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Where Did Things Go Wrong? An Investigation of the Adoption of the Creative Industry and Creative Economy Concepts in the Malawi National Cultural Policy

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MA Research Report Topic:

Where Did Things Go Wrong? An Investigation of the Adoption of the Creative Industry and Creative Economy Concepts in the Malawi National Cultural Policy.

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Thesis submitted to University of the Witwatersrand in partial fulfilment of requirements of degree of Master of Arts by Coursework and Research Report in the field of Cultural Policy and Management

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

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Name of Student: Yotam Phiri

Signature:  …….

Date: 31 July 2023

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Table of Contents

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION 2
Acknowledgements 3
List of Figures 6
Abbreviations and Acronyms 7
SECTION 1: Research Overview: 9
1.1. Introduction 9
1.2. Problem Statement: 10
1.3. Research Aims 11
1.4. Research Questions 12
1.5. Research Justification 12
1.6. Conceptual Framework and Literature Review 15
1.7. Research Methods 16
1.8. The Structure of the Research Report: 16
SECTION 2: Appreciating the Landscape of the National Cultural Policy: 18
2.1 Introduction 19
2.2. Historical Background: Malawi's Unwritten Cultural Policy 19
2.3. Malawi's Written Cultural Policy: Towards Democratisation of the Arts and Culture Sector 21
2.4. All is Not Well: The Enactment of the National Cultural Policy 24
SECTION 3: THE PERCEPTION OF A FAILED NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY IN MALAWI: GUIDING LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK : 26
3.1. Introduction 26
3.2. The Value of the Arts and Culture to Governments 26
3.3. Cultural Policy Development and Design 27
3.4. Situating Cultural Policy 29
3.5. Elaborating the Conceptual Framework 30
SECTION 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: 33
4.1. Philosophical Underpinnings 33
4.2. An Overview of the Data Collection Process 33
4.2.1. Research Instruments 34
Interviews 34
Purposive Sampling 34
Document Analysis 35
Retrospective Ethnography 35
Observation 36
4.3. Data Analysis 37

4.4. Trustworthiness 38
4.5. Ethical Considerations and Research Limitations 39
SECTION FIVE: INSUFFICIENT RECONTEXTUALISATION AND THE FAILURE OF THE NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY: 42
5.1. Introduction 42
5.2. Recontextualisation of the Creative Industry and Creative Economy Concepts to Malawi's Arts and Culture Sector 42
How Transferable Were the Creative Industry and Creative Economy Concepts? 43
Arriving at the Development Dimension; the Alignment of the National Cultural Policy in the National Development Agenda 49
An Incoherent Vision 51
Evidence that the National Cultural Policy is "Working": The Economic Imperative and Tangible Success 54
5.3. The Democratisation Predicament: Centralised Authority in Democratic Malawi 57
SECTION SIX: ADDRESSING THE FAILURE OF THE NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY: RECOMMENDATIONS 60
6.1. Introduction 60
6.2. (Re)Defining Malawi's Arts and Culture Domain 60
"We Have a Very Rich Culture": Developing Strategic Choices for Malawi's Arts and Culture Sector 62
6.3. Fostering Collaborative Governance 65
SECTION 7: CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD: 69
7.1. What Did the Research Study Establish? 69
The National Cultural Policy Must Exist in the Past, the Present, and the Future 69
The Economic Imperative Was Flawed 70
A Vibrant Arts and Culture Sector, Not Just Infrastructure is Key to Development 71
The Need for Democratic Governance in a Democratic State 71
7.2. Way Forward and Further Research 72
BIBLIOGRAPHY: 74
APPENDICES: 83
APPENDIX A: Interview Questions for Non-state Actors 83
APPENDIX B: Interview Questions for Government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies 84
APPENDIX C: Interview Participants 85
APPENDIX D: The 2022 National Conference on Arts and Culture, Malawi Programme 87
APPENDIX E: List of Participants at the 2022 National Conference on Arts and Culture, Malawi 89

List of Figures

Figure 1: A timeline illustrating the political eras, and key historical and contemporary cultural policy moments and changes……..18

Figure 2: Illustration of the centralised hierarchical governance structure of the arts and culture sector from the single party era and during the development of the National Cultural Policy ……..19

Figure 2: The conceptual framework model used in the research study……..…….31

Figure 3: Illustration of the revised hierarchical governance structure of the arts and culture sector following the national public sector reforms programme ……66

Abbreviations and Acronyms

BAF	Blantyre Arts Festival
BPAM	Book Publishers Association of Malawi
COSOMA	Copyright Society of Malawi
DCMS	The Department for Culture, Media, and Sport
DHRMD	The Department of Humans Resources Management and Development
EP & D	(Department of) Economic Planning and Development
ERP	Economic Recovery Plan
EU	European Union
FAMA	Film Association of Malawi
JUMA	Journalists Union of Malawi
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
KRA	Key Result Area
LYCO	Light of Youth Creative Organisation
MAWU	Malawi Writers Union
MDAs	(Government) Ministries Departments or Agencies
MGDSI	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy Phase One
MGDSII	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy Phase Two
MGDSIII	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy Phase Three
MUM	Musicians Union of Malawi
MW2063	Malawi Vision 2063
NaHeC	National Arts and Heritage Council
NSO	National Statistical Office of Malawi
NTAM	National Theatre Association of Malawi
OPC	Office of The President and Cabinet

PAMA	Poetry Association of Malawi
PHOTAMA	Photographers Association of Malawi
VAAM	Visual Arts Association of Malawi
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO-NATCOM	Malawi National Commission for UNESCO

SECTION 1: Research Overview:

1.1. Introduction

In February 2015 Malawi's inaugural National Cultural Policy (hereafter referred to as the National Cultural Policy) was enacted to support the central objectives of the national development agenda of poverty reduction, sustainable socio-economic development, and the increased sense of national identity and unity through Malawi's arts and culture (Government of Malawi, 2015: 7). The National Cultural Policy filled the previous void caused by the absence of a strategic direction for Malawi's arts and culture sector since a democratic system of governance was adopted in 1994. The National Cultural Policy that is underscored by the centrality of the arts and culture in nation-building and planning represented a major ideological shift from the autocratic system of the Single Party regime of 1964 - 1993 which was to preserve and popularise "Malawianess" under the growing "threat" of globalisation[1] to complement, rather than be a part of the central political agenda (Lwanda and Phoya, 2014; Zimba, 2019; Phiri, 2021).

Despite the National Cultural Policy heralding that it would bring together all players in the cultural sector toward achieving a common set of goals and a unified vision (Government of Malawi, 2015: 7) the eight (8) years since its enactment have been notable for the disparities between what the document espouses, and what has been implemented as "effective" policy delivery. As an officer in the Department of Arts, I have witnessed how this disparity has manifests amongst arts and culture managers, privately owned arts and culture organisations, institutions, and the creative civil society (hereafter referred to as non-state actors) as the perceived failure of the National Cultural Policy and its objectives[2]. This research study research investigates the failure of the National Cultural Policy to reconcile developing a collective set of goals reflective of the needs of its intended beneficiaries, with the maximisation of the contribution

[1] Despite his Western upbringing and Western political orientation, then president Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda believed Malawi was under threat from "Western cultural decadence". This he emphasised was most evident in the way youths dressed and behaved which were not in accordance with "ethics of African tradition". See Lwanda, J. L. C., and Phoya, M., M. (2014). *Academia*. Malawi at 50: Culture, Music, and Sport.

[2] As recently as 7th March 2022, non-state actors held demonstrations before submitting a petition to members of the August House of parliament for the expedited tabling of the National Arts and Heritage Council (NaHeC Bill). The enactment of the parliamentary bill would enact the establishment of NaHeC. Non-state actors adopted this course of action on the back of disillusionment over the continued delays in establishing NaHeC -as espoused in the National Cultural Policy- that they believe will improve the welfare of artists and provide a channel through which the government can demonstrate its support for the arts and culture sector. See Mlozi., H. (2022). Mwana Wosalira Amafera Kumbuyo. *Nation Online*. Online. URL: https://www.mwnation.com/mwana-wosalira-amafera-kumbuyo/.

to the arts and culture to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in line with the central government's[3] agenda, and how this failure leads to perceptions of the National Cultural Policy as a failure.

1.2. Problem Statement:

The National Cultural Policy was developed against the backdrop of global discourse surrounding cultural policy, and its function(s) in governance and development. Some of these discourses are centred on what those in charge of it do, and the consequences of their actions; as synonymous with the visual and performing arts; as the link between creativity, culture, and the economy; and arts and culture as it relates to peoples' identities and way of living (Matarasso and Landry, 1999; McGuigan, 2004; Singh, 2010; Craik, McAllister, and Davis, 2013). In designating the arts and culture sector as a driver for socio-economic development (Malawi Government, 2015: 8), the National Cultural Policy was anchored in discourse on the arts and culture and the economy. An approach rooted in the concepts of the creative industry, and the creative economy, popularised in the Global North where the economic benefits of the arts and culture have been leveraged for their ability to achieve mass outcomes and aligned centrally in national development agendas (Holden, 2009; De Beukelaer and O'Connor, 2016: 28). While this intention for the National Cultural Policy to directly contribute towards enhancing the economy helps to validate the newly acknowledged importance of the arts and culture sector in national development strategies[4], there is a general perception amongst non-state actors of a misplaced vision, and a set of goals placed on the arts and culture sector that do not meet the needs of what should be the document's intended beneficiaries, nor the realities on the ground[5].

This research study is therefore an investigation of the extent to which concepts of the development dimension of the arts and culture applied in Global North contexts can be applied to Global South contexts

[3] In this paper, the central government is the term applied to the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) in addition to key MDAs in the implementation of the national development agendas such as iterations of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, the Ministry of Finance, and the Treasury Department.

[4] The arts and culture were highlighted (for the first time) in the national development agenda; the (then) Malawi Growth and Development Strategy Phase II (2011-2016) and its successor, Malawi Growth and Development Strategy Phase III (2017–2022), the national medium to long-term development plans with a mandate to turn Malawi into a productive nation competing on the global stage while ensuring that the nation builds systems that deal with natural shocks and disasters. These were subsequently succeeded by the Malawi Vision 2063 a long-term development strategy for the development of Malawi into a self-reliant industrialized 'upper-middle-income country', with emphasis on inclusivity, self-reliance, and a youth-centric approach.

[5] A recent criticism from the President of the Lilongwe Crafts Association was that the government in its implementation of the Cultural Policy continuously fails to meet their expectations of providing an enabling environment for the perpetual creation and production of goods. He lamented that all efforts are for naught without the establishment of the National Arts and Heritage Council (NaHeC). See Department of Arts. (2019). 'Item 6: Way Forward'. Minutes of Arts & Crafts US Market Entry Requirements Meeting 19 May 2019, Capital Hotel, Lilongwe.

such as that of Malawi. This research study challenges t that the failings of the National Cultural Policy result from the failure to reconcile the relationship between the two (2) processes of the transition of Malawi's side-lining of the arts and culture from the development agenda to its newly acknowledged importance (emphasised by its more central alignment). My research hypothesis is that the failed attempts to mimic Global North concepts without contextualizing them to the Malawian arts and culture landscape throughout the policy circle contributed to the manifestation of a failed cultural policy.

1.3. Research Aims

Cultural policy has taken a marked shift in the 20th Century towards policy that ignores the distinctive attributes of both cultural creativity and cultural products towards an economic agenda (Galloway and Dunlop, 2007). The arts and culture sector have been increasingly re-defined as creative industries, and the potential economic benefits have become a lure for governments who feel the need to be seen to be supportive of, and engaged with this emerging industry sector (Craik, 2007). The result of which is the increasing desire for governments to instrumentalise arts and culture as a means for boosting national development through increased revenue generation (Yudicè, 2003) and the rise of cultural policies that set out heavily industry-centric approaches to guide the arts and culture sector that overrides important "public good" arguments for state support of culture (Galloway and Dunlop, 2007). However, scholars have argued that public policy cannot simply be a set of rules and guidelines made on behalf of the state by its various instruments (Singh, Thomas, and Harris, 2013; Hudson, Hunter, and Peckham, 2019). Against this background, this research study seeks to add to the argument of the importance of not subsuming cultural policy to an economic agenda. As such this research investigates the National Cultural Policy, and the extent to which it is hampered by this recent attention to the arts and culture sector under the umbrella of an industry approach to explore why it has subsequently failed.

