed that women increases in Malawi are still fragile and are largely linked to political party affiliation. More needs to be done to change the attitudes of gatekeepers in politics both in political parties and in parliament and that this should be reflected with changed policies.

Amongst the strategies to improve the low participation of women in politics was the need to improve the work of women movements by ensuring continuous lobbying efforts in order to change attitudes and restrictive laws and to increase the visibility of women in parliament. Long-term strategies of education and economic empowerment to women were also seen as viable.

The themes that emerged from the research were as follows:

a) Challenges that limit women to join parliamentary politics;

b) Challenges that women face when in parliamentary politics;

c) Proposed strategies to improve parliamentary participation for women through entry to parliament and reduction of challenges they face when in politics.

6.2 Conclusion

6.2.1 The problem of the electoral system

Although there is debate regarding an electoral system which can be used in Malawi, with some advocating for a proportional representation system, pointers are to the effect that a PR electoral system may not be adopted soon.

The PR is seen as a best chance to increase the number of women in parliament as has been the case been with Mozambique and South Africa. With PR, parties can voluntarily improve access of women to parliament by increasing the number of women candidates on their candidates' lists. However, in the absence of a PR system, lobbying efforts could see parties relaxing their rules and being supportive of women candidates in general and could improve the numbers for women in parliament just like the Nordic countries did.

6.2.2 The electoral code of conduct

All the respondents cited unfair electoral practices like issues of handouts to the electorate and bribery to influential people in constituencies. The elections were also characterised by mudslinging and were not largely on issues. These malpractices largely work to the disadvantage of women, who often are not violent people. For example, it is largely perceived to be normal to give handouts and gifts to the electorate during elections.

A soul search about such behaviours and other malpractices could lead to a change of rules that govern the conduct of elections. Enforcement of such rules could change the environment under which elections are conducted and could work to the advantage of women.

6.2.3 The role of government in the 50:50 campaign

Often, the involvement of government in the 50:50 campaign was viewed with suspicion. Government was perceived to be sympathetic to its candidates and was accused of favouring them. Perhaps, the role of government could dwell on providing a favourable policy environment that could see adherence to protocols to which it is a signatory.

Furthermore, civil society should work continuously on the issues of empowering women by lobbying for their increased opportunities and even by taking the campaign to parliament where women face further challenges of patriarchy and skills to effectively do their work.

6.2.4 Empowerment of women parliamentarians

When the women parliamentarians have won their seats, they also need to be empowered. This could come from networking where they are able to learn from their colleagues in Malawi and in the SADC region and other bodies. As women improve their skills, as they become politically visible through their voice as an interest group and as individuals with positions, they would be self reliant people capable of taking charge of their destinies and those aspiring for parliamentary political office could emulate them.

6.3 Recommendations

The next section deals with recommendations for the research. Areas which may need further research are also highlighted.

6.3.1 The parliament of Malawi

The parliament of Malawi should increase the number of women in leadership positions in committees and should in future consider having a woman as a Speaker. This would empower the women and could improve their political visibility. The general public will start believing and accepting that women are capable of holding leadership positions.

An audit on the role of the women's caucus, a grouping for all women members of parliament needs to be conducted. Such an analysis would clarify the aspirations of the women, improve their networks and help in the actualisation of their interests as a group.

Periodic assessments of rules that govern the conduct of business in parliament need to be done and where there are changes, they should take into account concerns that apply to women members of parliament. Women who are also in parliament need tailor-made trainings to improve their political skills.

6.3.2 Areas for more research

There is need for more research on the effect of increased numbers of women in parliament. Researchers could question for example, what impact if any, have more women numbers done to the parliament of Malawi.

Importantly, Malawi could learn from its counterparts in the SADC region like the Republic of South Africa and Mozambique if increased numbers of women has helped in changing the policy agenda and shaping up the priorities of government. Where there are problems, possibly such research could highlight how increased numbers of women could lead to a good impact on policy outcomes.

Furthermore, there is a need for more research on the aspirations of women in Malawi or indeed in SADC. Issues of interest to women parliamentarians once identified like land rights, HIV/AIDS policies, domestic violence, early education and childcare and fighting anti-social behaviour among others, could be assessed in policy outcomes and budget statements in order to measure the progress of having more women numbers in parliament.

6.3.3 Concerns for a few countries in SADC and donors

The data has pointed that a few countries within SADC still remain with many challenges with regard to improving the participation of their women in politics. Zimbabwe and Botswana which use quotas in constituency based systems could consider changing their electoral systems, perhaps to proportional representation.