This research study done through the investigation of the National Cultural Policy in its present state acquires an understanding of how the contrasts in the positioning of the arts and culture sector across the two political systems has had an impact (positive and/or negative) on the development and design of the policy. The investigation also seeks to trace the formulation of the National Cultural Policy and the processes and mechanisms utilised for its enactment. Through this investigation, the research aims to isolate the strengths and weaknesses, as well as identify any possible barriers that may have arisen in the final design of the National Cultural Policy. Following the tracing of the policy formulation, the research identifies the disconnects between the concepts of the development agenda and the realities of Malawi's arts and culture sector. Finally, the research study establishes whether the National Cultural Policy has indeed failed and if so, establishes where it went wrong. It is envisaged that the research will result in

recommendations to provide greater synergy between the adopted Global North concepts and measures, and the Malawian context for a more effective cultural policy moving forward.

1.4. Research Questions

Zohrabi (2013) posits that qualitative research is an exploratory inquiry concerned with answering questions concerning a particular social occurrence, or policy operations in a particular context. In this study, the research seeks to provide answers to the following questions:

1. How applicable are Global North concepts of the creative industry, or creative economy to Malawi?
2. What was the process used to develop the National Cultural Policy formulation and design, and to what extent were the needs of non-state actors captured?
3. What are the perceived gaps in the National Cultural Policy, and how can these be addressed?

These central questions helped to determine the research methodology. The answers to these questions provide the clarity required to develop a cultural policy that is best suited to making the impactful changes that Malawi needs in the medium to long term.

1.5. Research Justification

During the 20th Century, debate in the Global North – those nations which are characterised by a high level of economic and industrial development typically located to the north of less industrialised nations - emerged around national development (whereby national development referred to the ability of a country to improve the standard of living) and whether the arts have a viable role in this process. Questioning around the suitability of the arts subjected governments to continually face the need to justify any continued public expenditure for a sector that was viewed as not being part of the real business of politics, nor the economy (Throsby, 1994; 2009; Holden, 2009). The justification(s) came to be founded upon the rationalisation provided of the connection between culture, creativity, and the economy. This was exponentially influenced by the United Kingdom's Department of Media, Culture, and Sports' (DMCS) report of 1998[6] responsible for the emergence of the term "creative industries" – defined as those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill, and talent which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property (DMCS 1998) - into the

[6] The inclusion of arts and culture products with intellectual property-based elements helped to classify them as commodities and as a result, their commercial success emerged as the arbiter of value, emphasised the notion that "what sold mattered". See Banks (2015: 37), for a concise argument on the complexities of the introduction of the creative industries into discourse on development through the arts and culture.

lexicon. Similarly, the United Nations Council for Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) Creative Economy Report for 2008[7] and its comprehensive view of the rapidly growing global trade in goods and services ranging from traditional arts and crafts to technology-driven products such as film, audio-visual works, and "new media" products such as digital animation and videogames helped in popularising the term "creative economy" (De Beukelaer and O'Connor, 2016). These documents attached a "development dimension" to the arts and culture that speaks both to politics and economics because they quantify the importance of the arts and culture sector as an "industry" through its propensity to create jobs and generate revenue (Yudicè, 2003; Holden, 2009; O'Connor and Gibson, 2016). Similarly, this development dimension became the guiding principle that development agencies and international organisations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) proffered to assist developing countries to harness and leverage, to tackle economic and technological issues as core development objectives in contemporary policy.

This therefore cast the arts and culture as a catalyst to enhance economic and social wealth (Craik, McAllister, and Davis 2003; 21). Against this background, the Malawi Department of Culture[8] seeking to meet the central political agenda attempted to transfer the development dimension framework to the National Cultural Policy. Because its application in Global North contexts was viewed as the template through which to develop a cultural policy that would have a positive impact on national development through increasing the arts and culture sector's contribution to the GDP. This paves the way for many problems because according to Kaya and Seleti (2013: 32), the cultural governance structures and cultural values that the development dimension was founded on are inherently different from those existing in most African societies. Similarly, in such societies where historically the relationship between the government and the role of the arts is complicated, the emphasis on industry and economy in cultural policy overlooks the propensity for arts and culture to assist in nation-building regardless of any

[7] The Report recognizes that creativity and human talent are quickly becoming powerful engines for economic growth and development, and therefore calls for the adoption of effective cross-cutting mechanisms and concerted inter-ministerial policy action. See United Nations. (2008). Creative Economy Report: The Challenge of Assessing the Creative Economy: Towards Informed Policy-making. Geneva: United Nations.

[8] In this paper, the term the Department of Culture refers to the unit within the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Wildlife. This unit that is comprised of the autonomous Department of Arts, the Department of Museums and Monuments, and the Department of National Records and Archives respectively is mandated to provide oversight in the implementation of the National Cultural Policy. This iteration of the Department of Culture emerged in 2014 following the National Reforms Programme that sought to streamline government ministries departments and agencies to ensure better service delivery. However, between 1990 – 2013 the Department of Culture consisted of the office of The Directorate of Culture (the office of The Director of Culture) and five (5) sub-divisions namely: National Archives, the Censorship Board of Malawi, the Museums of Malawi, Antiquities and Arts and Crafts. The Department of Culture. In this guise, the Department of Culture was mandated to oversee the development and promotion of cultural heritage in all identifiable forms.

commercial value they may have (UNESCO 2005: 5). As such, the role of cultural policy as Galloway and Dunlop (2007: 29) argue should be to ensure creating the space for different types of cultural expression and fostering public support for arts and culture.

Against this background, the research study explores how the overt mimicry of the Global North in the National Cultural Policy places the development dimension as the basis of what is needed in the Malawian context, and how this culminates into a failed policy.

The past four (4) years have seen the emergence of texts on the National Cultural Policy and its implementation, namely Zimba (2019) and Phiri (2021). Whereas the former argues that the implementation of the National Cultural Policy is affected by the tensions between the values of democratic governance, and the existence of outdated legislation that inform the governance structure, the latter argues that the failure of the implementation of the National Cultural Policy results from centralised-authority mechanisms within the governance structure, and external pressures exerted by the central government that negated the Department of Culture's ability to establish arm's-length institutions. While both texts offer significant insights into how, and when, the democratic government introduced the arts and culture centrally in the national development agenda, and some of the barriers to the implementation of the National Cultural Policy, there remains room for further investigation. The research study sees the need to investigate how centralised governance and the external pressures exerted by the central government may have informed the processes and mechanisms of the National Cultural Policy's formulation, and the impacts (if any) these may have had on the policy's design. Similarly, the research study can establish whether the subsequent failures in the policy's implementation can be traced back to the policy's design – the processes followed in developing the National Cultural Policy and the subsequent final policy document - and how this manifest as perceptions of the policy's failure.

The National Cultural Policy document is due for an evaluation review process[9]. This research study, therefore, takes on greater significance as it can provide a "situational analysis" of the National Cultural Policy by outlining the strengths, as well as the shortfalls, and challenges that may have originated from

[9] While the review process was originally slated for the 2021-22 Fiscal Year, this has been postponed until the 2022-23 Fiscal Year due to prioritisation of the completion of the National Reforms Programme and the devolution of the Department of Culture across the major districts. Similarly, programming in the Department of Culture has been affected by a shortage of funding for the activity with the development of the Malawi 2063 Implementation Plan Phase 1 (MIP1) being inserted into the Annual Work Plan while funds are sourced for the National Cultural Policy Review Process. See Department of Arts (2021) Minutes from the Workshop on the Annual Workplan 2021-22.

the policy's formulation and/or design. As cultural policy is deeply contextual and affected by social changes at both global and local levels (Volkerling, 1996; Matarasso and Landry, 1999; O'Connor, 2011, cited in Joffe 2016: 7) it is therefore important to acknowledge the processes, mechanisms, and choices made that culminated in the inaugural cultural policy document and how they may have contributed to the perceived failure at the implementation level. As an officer in the Department of Arts that will have a role in the formulation of the revised cultural policy, I am compelled to acquire a greater understanding of the importance of the steps taken to develop policy, especially when the development dimension remains such a prevalent topic of discussion in global discourse in the field of arts and culture. This research study therefore takes on importance as it provides findings that identify how successful, or limited, adopted policies may be and how to address these from a localised perspective to ensure the production of a cohesive and balanced cultural policy.

1.6. Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

The conceptual framework of this research study is based on literature about the increased awareness that policy development, more especially cultural policy needs to be more dynamic, resilient, and adaptive to ever-changing environments and/or circumstances. Through literature across fields such as cultural policy, cultural studies, and public policy, the study primarily identifies the fast-policy phenomenon (O'Connor and Gu, 2006; Miller, 2009; Keane, 2013), the failure to employ a recontextualisation of the adopted concepts of the creative industry and creative economy to apply to the arts and culture landscape of Malawi (Bernstein, 1975; Singh, Thomas, and Harris, 2013; Joffe, 2016; Nwankwo, 2018; Onyeator,2019), and the failure to recognise the connection between intention (the purpose of the policy document), targets (the measurable/identifiable outputs), instruments (the tools utilised to attain the objectives), and policy framework to how cultural policy is ultimately designed (Matarasso and Landry, 1999; Makoza, 2017; Hudson, Hunter, and Peckham, 2019) as the key factors that contributed towards the manifestation of the perception that the National Cultural Policy is a failure. Analysis of how the combination of these factors has manifested in the prevalent attitude towards the National Cultural Policy utilises a conceptual framework centred on the transfer of policy across unrelated fields using the three (3) tier recontextualisation process according to Singh, Thomas, and Harris (2013), and the "balancing act" of strategic dilemmas in cultural policy as espoused by Matarasso and Landry (1999). This hybridized framework brought the research study into conversation with various studies that have elaborated on the dynamics of policy development and design that have led to the position that any future versions of the National Cultural Policy should include this framework model during the National Cultural Policy Review process and subsequent policy development processes respectively. Section three provides an in-depth

discussion of the literature that informed the study in addition to the application of the conceptual framework.

1.7. Research Methods

This research study is an investigation into the phenomenon of policy failure. The emphasis on coming to appreciate what has led to the National Cultural Policy being perceived as failing by non-state actors places the study in the realm of a qualitative research approach as it utilises interviews, document analysis, and retrospective ethnography to answer questions linked to both experience(s), and multiple perspectives to create a holistic picture of the research problem. The diversity of methods applied in the collection of data was important because as Creswell (2007: 67) posits it aids in providing a richer understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Against this background, the research study employed a total of ten (10) interviews consisting of three (3) with officials representing different government ministries, departments, and agencies and seven (7) from various non-state organisations and/or institutions. Further data was collected through participant observation during the 2022 National Conference on Arts and Culture, and a document analysis of amongst others, legislation across the autocratic (1964 – 1993) and democratic (1994 – present day) periods of Malawi that shaped cultural policy and national development agendas, and strategic documents from the period between 2009 – 2015 that informed the decisions made in developing the National Cultural Policy. Data analysis was done through an interpretative thematic analysis. Section four provides a detailed exposition of the research methodology utilised in this study.

1.8. The Structure of the Research Report:

This research study comprises seven (7) sections.

1. Section One: Research Overview. This section outlines the overview of the study; discusses the background, outlines the aims and rationale, research questions, and explains the significance of the study.
2. Section Two: Appreciating the Landscape of the National Cultural Policy. This section provides a contextual background and history of the National Cultural Policy to provide the backdrop against which the phenomenon under investigation emerged.
3. Section Three: Literature review: This section contains the literature review and outlines the conceptual model applied in the study.
4. Section Four: Research Methodology. This section discusses the research design and elaborates on the qualitative research approach employed for this study.

5. Section Five: Insufficient Recontextualisation and the Failure of the National Cultural Policy. This section provides an in-depth reflection on the research findings and isolates the disconnects that emerged in the development and subsequent design of the National Cultural Policy.
6. Section Six: Addressing the Failure of the National Cultural Policy: This section provides an in-depth reflection of the research findings and suggestions for improving the efficient management of policy implementation in Malawi.
7. Section Seven: Conclusion and Way Forward. In this final section I offer a summary of the research report's contributions and provide solutions and possible directions for future research.

SECTION 2: Appreciating the Landscape of the National Cultural Policy:

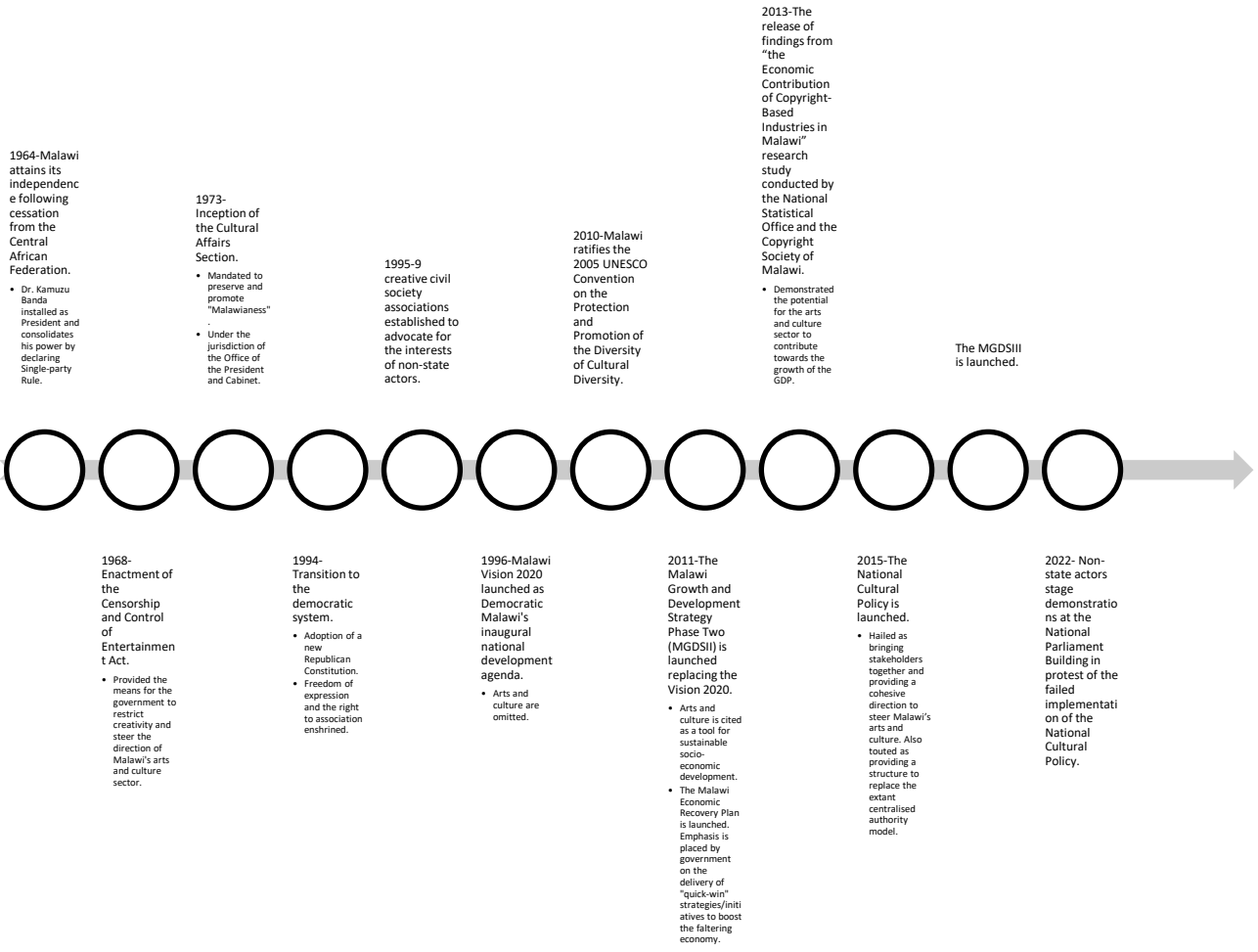

Fig 1: A timeline illustrating the political eras, and key historical and contemporary cultural policy moments and changes.

2.1 Introduction

The research study investigates the phenomenon of policy failure, specifically how the National Cultural Policy has come to be seen as failing to meet its objectives by one of its major beneficiaries (non-state actors). Thomas Schmitt (2011: 22) posits that governance, as it relates to arts and culture, serves as a reflection of historical developments, in politics at international, regional, and local levels. Similarly, Maralack (2021) contests that the desired impact(s) of cultural policy must emanate from the ability of cultural policy to look back at what came before to make necessary improvements in the future. Against this background, this section traces "the journey" of the National Cultural Policy to identify where, why, and how, things may have started to go wrong. In extrapolating some of the contestations of the National Cultural Policy it became easier to do a thorough investigation informed by literature on cultural policy and the conceptual framework to analyse how this manifest in the prevailing attitudes towards the policy document.

2.2. Historical Background: Malawi's Unwritten Cultural Policy

Malawi's cessation from The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland[10], and its subsequent independence in 1964, were built upon the strong wave of anti-colonial sentiments. Lwanda and Phoya (2014: 2) cite that the largely negative, colonial policies, and attitude towards many aspects of indigenous culture, led to a marked revival of pride in African culture that was mobilised into the nationalists' arsenal. Against this background, following independence the political agenda of the nascent Malawi government was to establish Malawi as a sovereign state, in which the arts and culture were identified as being crucial in complementing, but not central to development efforts (Ibid: 3). Although the decade following independence was characterised by an absence of a cultural policy document, there was an evolution in the management of Malawi's arts and culture rooted in both Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda's[11] "Oral Policies"[12], and the formal re-organisation of various ministries and departments superimposed on the existing colonial frameworks (Ibid). The direction of, and the governance of Malawi's arts and culture sector came to be characterised by the aforementioned oral policies such as that youths of Malawi be

[10] Also known as the Central African Federation (CAF), this was a colonial federation that consisted of three (3) southern African territories namely, the self-governing British colony of Southern Rhodesia and the British protectorates of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland that existed between 1953 and 1963.

[11] Dr. Banda was initially appointed as Malawi's first indigenous Prime Minister before taking on the role of President of the Republic of Malawi following independence. He would consolidate power by declaring Malawi a One-Party State under the rule of his Malawi Congress Party (MCP). Dr. Banda would rule from 1964 until the adoption of the democratic governance system in 1994.

[12] As Dr. Banda himself stated: "anything that I say is law. Literally Law" (Short, 1974, cited by Lwanda and Phoya, 2014). Therefore, the oral policies referred to are those decrees by Dr. Banda that became accepted as duties, obligations, rights and crimes during the Single Party era that were enforced by the arms of government.

brought up following the ethics of African tradition[13], which were frequently installed on an ad hoc basis on the predicate that anything Dr. Banda says is the law. These oral policies were consolidated by legislation such as Ordinance Number 17[14], and the establishment of the Cultural Affairs Section (that would ultimately become The Department of Culture[15]) in 1973, instruments that would serve as extensions of The Office of The President in ensuring the preservation and popularisation of "Malawianess" under the growing "threat" of globalisation[16].

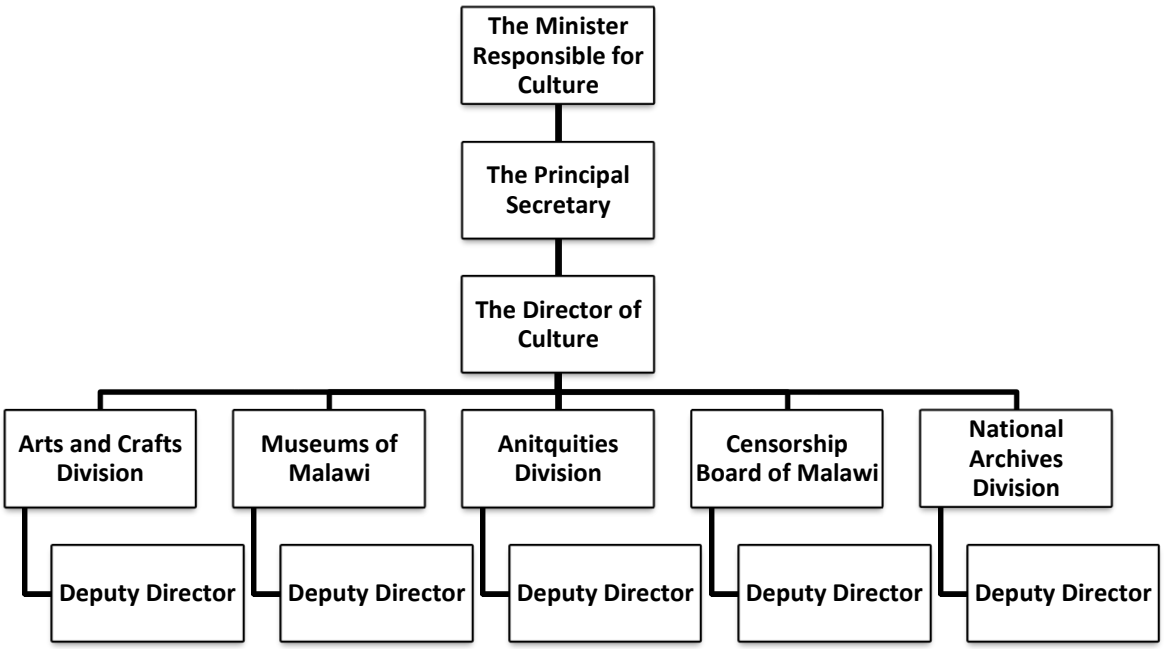

Fig 2: Illustration portraying the centralised hierarchical governance structure of the arts and culture sector.

[13] One such policy arose from the MCP's National Convention of 1968 that decreed the condemnation of all indecent and rough appearances, disrespectful attitudes towards elders which youths tend to copy from foreign countries (MCP Annual Convention Resolution 1968, cited in Kandoole and Phiri 1989).

[14] The decree of Ordinance number 17 of 1963, aimed at encouraging, developing, and administering sports and culture, including recreation and activities of a sporting nature, for all the people of (then) Nyasaland. By way of the order, the National Council for Sports and Culture was constituted.

[15] The Department of Culture headed by the then Director of Culture consisted of the office of The Directorate of Culture (the office of The Director of Culture) and 5 sub-divisions namely: National Archives, the Censorship Board of Malawi, the Museums of Malawi, Antiquities and Arts and Crafts. The Department of Culture -through the: 1947 National Archives Act, 1968 Control of Censorship and Entertainment Act, 1989 Museums Act, 1989 Copyright Act,1990 Monuments and Relicts Act and the 1990 Arts and Crafts Act- was mandated to oversee the development and promotion of cultural heritage in all identifiable forms and had a direct influence in determining the direction of the arts and crafts sector.

[16] Despite his Western upbringing and Western political orientation, then president Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda believed Malawi was under threat from "Western cultural decadence". See, Lwanda, J. L. C., and Phoya, M., M. (2014).

This prevailing environment ensured that the governance of arts and culture existed under a centralised, "top-down" organisational model with a holistic (and authoritative) influence on the strategic direction of Malawi's arts and culture sector. Aside from this centralised modus operandi towards the steering and governing of the arts and culture sector, the environment was exacerbated by the existence of the 1968 Censorship and Control of Entertainment Act[17]. As Zimba (2019: 6) postulates, ideally, censorship should play a complementary role in socio-economic development as censorship ensures the quality of social and cultural life through the protection and control of access to creative content that has the potential to disturb the social fabric of society. However, as Zimba (2019) opines, how the act was enforced by the Censorship Board of Malawi had overarching ramifications on Malawi's arts and culture sector in the sense that the pervasiveness of ex-ante censorship and ex-post censorship[18] taking place ensured the absence of a positive environment for artistic and cultural activity. Indeed, as Sahle, (2001), Lucida (2002), and Msiska (2016) lament, the 1968 Censorship and Control of Entertainment Act was used as an oppressive tool by the Malawi Government aimed towards consolidating the State's power through control of channels of communication to eliminate the dissemination of new or alternative ideas that may be opposed to the ideologies of the political leadership. As such, forms of artistic and cultural expression were anchored in the preservation and promotion of Malawianess as per the central government's agenda.