With the presence of women groups for parliamentarians, such groups should become more visible and better networked within the region in order to learn from each other and to improve their lobbying efforts. In the absence of a regional parliament for SADC, the SADC Parliamentary Forum should work more in its lobbying efforts to have more women in parliaments within the region. It should be seen for example, to be shameful for countries not to have high numbers of women in their parliaments.

Similarly, donors should consider funding campaigns for equal representation in parliaments on a continuous and stable basis. Civic education to people on the need to have more women in parliament would be crucial.

REFERENCES

Ashfar, H. (Ed.) (1996). *Women and Politics in the Third World*. London: Routledge.

Beckman, P.R. & D'Amico F. (Eds.) (1994). *Women, gender and world politics: Perspectives, policies and prospects*. Wesport: Bergin.

Boyce, C. & Neale, P. (2006). *Conducting In-Depth Interviews: A Guide for Designing and Conducting In-Depth Interviews for Evaluation Input*. Pathfinder International.

Britton, H. E. (2005). *Women in the South African Parliament. From Resistance to Governance.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Burkey, S. (1993). *People First A guide to Self –Reliant, Participatory Rural Development*. London: Zed.

Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (2009). *A review meeting report on 50:50 campaign held at Hippo View Lodge on 30th June, 2009*.Lilongwe: (unpublished).

Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (2009). *National analysis of 50:50 campaign covering civil society organisations' involvement, actual female aspirants experiences and challenges*. Lilongwe: (unpublished).

Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (2009). *Media coverage report on participation of women in the 2009 general elections from November 2008 to January 2009*. Lilongwe: (unpublished).

Chambers, R. (1983). *Rural Development: Putting The Last First.* London: Longman Group.

Conway, M "Women and Political Participation" *Political Science and Politics*, Vol.34, (2), 2001, pp.231-233.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.*

Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (2nd ed.) .Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.*

De Beer, F. & Swanepoel, H. (1996). *Guide for community capacity building. A guide for community workers and community leaders*. Halfway House: International Thomson Publishing.

De Beer, F. & Swanepoel, H. (1998). *Community Development and beyond. Issues, structures and procedures.* Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik.

De Beer, F. & Swanepoel, H. (2000). *Introduction to Development Studies (2nd Ed.).* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Dulani, B. Consolidating Malawi's Democracy. In K. G. Adar, A. Hamdok & J. Rukambe (Eds.) *Electoral Process and the Prospects for Democracy Consolidation*. Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa. 2008, pp.71-92.

Elgie, R. & Devlin, C. "The Effect of Increased Women's Representation in Parliament: The Case of Rwanda*" Parliamentary Affairs, Vol. 61, No.2, 2008, pp.237-254*.

Geisler, G. (2004). *Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation and Representation.* Uppsala, Spain: The Nordic Africa Institute.

Gould, C. (1988). *Rethinking democracy: Freedom and social cooperation in politics, economy and society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2004).*The Implementation of Quotas: African Experiences*. Stockholm: IDEA.

Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2005). *Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers*. Stockholm: IDEA.

Inter-Parliamentary Union (1995). *Women in Parliaments 1945-1995: A world statistical survey*. Geneva: IPU

Inter-Parliamentary Union eBulletin, 2006, March 15.

Inter-Parliamentary Union eBulletin, 2009, October 15.

Inter-Parliamentary Union (2010). *Women in Parliaments: World Classifications*. Geneva: IPU.

Jahan, R. (1996). *The Pakistan Development Review, Vol. 35: Part II (winter 1996) pp.825-834.Retrieved on 31 March 2010 on www.googlescholar.com.*

Karam, A. (1998). *Women in parliament: Beyond numbers*. Stockholm: IDEA.

Korten, D. C. (1984). People-centred development: toward a framework. In: Korten, D.C. & Klauss, R. (Eds.). *People-centred development: contributions toward theory and planning frameworks*. West Hartford: Kumarian.

Lowe-Morna, C. (1996). *Strategies for increasing women's participation in politics*: A paper prepared for the commonwealth Ministers responsible for women's affairs fifth meeting in Trinidad Tobago in 1996: Johannesburg (unpublished)

Malawi Electoral Commission (1994). Presidential and Parliamentary Elections Results.

Malawi Electoral Commission (1999).Presidential and Parliamentary Elections Results.