2.3. Malawi's Written Cultural Policy: Towards Democratisation of the Arts and Culture Sector

Modern governments cannot escape the strong push for change sought by the public. This means that they often find themselves altering policy and governance structure(s) to meet said demand. Therefore, the fall of Single-Party Rule in 1994 brought with it the adoption of a Democratic Government system[19].

[17] This Act empowered the government to regulate and control the making and the exhibition of cinematographic pictures, the importation, production, dissemination and possession of undesirable publications, pictures, statues and records, the performance or presentation of stage plays and public entertainments, the operation of theatres and like places for the performance or presentation of stage plays and public entertainments in the interests of safety.

[18] The cultural researcher Andreas Joh. Wiesand, posited censorship has two layers; ex-ante which entails the suppression of free expression before creation, presentation or publication, and ex-post in which measures are executed through a state-mandated institution to prevent access by the public to materials deemed as being offensive. He argued that increased direct exposure to both layers ultimately result in self-censorship. See Zimba, W. (2019).

[19] In this paper, the term democratic government system refers to the political environment from 1994 to the present day that caters for multiparty rule. In 1993, during the 1993 National Referendum the Malawian public unanimously voted to abolish the system of governance that gave absolute authority to Dr. Kamuzu Banda and prevented the existence of any political party aside from the Malawi Congress Party. The citizenry declared their desire for a system that would allow for the existence of other political parties (the United Democratic Front, the Alliance for Democracy, the United Party) that could rule at national and parliamentary level. This paved the way for the first general State Presidential and Parliamentary elections to take place in 1994.

Most importantly for the arts and culture sector, this meant the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi which for the first time, enshrined the freedom of expression, and the creativity of its citizens[20]. However, as scholars such as Kangas and Vestheim (2010) postulate, governments are often reluctant to change, and when they do so, the change is more symbolic than meaningful. This is a sentiment echoed by Lwanda and Phoya (2014: 3) who highlight, that successive governments were all slow to develop a cultural policy that reflects the values of a democratic system by recognising and fulfilling the needs of practitioners, providing platforms for non-state actors to have a meaningful role in the management and growth of the arts and culture sector, and the provision of an environment conducive for practitioners to produce cultural and/or artistic works. One of the major contributing factors towards this was the continued perception of the central government that arts and culture did not have a role to play in the socio-economic development agenda as evidenced by the absence of arts and culture in strategic documents such as the Malawi Vision 2020[21], and the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy Phase One (MGDSI)[22].

Despite the failure to foster a new attitude towards the role of the arts and culture sector in democratic Malawi, the democratic government did provide the foundation for improved governance of the sector. 1995 marked a significant point in the governance structure of Malawi's arts and culture sector. Under a directive from the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC), the creative civil society emerged through the establishment of nine (9) Rights Holder Associations[23] to advocate for the interests of individual practitioners, and non-state institutions and organisations, whose operations, and oversight fell under the jurisdiction of the copyright Society of Malawi (COSOMA)[24]. This development is an example of what Schmitt (2011: 19) believes is the increased recognition by politicians of not imposing decisions on the

[20] Section 26 of the Constitution of the Republic Malawi states that: "Every person shall have the right to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of his or her choice."

[21] The Malawi Vision 2020 was the inaugural national development strategy adopted following the transition to a democratic government. The overarching goal of Vision 2020 was for Malawi to become a secure, democratically mature, environmentally sustainable, self-reliant nation with equal opportunities for, and active participation by all, with social services for all, vibrant cultural and religious values, and being a technologically driven middle-income country by the year 2020. See, Malawi Government. (1996). *Malawi Vision 2020*

[22] The MGDS implemented between 2006 – 2011 was the successor to Vision 2020. It was the first medium-term national development strategy formulated towards providing a decisive and strategic single reference document to be followed by all stakeholders to achieve the goal of wealth creation through sustainable economic growth and infrastructure development. See, Malawi Government. (2006).

[23] Amongst the arts and culture groupings and associations to emerge were the: Visual Arts Association of Malawi, National Theatre Association of Malawi, Photographers Association of Malawi, Musicians Association of Malawi, Malawi Writers' Union, Book Publishers Association of Malawi, Journalist Union of Malawi, Film Association of Malawi, Malawi Folk Dance Music and Song Society of Malawi

[24] The Copyright Society of Malawi (COSOMA) is a parastatal organisation that was established in 1992 under section 41 of the Copyright Act with the aim of promoting and protecting the interest of authors, composers, performers, producers of sound recording and broadcasters.

public as a means to ensure democratic governance. While the recognition of non-state actors was a welcome development, as intimated, the lingering prevailing attitude towards the position of the arts and culture sector remained unchanged; the consequence of which was the apathy by the central government to review the overarching legislation governing the sector. The continued existence of legislation such as the 1968 Censorship and Control of Entertainment Act that predated and ran counter to the newly enshrined freedoms of expression espoused in the constitution, ensured that moments of confrontation between the government and non-state actors were frequent (Lucida, 2002; Lwanda and Phoya, 2014; Msiska, 2016; Zimba, 2019).

Therefore, despite the wave of optimism that greeted the adoption of a democratic government and the newly enshrined freedom of expression and creativity espoused in the constitution, Malawi's arts and culture landscape, unfortunately, did not undergo any meaningful change. One could make an argument that Malawi's arts and culture sector from the period between 1994 – 2011 could be seen as being "business as usual" carried over from the Single Party era. This is because a procedural governance culture was allowed to set in over time, in which the manner of governance for the arts and culture became the socially accepted way of being, or the norm for Malawi (Phiri, 2021: 11). However, a rapid change took place around 2010 because of shifts in the Malawi Government's foreign policy agenda that saw it engage in diplomatic relationships with a wide array of development partners and international aid agencies in deliberate efforts to immerse itself into the "Global Village".

Against this background, and in keeping with contemporary global discourse, the central government acknowledged for the very first time that "the arts and culture, like climate and environment, play an important role in influencing development decisions and needed to be taken into consideration" (Malawi Government, 2011). This culminated in the arts and culture sector's alignment with the national development agenda in which the sector was cited as a tool for sustainable socio-economic development warranting its inclusion in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy Phase 2 (MGDS II). This explicit policy direction marked a significant ideological shift by the central government and laid the foundation for numerous efforts and initiatives to take place. National efforts to develop and promote Malawi's arts and culture have been in response to corresponding global efforts and as such, Malawi has ratified several international conventions including the 2001 UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, and the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. Similarly, Malawi has initiated several bilateral agreements on arts and culture with counterparts in both the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region and beyond (Malawi Government, 2015).

2.4. All is Not Well: The Enactment of the National Cultural Policy

It is against this backdrop that the development of Malawi's inaugural National Cultural Policy took place. The National Cultural Policy that was enacted in February 2015 therefore emerged as the concretisation of the transition from the centralised authority model that placed the arts and culture on the margins of the development agenda, towards the actualisation of democratic ideals in the governance of culture. The National Cultural Policy therefore

> …lays down strategies for ensuring development in the cultural sector. These strategies, among others, include the establishment of an Arts and Culture Fund and the establishment of a National Arts and Heritage Council to be responsible for mobilising and managing resources for activities and projects to be carried out by players in the cultural industry…The policy will also seek to harness the roles of various stakeholders in the cultural sector…(Malawi Government, 2015: 8).

The significance of the policy document was greatly understood, especially the need to fill the void caused by its absence. In enacting the National Cultural Policy the government sought not only to bring stakeholders together and provide them with a cohesive direction in which to steer Malawi's arts and culture but also to provide a structure in which other public institutions would be established to replace the extant centralised model and efficiently mainstream arts and culture-related measures and activities across government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and the private sector (Phiri, 2021: 19). However, a sense of trepidation should have arisen as the policy document also explicitly stated that its primary objectives were to align the activities of the entire cultural sector with the priority areas set by the Government in the MGDSII (Malawi Government, 2015: 7).

Malawi is one of the developing countries with a low human development status (UNDP, 2015) and is beset by numerous social challenges that have been ascribed by Head and Alford (2015, cited in Makoza and Chigona, 2017: 1) as complex because they have no clear-cut solutions and cut across economic sectors that government cannot solve on its own. Against this background, the central government agenda centred on the pursuit of economic progress to reduce poverty and bring about prosperity in the medium term (Malawi Government, 2011: 12). In regard to the arts and culture sector this places greater emphasis on the increased economic contribution of the sector to the Gross Domestic Product (Ibid: 14). The by-product being that the goals of the National Cultural Policy being heavily linked to the economic performance of practitioners within the arts and culture sector as a more easily recognisable means to verify development (Magomelo, 2022; Mkandawire, 2022; Msendera, 2022). A negative line of thinking

that permeates debates around the scope of cultural policy and that is heavily criticised for doing nothing more than truncating and essentialising cultural policy to that which is tangible (Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005; Maralack 2021). This is problematic because as Phiri (2021) alludes to when highlighting the procedural governance culture that set in, the lingering social issues caused by the impact of ex-ante censorship and ex-post censorship during the Single Party era, in addition to the continued existence of outdated legislation meant that conflicts from the single party era related mostly to the social aspects of the arts and culture were left unresolved during the transition to the democratic system. This is a critical factor that paved the way for tensions towards the National Cultural Policy to emerge. As Maralack (2021: 390) posits when developing cultural policy, it is important to reflect upon the policy or policies that have been inherited, the arts and culture framework, as well as the trajectory and rationale of interventions and strategies. As such, it was imperative that the policies and governance structure inherited from the Single Party administration required careful consideration when the National Cultural Policy was being developed to effectively plan out what the future of Malawi's art and culture sector should look like, and the strategies, measures, goals, and objectives required to get there.

Subsequently, the seven (7) years since the National Cultural Policy's enactment have been notable for the significant gaps between what the document espoused, and what has been implemented under the oversight of the Department of Culture as "effective" policy delivery. This has manifested the perception amongst non-state actors that the National Cultural Policy, and more significantly, the sense of a misplaced vision and goals for the arts and culture sector being championed by the National Cultural Policy document[25]. These perceptions have created an environment in which there are continual tensions between the Department and non-state actors. As recently as 7th March 2022, non-state actors demonstrated at the National Parliament Building during the August House of the National Assembly over the protracted delays in the establishment of the proposed National Arts and Heritage Council (NaHeC) that is one of the key outputs within the National Cultural Policy[26].

[25] A criticism from the President of the Lilongwe Crafts Association was that government continuously fails to meet their expectations of providing an enabling environment for the perpetual creation and production of goods. He lamented that all their efforts are for naught without the establishment of the NaHeC. See Department of Arts. (2019). 'Item 6: Way Forward'. *Minutes of Arts & Crafts US Market Entry Requirements Meeting* 19 May 2019, Capital Hotel, Lilongwe.

[26] Stakeholders from the creative civil society and the private sector held demonstrations before submitting a petition to members of parliament for the expedited tabling of the National Arts and Heritage Council (NaHeC) Bill. The approval of the parliamentary bill would authorise the establishment of the NaHeC. Non-state actors adopted this course of action as they believe the NaHeC will significantly improve the welfare of arts and culture practitioners and provide a channel through which the government can demonstrate its support for the arts and culture sector. See Mlozi., H. (2022).

SECTION 3: THE PERCEPTION OF A FAILED NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY IN MALAWI: GUIDING LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK :

3.1. Introduction

This research report is informed by literature that embraces a broad overview of theories and debates concerning processes, decision-making, strategic planning, and concepts of participation linked to cultural policy development and design. Attempts at addressing the phenomenon of policy failure as manifest in the National Cultural Policy and how it is perceived amongst stakeholders is anchored in some of the prevalent debates on contemporary cultural policy and as such builds upon literature that acknowledges that the increased attention afforded to cultural policy reflects the trend that the arts and culture have become more central in international discourse on sustainable economic development.

This section draws upon views on contemporary cultural policy to address how the processes and decisions made in the establishment of the National Cultural Policy went wrong, and how these have ultimately resulted in the perceived failure of the policy document. This section also highlights why literature from the field of education sociology was drawn upon to provide a critical lens through which to analyse why the attempt to transfer the Global North concepts of the creative industry and the creative economy was ultimately successful. The exploration of isolated research studies and commentaries in this section will culminate in the advancement of a conceptual model that harnesses the elements of the creative industry and the creative economy as development tools, reconciling globalisation with needs in the localised context, in addition to the greater participation of non-state actors in decision-making.

3.2. The Value of the Arts and Culture to Governments

Adorno and Horkheimer (1972) is credited with introducing debate around how the commodification of arts and culture during the 20th Century drew greater attention from the government in the sector. The subsequent writings of Throsby (1994), Holden (2006), and O'Connor (2007), assigned "value" to the arts and culture sector for either their intrinsic qualities, or in their ability to be utilised for the greater good when instrumentalised by the government, or through institutions that would develop and promote arts and culture. The Department of Media, Culture, and Sports' Report of 1998 was responsible for the emergence of the term "creative industries" into the lexicon, and gave rise to the linkage of the value of culture to economic benefit (Holden, 2009; De Beukelaer and O'Connor, 2016: 28), and the justification for the value of culture within the language of economic efficiency (O'Connor, 2015, cited in De Beukelaer

and O'Connor, 2016: 29). The DMCS (1998) attached a development dimension to the arts and culture that could speak both to politics and economics that helped to "quantify" the importance of the arts and culture sector through its propensity to create jobs and generate revenue (Yudicè, 2003). Banks (2015) however, saw the need for trepidation around this newly found importance placed on arts and culture by politicians through the questioning of the authenticity of the term creative industries. In his argument, he proposed that its coinage was nothing more than a codification and working grammar of the arts and culture as an industry, to lobby for increased funding for the sector in the wake of decreased public expenditure in the 20th Century. De Beukelaer and O'Connor (2016) suggested that the success of countries in the Global North (such as the United Kingdom) in acquiring increased funding from the national treasury through the application of the creative industries came to be viewed by governments in the Global South as the model to follow. They argue that a "fast policy" phenomenon has proliferated Global South contexts whereby the creative industry has gained immediate traction as it is viewed by politicians and policymakers as the most readily available means through which to make highly visible gains, thereby becoming the perceived quick fix in cultural policy (Peck, 2002 cited in De Beukelaer and O'Connor, 2016: 27). Craik, McAllister, and Davis (2013: 20) lament that whilst the trend of governments in the Global South adopting a creative industry approach in cultural policy demonstrates they are "buying into" cultural matters, that the chosen form(s), objectives, and instruments of cultural policy become adversely impacted as the focus is placed on delivering results and in the process negating the arts and culture sector's role in addressing societal ills and aiding environments to adapt to the ever-changing world. This body of literature provides a significant lens through which the research study addresses what value(s) the central government placed upon the arts and culture sector in democratic Malawi. Similarly, the literature provides a foundation through which to assess the extent to which the creative industry and creative economy concepts as applied in the Global North were applicable to the Malawian context.

3.3. Cultural Policy Development and Design

Reviewing public policy is not a new phenomenon. Literature such as Gunn (1978, cited in Hudson, Hunter, and Peckham 2019), posits that the relative success of public policy and its implementation is predicated on intentions preceding action, and targets determining the relevant instruments for carrying out the policy. Matarasso and Landry note that the development and management of cultural policy is one of the most complex areas of modern government because, in the world of culture, efforts by the State in one direction will often produce unexpected, perhaps unwanted, results elsewhere (1999: 7). Furthermore, Matarasso and Landry (1999) make the connection between intention, targets, instruments, and policy framework by positing that the direction of cultural policy can be gleaned from the policy

choices and strategies - both implicit and explicit - as well as the many strategic choices that will be reflected in a cultural policy's design and subsequent implementation. Central to this process is establishing how arts and culture are perceived by the government as this has an overarching impact on cultural policy development and implementation (Ibid). This text is of great importance to the research study as it introduced me to the various dilemmas that emerge in the process of development and design of cultural policy. The most pertinent one for this research study is the "Framework Dilemma" which provides a lens through which to examine how the democratic government of Malawi utilised the National Cultural Policy to move away from the objectives of "promoting Malawianess" and the preservation of traditional Malawian customs and practices that characterised the arts and culture landscape during the Single Party administration, to the alignment of the arts and culture as a key component within the national development agenda for socio-economic development. The efforts of policymakers to reconcile this shift in ideology means that the National Cultural Policy would have been cardinal to directly embodying this change. Matarasso and Landry's identification of the choices policymakers have to make based on political, social, and ethical values that ultimately shape the outcomes of cultural policy (1999: 9) provides the basis for the following questions:

1. What is the role of the arts and culture sector in democratic Malawi?
2. What required redress in the wake of the recognition of the protection of creative expressions?
3. What are the roles and responsibilities of the government and non-state actors in developing a cultural policy document?
4. What are the needs of stakeholders that the cultural policy document should meet?

The answers to these questions will establish what vision the government has for the arts and culture sector and the roadmap that it sought towards attaining it. These in turn will aid in addressing the investigation to determine how effectively this was captured in the development and subsequent design of the National Cultural Policy. Thomas Schmitt (2011) echoes the position of Matarasso and Landry (1999) by positing that cultural policy should be a clear reflection of historical developments. In this regard, the National Cultural Policy should reflect the reconciliation between the shift in ideologies and perceptions of the central government towards arts and culture. He however warns that cultural policy can be applied in two (2) ways, either as "sectoral cultural policy", whereby the government's direct or indirect involvement in the promotion and administration of activities in the sector are analysed, or as a political form of steering as a form of "top-down management" (2011: 41 - 42). The latter point helped to inform the research study by pointing out that not only is there a need to pay attention to the strategic decisions made in the development and design of the National Cultural Policy, but also to ascertain

whether the decisions that were made were reflective of what the National Cultural Policy should address, that is being in response to the changes in the Malawian landscape, or whether they served to steer an agenda being forwarded by the central government. This helps to determine if the imposition of an ulterior agenda is the cause of perceptions by non-state actors of the National Cultural Policy as being a failure.

The writings of Makoza (2017), and Makoza and Chigona (2017) respectively are also of importance for the research study. These writings address why Malawi's National ICT Policy can be deemed a failure. The authors argue that the explicit policies that prioritised economic imperatives, overlooked the need to address the poor infrastructure, inadequate skills capacities, and barriers to access of ICTs that the local landscape required. They also identify how by dominating the agenda in the development of the National ICT's Implementation framework the policy's intended outcomes were not realised. Though these writings may not be from the field of arts and culture, they are of value to the research because not only do they use Malawi as the case study, but because they explore the ramifications of the impacts of the central government's prioritisation of mass outcomes in public policy as "solutions". They therefore provide a reference point to assess whether the same applied to the arts and culture sector, and if so, how this manifested in the National Cultural Policy.

3.4. Situating Cultural Policy

Literature from the field of sociology of education introduced me to the concept of recontextualisation, a useful way to look at how the creative industry and creative economy concepts applied in the Global North could be adapted for a Global South context. In Basil Bernstein's seminal work *Class and Pedagogies: Visible and Invisible* (1975) recontextualisation is defined as the relational processes of selecting and moving knowledge from one context to another, as well as to the distinctive re-organisation of knowledge. This literature though rooted in transferring concepts for teaching and learning is of significance as it provides a lens through which to look at the feasibility of migrating knowledge from one context to another. Building on the theories of Bernstein (1975), Singh, Thomas, and Harris (2013) developed a framework through which to analyse how policies linked to child protection could be transferred, interpreted, and enacted in education policy. This framework is utilised to foster an understanding of the mechanisms and processes utilised in the formulation of policies across sectors. The work of Singh, Thomas, and Harris (2013) is significant to this research study as it provided a model through which to analyse the extent to which the Global North concepts of the creative industry and the creative economy are effectively transferred and interpreted into the National Cultural Policy.

The challenge of adopting concepts such as those of the creative industry and the creative economy into Global South contexts can be found in literature from the field of cultural policy and management such as Ford (2010), Joffe (2016), Nwankwo (2018), and Onyeator (2019). The common thread in these texts is the need for careful considerations over how the development dimension can be grounded within the respective Global South environments to reflect collective and localised needs towards the desired development. Onyeator (2019) therefore has great significance for this research study due to some of the parallels that can be drawn to the situation in Malawi. Onyeator suggests that the development agenda approach may not be actualised because the earning potential of the creative industries in Nigeria cannot be maximised until local realities are considered and woven into the fabric of policy and legislation. This it is argued is the result of a gap that occurs between the creatives (creative workforce) and policymakers due to the inability to correctly conceptualise the terms 'creativity' and 'culture' (Galloway and Dunlop, 2007, cited in Onyeator, 2019: 54). Onyeator, therefore, recommends the application of "Glocalizing" or the localisation of global discourse on arts and culture following the gaps that emerged between creatives and policy makers because of the inability to correctly conceptualise the terms 'creativity' and 'culture'. This provided context for the research to highlight how this disconnect impacts the effectiveness of the National Cultural Policy as I believe that a similar disconnect arises from what was envisioned when attempting to leverage the creative industry, and the realities of Malawi's arts and culture landscape as the local creative industry had yet to be fully conceptualised.

3.5. Elaborating the Conceptual Framework

To do a thorough tracing of the present state of the National Cultural Policy from a formulation and design perspective the research draws upon Singh, Thomas, and Harris (2013) and their application of Bernstein's ideas on recontextualisation as a framework for analysis. This model plays a cardinal role in studying the phenomenon at the centre of this research study because it helps address the feasibility of selecting and moving knowledge on the creative industry and creative economy from its origins in the Global North to a Global South context such as Malawi that is characterised by differing starting conditions and government priorities (Kaya and Seleti, 2013)[27].

At the heart of the process of recontextualisation is what Bernstein (1975: 467) describes as how policies are subjected to "complex processes" of fleshing out, and being given substance by specialised agencies

[27] This according to Kaya and Seleti (2013: 32), is the foundation for problems because the cultural governance structures and cultural values that the development dimension were founded upon are inherently different from those existing in most African societies. See Kaya, H. O., and Seleti, Y. N. (2013).

created by, or linked to the state or who thrive by doing its business. The underlying principle of this notion is that the process of transferring the chosen body of knowledge requires a collaboration between government and non-state actors to ensure the new policy and/or body of knowledge acquires "substance". Because of this caveat, the processes undertaken in a recontextualisation exercise necessitate an analysis of power and control relations whose findings may help to provide a better understanding of the policy work of interpretation and translation for subsequent enactment (Ibid: 465). Issues of power imbalance are identified by analysing the relationship, or lack thereof, of the agents, mandated to transfer the concepts of the creative industry and creative economy, namely the Official Recontextualising Field (ORF), represented by the government and the Pedagogic Recontextualising Field (PRF)[28], represented by non-state actors. The interplay of these agents creates what is known as the "Field of Production" (Ibid) where the interpretation and translation work occur that determines what is relevant for the policy that is to be produced. Analysing the conditions within this field of production is important for looking critically at the development of the National Cultural Policy because any power imbalances will be reflected in the attempts to adapt the development agenda concepts to Malawi. Similarly, analysing the field of production will aid in determining the extent to which the creative industry and creative economy concepts were adapted to Malawi's arts and culture landscape, as the ways in which they failed to do so will establish the disconnects that lead to the negative reception held towards the National Cultural Policy.