Malawi Electoral Commission (2004).Presidential and Parliamentary Elections Results.

Malawi Electoral Commission (2009). Presidential and Parliamentary Elections Results.

Malawi Housing and Population Census, (2008);

Malawi National Assembly Delegation Report, (2009). *Report on the seminar for chairpersons and members of parliamentary bodies dealing with gender equality: Geneva, Switzerland, 28th -29th September, 2009* (unpublished).

Malawi Government (1994). The Constitution of the Republic of Malawi.

Matlosa, K. The 2004 General Election in South Africa. In K. G. Adar, A. Hamdok & J. Rukambe (Eds.) *Electoral Process and the Prospects for Democracy Consolidation*. Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa. 2008, pp.109-138.

Merriam, S. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice, example for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco: Jossey –Bass Publications.

Miller, D.C. (1992). "The competitive model of democracy". In G. Duncan (ed.) *Prospects for democracy: North, South, East, West*. Oxford: Polity Press.

Monaheng, T. (1998). *Participation and human development: some implementation problems. Africanus, 28(1).*

Neuman W. L. (2006). *Social Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches (6th Ed).*

Reynolds, A. *Women in African Legislatures and executives: The slow climb to power*. A paper presented at Electoral institute of South Africa (EISA) roundtable discussion on "Putting women in power: Free and fair elections 1999)," Braamfontein-February 23, 1999.

Richardson, J. (2001) .*European Union: power and policy making (2nd Ed.).* London: Routledge.

Romm, N. "Critical Theory and Development." In J. K. Coetzee, J. Graaff, F. Hendricks, G. Wood (Eds.) *Development, Theory, and Practice.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press .2001, pp 141-152.

Rowlands, J. (1995). *Empowerment examined. Development in Practice, 5(2).*

Southern Africa Development Community (2000). "*Women in Politics and Decision Making in SADC: Beyond 30% in 2005 (2nd Ed.)." Report of the proceedings of a conference held in Gaberone, Botswana, 28 March-1 April 1999.* Gaborone: SADC.

SADC Parliamentary Forum (2006). *SADC Parliamentary Forum strategic plan*. Solitare Press: Windhoek.

Silverman, D. (Ed.) (2004). *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*. London: Sage.

Snynder, M. and Tadesse, M. (1995). *African Women and Development: A History.* London: Zed Books.

Strauss, A. (1987).*Qualitative analysis for social scientists*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tamale, S. (1999). *When hens begin to crow*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview.

Taylor, V. & Conradie, I. (1997). *We have been taught by life itself: Empowerment of women as leaders*. Cape Town: SADEP.

Teorell, J. "Political participation and three theories of democracy: A research inventory and agenda." *European Journal of Political Research,* Vol. 45, 2006, pp. 787-810.

United Nations (1995). *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. Geneva: United Nations

United Nations (1995). *Report to the fifth world conference on women held in Beijing in 1995*. Geneva: United Nations.

Verba, S. "The citizen as respondent: Sample surveys and American Democracy." *The American Political Science Review* Vol.90, No.1, (Mar., 1996), pp.1-7.

Verba, S. & Nie, N. (1972). *Participation in America: Political democracy and social equality*. New York: Harper & Row.

Appendix 1

List of in-depth questions to respondents

The interview questions followed three thematic areas of underlying reasons for low participation of women in politics in Malawi, how these reasons affected participation of women in politics and how the low participation of women in parliamentary politics could be improved.

What are the underlying reasons for low participation of women in parliamentary politics in Malawi?

a) What challenges do women face when they want to join politics?
b) What challenges do women face when they are in politics?
c) What issues discourage women in politics?

How do these reasons affect participation of women in politics?

a) How do women parliamentarians want to participate in politics?
b) How do women want their challenges in politics to be addressed?
c) Why have women been unable to improve their participation?
d) What changes have women made or pushed for change using their influence as female parliamentarians?
e) What issues are of importance to women parliamentarians?

How can the low participation of women in parliamentary politics be improved in Malawi?

a) How have women candidates been helped to participate in politics?
b) Which strategies have proved effective in improving the participation of women in politics?

c) Which strategies have not been effective in improving the participation of women in politics?
d) How do women members of parliament want to improve their participation in politics.

Appendix 2

List of interviewees for the in-depth questions

Chris Chisoni
Grenner Gambatula
Loveness Gondwe
Jean Kalilani
Aloisious Nthenda
Nancy Tembo