The ability to identify issues of autonomy and struggles over the content, texts, and practices within the field of production between the Official Recontextualising Field and the Pedagogic Recontextualising Field are crucial in retracing how the National Cultural Policy came to be enacted. Central to this is determining the government's perceptions of the role and functions of arts and culture and the overarching impact(s) this may or may not have had on the final policy document. Matarasso and Landry (1999) provide a further lens through which to analyse the choices made, and the processes utilised by policymakers during the formulation and design of the National Cultural Policy, to determine the extent to which non-state actors' needs and visions are captured or not. The findings from this analysis help to illuminate the excess power and influence of the government that negated the negotiation and decision-making processes. This power imbalance ultimately led to the development of The National Cultural Policy's goals conflicting with those of non-state actors. Furthermore, the findings help to establish that

[28] The Official Recontextualising Field refers to the field created and dominated by the State and its selected agents and ministries. It is the source of policy texts/documents and the site of policy production. The Pedagogic Recontextualising Field on the other hand consists of agencies at multiple levels, including professional development units responsible for translating policy into manuals, procedures, and other forms of support in enacting the policy. See, Singh, Thomas, and Harris, (2013: 468).

the National Cultural Policy was ultimately nothing more than a means to steer the central government's agenda of revenue generation. The combination of these theories provide the study with a hybrid model to evaluate the recontextualisation process in the development and production of the National Cultural Policy as follows:

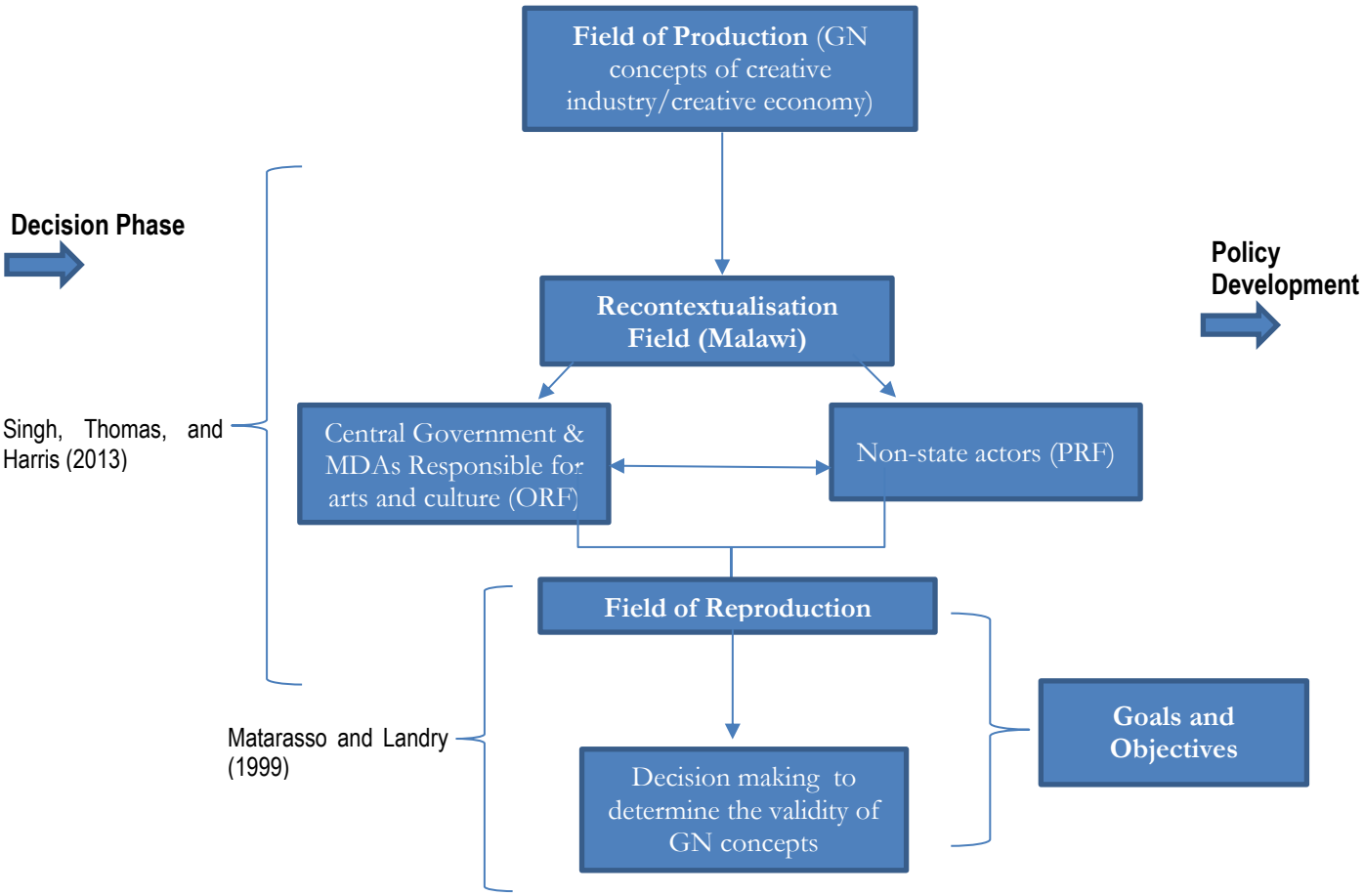

Figure 2: A graphic representation of the conceptual framework model

SECTION 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

4.1. Philosophical Underpinnings

This research study investigates the phenomenon of policy failure, specifically what has led to the National Cultural Policy being perceived as a failure over the past seven (7) years. I look to understand and uncover the underlying meanings and patterns of the relationships the government, and non-state actors have with the National Cultural Policy informing the respective perceptions they hold towards the policy document. Thus, the research is firmly placed in the realm of a qualitative study as it seeks to acquire an in-depth understanding of why it is that non-state actors hold the view that the National Cultural Policy has failed to enhance Malawi's arts and culture sector. Creswell (2007:67) believes that researchers pursuing a qualitative form of inquiry must gather multiple forms of data such as observations, interviews, and documents to understand people's actions, motivations, perceptions, and beliefs in a given social phenomenon. As such, the perspectives required to answer the research questions are linked to experience(s) that are more descriptive than amenable to counting or measuring (Silverman, 2000; Babbie, 2004; Hammerberg, Kirkman, and De Lacey, 2016).

Positioning the research study was an important step as it provided my investigation with a logic and system to be followed. This helped to make me aware of my assumptions, experiences, beliefs, and worldviews that aided in the subsequent design and conducting of the research. Against this background, Social Constructivism informed the research study as the underlying belief is that the prevailing attitudes (the reality, or knowledge) surrounding the National Cultural Policy are social constructs. This is consistent with Creswell, (2007: 47) who believes that realities are constructed through lived experiences based on the subjective meanings of individuals in social and historical contexts. This, therefore, necessitated engaging individuals with intimate knowledge, of the relevant issues to do with the National Cultural Policy to help foster a greater understanding of the phenomenon.

4.2. An Overview of the Data Collection Process

This research study utilises an interpretive method of inquiry in which the research framework is focused on the subjective meaning(s) that people assign to their situations. In keeping with Creswell (2007: 67), I acknowledge that the varied participants' meanings suggest the existence of multiple perspectives and diverse views towards the research problem. As such, the research attempts to develop a comprehensive picture by what Silverman (2000 cited in Creswell, 2007) ascribe as capturing and reporting multiple

perspectives, identifying the many factors, and generally sketching the larger picture from the data collected.

The centrality of the participants' perceptions, their meanings, and their subjective views are best suited for understanding the perceptions around the National Cultural Policy since its enactment as the narratives of policy stakeholders cater for the development of an in-depth and holistic perspective of the tensions emerging from their interactions in attempts to acquire collective decision making.

4.2.1. Research Instruments

Developing a complete description of the stakeholders' attitudes toward the National Cultural policy necessitates implementing an ethnographic approach. Therefore, a flexible research design utilising multiple tools namely interviews, document analysis, and retrospective ethnography has been employed to gather the various views to help unbundle the phenomenon under study.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews using open-ended questioning afford greater flexibility and freedom, as such I used this approach for interviewees to speak in their own voice and express their own thoughts and feelings. Thus, allowing them to give greater detail to their own perceptions and accounts (Patton and Cochran 2002; Gubrium and Holstein 2002, cited in Alshenqeeti, 2014:35). This methodology is employed as the primary method of data collection to ascertain perceptions around the National Cultural Policy built upon personal viewpoints from three (3) government officials and seven (7) non-state actors.

Purposive Sampling

Purposive Sampling has been utilised with individuals specifically identified based on their ability to adequately address the central research questions (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Creswell 2007; Teddlie and Yu, 2007). The participants for the study have been primarily selected based on their experience(s) both with the development of the National Cultural Policy and secondly with their level of activity and visibility within Malawi's arts and culture sector that enables them to acquire a grounded impression of the National Cultural Policy since it was enacted. "Criterion sampling" was utilised to finalise the list of participants thereby ensuring the provision of a variety of descriptions of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell,2007: 156).

Document Analysis

I also utilise primary sources in the form of legislation from Malawi's Single Party administration such as the 1968 Censorship and Control of Entertainment Act, and the 1990 Arts and Crafts Act that shaped cultural policy pre-democracy and national development agendas such as the Malawi Vision 2020, and the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy Phase 1 (MGDSI), the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy Phase 2 (MGDSII), and the Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) respectively, that informed the decisions made during the policy circle. I also analysed line ministry Operational Performance Agreement (OPA) Reports, and strategic documents within the period between the 2009 - 2010 financial year and the 2015 - 2016 fiscal years, that framed the decisions linked to the enacted version of the National Cultural Policy. The study of these documents helps to provide a lens through which to glean the ideologies and perceptions of the central government concerning the role of the arts and culture sector. The findings gathered through this process are vital for providing a reference point through which to evaluate the level of recontextualisation, or the lack thereof, to which the creative industry and the creative economy concepts were applied to suit the Malawian landscape when viewed in conjunction with the responses from the semi-structured interviews. Because the research study attempts to trace the challenges within the policy circle of the National Cultural Policy from its advent through to its enactment, the usage of document analysis is beneficial because of the "stability" inherent in documents (Robson, 1994; Bowen, 2009) that cover for the possible gaps that may have emerged in my reflections and those by my research participants.

Retrospective Ethnography

Having joined The Department of Arts in 2010 I am able draw upon a cache of background context, recollections, and perceptions related to the various stages in the development of the National Cultural Policy. As such, the utilisation of retrospective ethnography allows my experience(s) to become a strength as there is a naturalness in building the holistic picture to answer the central questions of the research study due to the dual insider (subject)/outsider (researcher) relationship I was able to attain during data collection, and the data analysis processes (Cresswell, 2007; Paechter, 2012). Furthermore, the application of retrospective ethnography is well aligned with what I seek to achieve through this research study because it provided the platform to look backward in trying to determine where the present-day perceptions of the policy document's failures can be pinpointed thereby helping to establish what needs to be avoided/prevented moving forwards.

Observation

Though it was not included in the initial research design, Participant Observation provides this research study an alternate viewpoint through which to address the central research questions as the research study coincided with the "2022 National Conference on Arts and Culture, Malawi"[29] (hereafter referred to as the 2022 National Conference) held from 24th – 25th October 2022 at the Sunbird Capital Hotel in Lilongwe. Among the expected outcomes of the 2022 National Conference were the increased understanding and appreciation of the National Cultural Policy framework, the enhanced understanding of the importance of the National Cultural Policy in socio-economic development and arriving at a consensus on effective and concrete actions for better implementation of the National Cultural Policy (Simwaka, 2022). Though the objectives and aims of the 2022 National Conference centred on the implementation of the National Cultural Policy, its appeal was twofold. Firstly, in the wake of the demonstrations conducted by non-state actors in June 2022, I sought to see to what extent their grievances were delivered to the government through this forum (in addition to seeing if these grievances articulated in detail the expectations, they had before the enactment of the National Cultural Policy vis-à-vis what has transpired in the subsequent years). Secondly, the forum presented me with an opportunity to observe the interactions through the lens of recontextualisation to get a sense of the power and control relations that may require addressing (Bernstein, 1975; Singh, Thomas, and Harris 2013; Makoza, 2017).

The 2022 National Conference provided a rich source of data because it allowed me to immerse myself in the interaction(s) of the targeted culture-sharing groups enabling more nuanced observations of the behaviours, beliefs, and language of the culture-sharing groups (Creswell, 2007: 90). Conversely, the utilisation of observation allowed me as a researcher to create some "distance" from some of the preconceptions and judgments I held from personal experiences with the National Cultural Policy as the focus on recording information as accurately as possible assisted in a triangulation of the captured data (Creswell, 2007; Paechter, 2012; Denzin and Lincoln, 2018).

[29] Held under the theme "Leveraging Arts, Culture and Heritage for Sustainable Development", this two (2) day event was a joint venture between the Malawi National Commission for UNESCO, The Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife, and Culture, and selected non-state actors aimed towards providing a platform for stakeholders in the arts and culture sector to engage and share experiences of activities in the sector, identify the major challenges being encountered, assessing the National Cultural Policy framework vis-à-vis Malawi 2063, and to forward ideas, proposals, and concrete actions to be undertaken to strengthening the implementation of the National Cultural Policy. These remarks were made by the Director of Arts, Humphrey Mpondaminga during the morning session of Day 1 of the 2022 National Conference. See 'Item 7: Introductory Remarks'. *Minutes. The 2022 National Conference on Arts and Culture* (Day One) 24 October 2022, Capital Hotel, Lilongwe.

The format of the 2022 National Conference consisted of presentations followed by group plenary sessions and further group discussions that forwarded observations, challenges, and recommendations. This was also significant for the research as I was not at the centre of directing the conversations - unlike in a focus group discussion - therefore allowing me to be a non-participant and utilise active listening (Corbetta, 2003; Creswell, 2007). However, as Creswell (2007: 167) posits, a good qualitative observer will change their role during the observation study. As such, I occasionally engaged in active participation during group discussions by not only contributing ideas but also through seeking clarification on ideas presented by fellow group members. Furthermore, I also engaged participants outside of my group in informal discussions during hospitality and rest breaks. The ability to switch between these forms of participation/observation immensely benefitted the research study as being a public event I was able to acquire data from a wide spectrum including high-ranking government officials, academicians, non-executive members of creative civil society organisations, and non-affiliated/private arts and culture practitioners[30] that was helpful with the generalisation of the research findings.

4.3. Data Analysis

An interpretive thematic analysis is employed to build meanings across the collected datasets (Creswell, 2007:223). This approach fit well with the "meaning formation" that form the crux of stakeholders' efforts in developing a meaningful and transformative National Cultural Policy. This echoes Yanow (2000) that posits that a policy document as a product of human creation must be representative of the stakeholders and their perceptions of what a policy must do, and their perceived best course of action towards that policy. Therefore, looking critically at the perceived key areas of importance in the National Cultural Policy for government officials and non-state actors respectively, to make sense of (or interpret) the meanings that stakeholders have about cultural policy through an interpretive analysis lays the foundations for a document that seeks to reconcile the two sides and their agendas. The interpretive approach became useful in determining what the ideal process for developing the National Cultural Policy should obtain by placing emphasis on the participants' diverse and multiple views on the required process(es).

The Data analysis utilised two stages. The first consisting of transcribing the interviews, compiling my observation notes, comparing, and contrasting my notes from the interviews, extracting themes, and

[30] According to the Senior Arts and Crafts Officer, James Thole, the Department of Arts' "Arts and Culture Information System", has almost 9,300 registered practitioners across the fields of visual arts, music, literary work, fashion, theatre, film, and dance. While this is not exhaustive it serves to demonstrate how many other individuals, I was able to access beyond the participants shortlisted to conduct the semi-structured interviews. See Appendix E for the full list of participants at the 2022 National Conference for purposes of comparison.

organising the data from the content analysis. Followed by the development of themes and summaries from the different data sets to capture the most relevant information (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996; Hancock et al, 2009; Douglas, 2017). To code the responses from interviews, I borrowed O'Connor's (2015) approach in which insights gleaned from readings of each interview are noted in addition to how many times those insights are mentioned. Those mentioned by more than two participants, were recognised as being significant. These insights also had to have links to my literature review. This, in turn, produced open coding (coding data as indicators of concepts such as power imbalance(s) in the Reproduction Field). This data analysis produces a descriptive account of the data including information on what was said, written, or observed (Hancock, Windridge, and Ockleford, 2009: 24). This data became useful in understanding the perceptions of stakeholders about the processes involved in the development of the National Cultural Policy. Interpretive analysis employed in the second stage focused on what was meant or inferred or implied by the responses (ibid).

4.4. Trustworthiness

This research study, as with any qualitative research is subjected to questions of quality and/or reliability (Loh, 2013). This research study seeks to acquire a level of acknowledgment for its significance by establishing its "trustworthiness" with particular attention being paid to the extent of the: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the data as espoused by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Against this background, I made usage of various strategies throughout the research study to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings.

The first step I utilised was triangulating the data by using multiple/different sources (Denzin, 1978 cited in Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 305). Lincoln and Guba (1985: 305) posit that the usage of multiple/different sources can occur in two (2) forms, the first being multiple copies of one type of source. In this case, by utilising ten different respondents to the semi-structured interviews, the research ensures that the opinions given, and the interpretations derived from them are the result of the variety of responses given adding to the sense of a comprehensive picture being developed. Secondly, the "multiple sources" refer to the different methods applied to collect the data. As the research study collects data from four credible sources (Creswell, 2007: 246), the triangulation process established the plausible narratives from government documents, participant responses, participant observation, and personal reflections I brought beforehand, through the identification of convergences and divergences emerging from the data (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2007). Furthermore, the variety of methods aids in checking for any data variations (Creswell and Miller, 2000: 126).

Transferability is another vital process for enhancing the reliability of the data. The utilisation of purposive sampling is essential as it caters for the inclusion of the widest possible range of information within the final report that is useful for providing a "thick description" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 316). In developing descriptions and deep narratives from the findings, the research study could prove to be beneficial to other practitioners. This issue of relevancy takes on greater significance in the views of Riessman when it provides the basis for further work (2008, cited in Loh, 2013: 10). As intimated earlier, the National Cultural Policy is the first of its kind in Malawi, and as Zimba (2020) and Phiri (2021) acknowledge that in the Malawian context, there is much that requires further understanding in the field of cultural policy both regarding its design and its implementation. As such the research with its potential through the thick descriptions can provide an "understanding" and a "guide" to help better understand the underlying issues of the National Cultural Policy.

With the research study utilising retrospective autoethnography, the research study employs vigorous auditing of the research process. As Lincoln and Guba (1985: 318) posit, it is imperative that a researcher must engender to provide findings and interpretations as fairly and objectively as possible. As such emphasis has been placed on efficient data processing, necessitating the constant rechecking of the status of data at each phase to ensure their credibility. Thus, the research design is anchored by my continual self-re-evaluation in relation to the research (Paechter, 2012). The continuous re-evaluation of my position throughout the phases of the research allowed me not only a constant revision of my pre-existing knowledge but also serves as Haynes (2012) posits, to provide a more holistic "picture" of certain events and/or process linked to the development of the National Cultural Policy in the wake of new information acquired. This process of constant checks in acquiring the relevant data contributes towards the dependability of the inquiry, and by constantly examining the findings, interpretations, and recommendations to ensure they are supported by the data I also ensure the conformability of the research study.

4.5. Ethical Considerations and Research Limitations

Ethical consideration in research necessitates adherence to moral standards regarding informed consent, deception, confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy (McMillan & Schumacher (2006: 333). As such, I acquired ethical clearance from the Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) through the Wits School of Arts before any data collection took place. To avoid coercion, I first sought informed consent from the participants and ensured the issues of anonymity and confidentiality were discussed and agreed

upon between myself as the researcher and the shortlisted participants. All respondents agreed to be referenced by name. Similarly, all participants were agreeable to having the interviews recorded for transcription purposes. The recordings of these interviews remain stored on my personal password-protected laptop and in my private cloud storage platforms that are also password protected.

It is important to acknowledge some of the limitations of using a qualitative research method, Alshenqeeti (2014: 41) offers a word of caution around power relations that may unintentionally occur between a researcher and the interviewee. This was a significant factor to be addressed considering my position as Chief Arts Officer within the Department of Culture. The potential existed for interviewees to be cautious about the answers they give for fear of possible repercussions in future engagements with the government. Against this background, I assured the interviewees of my position as a researcher and of the importance of the research as a purely academic pursuit. I further sought to gain their trust by reducing the level of formality (normally associated with engagement with the government) by conducting the interviews in informal settings (public spaces such as cafes, hotel lounges, bars, etc.) of their choosing.

An obstacle during the data collection process was the fuel crisis stemming from a shortage of forex to purchase the commodity[31]. This presented a significant challenge as firstly it meant that a great portion of my time and that of the interviewees was spent trying to acquire fuel. Similarly, the shortage of fuel meant that neither I nor the interviewees were able to meet up during the proposed times due to a lack of transportation, or frequently rescheduling the interviews to enable both parties to source fuel on a moment's notice. One way in which I sought to overcome this challenge was through the 2022 National Conference on the assumption that most of my shortlisted participants would be in attendance. While some did indeed attend the function others were absent. This left gaps of information from key sectors that I had hoped would help to provide a more holistic picture of the problems the research seeks to address.

The quality of the research is limited by the absence of a participant from the National Statistical Office of Malawi (NSO). The study would have benefited greatly from the participation of a representative from the NSO, particularly, as I seek to highlight the correlation between the release of findings from an NSO research study in 2013, with the preoccupation of the National Cultural Policy on revenue generation.

[31] The shortage of fuel began in August 2022. The President Dr. Lazarus Chakwera acknowledging that the National Oil Company of Malawi (NOCMA) - which is responsible for ensuring the availability of fuel – lacked sufficient funding, negotiated a $50, 000, 000 Fuel Financing Revolving Facility with the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) for the immediate procurement of fuel products towards the replenishment of the strategic fuel reserves stocks. See Malawi24 (2022).

Very rich data could have been provided regarding the perceived impacts of the 2013 study on Malawi's arts and culture sector, as well as fostering a greater appreciation of what happened, or did not happen following the release of these findings and what impact this could have had on how the policy document was developed, in addition to how any subsequent follow-ups could have been utilised in the pending Review Process of the National Cultural Policy. Engaging representatives from this field will be beneficial for any future studies on perceptions of the National Cultural Policy since its enactment.

SECTION FIVE: INSUFFICIENT RECONTEXTUALISATION AND THE FAILURE OF THE NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY:

5.1. Introduction

This section provides the core findings in response to the central research questions. It provides a deeper understanding of the factors that have contributed to the perception of the failure of the National Cultural Policy in its eight (8) year lifespan. parts. The section consists of an evaluation of the extent of the recontextualisation, or the lack thereof, of the creative industry and creative economy to the Malawian context in the development and design of the National Cultural Policy. Finally, I look at how this lack of recontextualisation of the creative industry and creative economy concepts in the National Cultural Policy's final design manifest as the National Cultural Policy's subsequent failure following its enactment. The evaluation of the National Cultural Policy and its development and design is anchored in the lens of Singh, Thomas, and Harris's (2013) model of recontextualisation - expounding on the work of Bernstein (1975) - as a framework in which the complex processes, and level(s) of collaboration between government and non-state actors to ensure that new policy is fleshed out and acquires "substance" (Bernstein, 1975: 467) are cardinal. Further analysis is conducted under the spectrum of strategic dilemmas in cultural policy as espoused by Matarasso and Landry (1999) to identify the strategic decisions that were made during the development and design of the National Cultural Policy to address how those decisions informed the final design of the National Cultural Policy and how they manifest as disconnects that culminated in the failure of the policy document to meet its objectives for the arts and culture sector, and its inability to meet the needs of its intended beneficiaries.

5.2. Recontextualisation of the Creative Industry and Creative Economy Concepts to Malawi's Arts and Culture Sector

The official recontextualising field (the government) and the pedagogic recontextualising field (non-state actors) having different perceptions of the creative industry and creative economy concepts to be transferred to Malawi, provided the foundations for what Matarasso and Landry (1999: 7) believe is one of the most complex areas of modern government; finding a level of balance in the differing visions amongst stakeholders necessary for the development and management of cultural policy. The overriding feeling amongst non-state actors though is that the process to develop the National Cultural Policy "left a lot to be desired" (Chibambo, 2022, Mkumpha, 2022; Msendera, 2022) because of the government's desire to expedite the policy's enactment to support the national development agenda, no room was left for the recontextualisation of the creative industry and creative economy concepts to ensure their suitability to Malawi. The end result is a policy document that fails to address many of the needs of non-

state actors, as Thomas Chibambo, the Founder and Executive Director of the Blantyre Arts Festival (BAF) suggests:

> Most of the things in the National Cultural Policy were rushed just because we would like to have a cultural policy…it did not include so many challenging factors that would've been put in place so that the cultural policy itself should highlight or put the measures that would help the players on the ground (Chibambo, 2022).

This statement underscoring the perceptions of non-state actors towards the National Cultural Policy emphasises the need to unbundle how and where the disconnect(s) between what the National Cultural Policy embodied and what it was expected to do, emanate from. This necessitates establishing a deeper understanding of the nature of the recontextualisation process and the level of interactions between the government and non-state actors in developing the policy document.

How Transferable Were the Creative Industry and Creative Economy Concepts?

The transition from the single-party administration to the democratic system brought with it a wave of cultural awareness and an increased desire for local cultural products and cultural expressions (Kachigamba, 2022; Lusaka, 2022; Mazibuko, 2022; Thole, 2022). Addressing this desire was seen by many non-state actors as the basis for the development of a cultural policy by establishing what needed to be done in response to this demand (Magomelo, 2022; Mkandawire, 2022; Mpakule, 2022). A significant takeaway from the National Conference 2022 is the inference that the development of the National Cultural Policy fails to concretise the transition from the single-party administration's view that arts and culture was on the margins of the development agenda, with the democratic government's alignment of arts and culture sector more centrally in the national development agenda. The failure to reconcile this shift is believed to have resulted in the overarching difficulties in the present day. One group suggests the need for:

> Decolonising of the whole sector by overcoming the past and what has traditionally been said about arts and culture and those involved in this field. We also need to address the way we see and the way we present our own artistic and cultural expressions (Group 6, National Conference 2022).

The genesis for the emergence of such a view can be traced to the inaugural national development agenda, the Malawi Vision 2020 (1998 – 2004), which made no mention of arts and culture. A situation

that had not changed over a decade later when MGDSI (2005 – 2010) that replaced the Vision 2020 also did not earmark the sector. This development dismayed the Executive Secretary for UNESCO-NATCOM:

> When MGDSI did not mention anything (about arts and culture). I remember asking why and I was told that it was subsumed in social development, as a theme or key result area…I argued that (arts and) culture deserved to stand alone. (Magomelo, 2022)

The embedding of arts and culture in MGDSI can be attributed to the perceived priorities of the central government at the time. As a low-income status country, Malawi is beset by various social challenges including a lack of basic infrastructure, limited access to basic education, inadequate health facilities, high unemployment rates, environmental degradation, and a high HIV/AIDS prevalence rate (Malawi Government, 2017: 13). These are complex challenges because they have no clear-cut solutions and cut across economic sectors that the government cannot solve on its own (Head and Alford, 2015 cited in Makoza, 2017: 1). The emphasis of the central government goals of the generation of wealth through sustainable economic growth and infrastructure development as a means of achieving poverty reduction (Malawi Government, 2011: 5) anchors the eventual disconnects in the National Cultural Policy because any initiatives by MDAs perceived by the central government as not providing "immediate economic benefits" (Ibid) are subjected to resistance.

I can recall from my tenure within the Department of Culture efforts by the Department to develop the National Cultural Policy being subjected to constant barriers from the central government, be it in the form of institutional bureaucracy or the lack of resources until the "emergence" and presentation of the arts and culture sector as an "industry". The Chief Arts Officer provided evidence of some of the challenges faced during the Department's attempts to develop the National Cultural Policy. She disclosed that the Department of Culture's request for supplementary budget support for the 2011 – 12 Financial Year were dismissed during a meeting in 2011 with the (then) Ministry of Finance and Development Planning in which they were told:

> …they (the arts and culture sector in general, and the Department of Culture specifically) were not valued as being something that will bring something to the table. At least not of "economic value", to them. (Maulidi, 2022).

The Department was denied the supplementary budget support required for the completion of a European Union and UNESCO technical mission[32], the implementation of roundtable discussions with rights holder associations, and a national consultative workshop - activities deemed as being cardinal to the groundwork for developing the National Cultural Policy (Maulidi, 2022) - as they were not seen as being integral to national development despite the MGDSII labelling the arts and culture sector as a driver for sustainable economic growth. The result of the Department of Culture's inability to speak to the central government in "a language that they could understand" forced the Department of Culture to identify initiatives linked to economic benefits to be derived from the development of the National Cultural Policy as the justification for its development (Mazibuko, 2022; Magomelo, 2022). That the Department of Culture was made to present the necessity of a cultural policy to the central government via economic parameters (despite the growing demand for a cultural policy by non-state actors to address the challenges in the arts and culture sector caused by its continued absence) demonstrates that the central government in democratic Malawi held the same indifference towards arts and culture as the pre-democratic administration.

The perception of the role of arts and culture as being limited to the preserving and promoting of a "Malawianess" from the single-party administration carried over into democratic Malawi and was accepted as being "the way things work" (Phiri, 2021: 18). The institutionalisation of this perception of arts and culture is an example of what Kangas and Vestheim (2010) suggest as a common government response to demands by the public for changes in either policy or governance with said change often being more gradual than meaningful[33]. This often results in layering - a model of institutional transformation – wherein changes in governance are primarily made through modifications to institutional systems, forms, and processes that are added onto existing ones (Thelen 2004, cited in Kangas and Vestheim, 2010). Though my earlier research conclusions were linked to the failures in the implementation of the National Cultural Policy, the ramifications of layering in democratic Malawi are revisited here to identify the impacts that

[32] Under the European Union and UNESCO's jointly funded "Expert Facility to Strengthen the System of Governance for Culture in Developing Countries" project, the Department of Culture undertook two (2) technical missions led by two (2) UNESCO Technical Experts Stephen Chifunyise and Basma El-Husseiny respectively, to conduct diagnostic consultations between stakeholders, and to enhance the capacities of stakeholders in the arts and culture sector with the primary objective to develop Malawi's inaugural National Cultural Policy. The need for supplementary budget support arose from the shortfall in the Department of Culture's annual funding to facilitate these activities. In fact, one of Mr. Chifunyise's trips had to be postponed until the Department secured funds from alternative means. See Department of Culture, (2012).

[33] A theory by Kathleen Thelen that addresses the two (2) common ways in which governments respond to demands by the public for change(s) in governance and policy. Where layering occurs it is posited that some systems of governance are built by making modifications to institutional systems that are added onto existing institutional forms, rather than replacing it holistically as a more effective means of reform. See Kangas, and Vestheim (2010).

can be identified in the development of the National Cultural Policy in general, and the recontextualisation process more specifically.

The sense of a need to overcome the continued indifference towards arts and culture can be gleaned from the different tones between a draft version of the cultural policy from 2009 that states that amongst the key objectives of the cultural policy are to ensure:

> …that cultural issues are prioritised on the national development agenda, the alignment of Malawi's legal framework(s) on cultural heritage to the national constitution, regional and international protocols, declarations, treaties, charters, and conventions that Malawi is party to, the increased knowledge of, appreciation for, and promotion of Malawi's arts and culture, its heritage and its diversity, the improved creation, production, promotion, dissemination/distribution and access to cultural products and services, and the Improved welfare of cultural operators and artists through among others increased employment opportunities through the arts and culture (Government of Malawi, 2009).

This is very similar to what non-state actors envisioned that a cultural policy would do for the arts and culture sector. The following statement by the President of the Visual Arts Association of Malawi (VAAM) best captures what the vision for the culture should look to provide:

> …an enabling environment where artists, cultural professionals, practitioners, and citizens can create, produce, distribute, disseminate, and enjoy a broad range of cultural goods, and activities that could be provided by having a cultural policy (Mpakule, 2022).

This demonstrates a oneness about the direction Malawi's arts and culture should pursue. There is however a marked difference three (3) years later when during a press briefing by the Deputy Director of Planning in the (then) Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife, and Culture on the cultural policy[34] . He stated that the version of the cultural policy of that point in time sought to achieve:

> A strong cultural and creative industry that can contribute to the national economy, a closer connection between tourism and the arts and culture, enhance economic benefits from the

[34] Held under the theme, 'What Do We Want to Achieve?', this press briefing provided a progress update on the development of the National Cultural Policy. This followed media coverage of discontent amongst non-state actors on what was deemed a lack of progress, and a lack of commitment by the government to develop the policy.

> arts and culture, and increased revenue generation for government from the cultural and creative industry (Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife, and Culture, 2012).

This shift is noticeable for its explicit usage of the terminology "cultural and creative industries". This follows the Department of Culture increasingly emphasising the connection between the arts and culture sector, the tourism industry, and the economy. A development occurring in the wake of MGDSII identifying the arts and culture sector as a key component for sustainable economic growth (Malawi Government, 2011: 15), and the aforementioned need by the Department to demonstrate the potential economic benefits to be derived from the arts and culture sector. The rationalisation being that with tourism placed as a priority by the central government (Government of Malawi, 2011; Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife, and Culture, 2013) that arts and culture could also gain a better standing - and more importantly for efforts to develop the National Cultural Policy – the ability to command more funding (Thole, 2022). This shift embodies observations by Peck (2011, cited in De Beukelaer and O'Connor, 2016: 27) on the adoption of the creative industry and creative economy concepts as "fast" cultural policy[35] in Global South contexts, as a strategic tool for development. In this context, the coinage of the creative and cultural industries is an attempt at transferring the creative industry and creative economy concepts popularised in Global North contexts, and the packaging of the arts and culture sector as a new route to economic growth. Additionally, because of the sector's potential to both, generate revenue and create jobs it provided what was believed to be more justification for lobbying efforts with the Ministries of Finance, and Economic Planning and Development respectively. The Executive Director of Zaluso Arts strongly contests that the creative economy and creative industry concepts were only copied as they were buzzwords at the time that dominated the global discourse on the functions of arts and culture in society (Ndalama, 2022).

In so doing, this attempt to transfer the concepts of the creative industry and the creative economy falls victim to what Banks (2015: 37) argues is nothing more than a codified language with little substance. This is especially true in the case of Malawi because as the Executive Secretary of UNESCO-NATCOM highlights the dominant focus at the time was on culture as heritage:

[35] Fast policy often dismissed as a quick fix that is adopted without scrutiny, is defined as the social practices and infrastructures that enable the complex folding of policy lessons from one place into reformed and transformed arrangements elsewhere. In this context, fast cultural policy refers to the widespread adoption by policymakers of cultural policy based on the creative industry and creative economy concepts Global South after it was popularised by 'New Labour' in Britain (DCMS 1998). See, De Beukelaer and O'Connor (2016).

> The issues raised in the UNCTAD Report were relevant, but Malawi's (arts and culture) players had not caught up with the issues being raised…I believe it (the 2008 UNCTAD Report) talked about creative industries being the industries of the future. But in Malawi, the debate was just beginning. Not many people saw culture in that light. For many people when they talked about arts and culture in those days it just was from the heritage aspect. Very few people would talk about it in terms of industry (Magomelo, 2022).

Pointing out how arts and culture was yet to be perceived in the manner it is in the Global North speaks to Kaya and Seleti's (2013) notion that attempts to copy Global North policy necessitates careful consideration(s) as the conditions are markedly different. It was imperative for considerations of the state of Malawi's arts and culture landscape to be made, before any attempt by policymakers to copy these concepts holistically. A point that is not lost on the Head of Documentation and Reforms Coordinator at COSOMA who states:

> They (the creative industry and creative economy) are based on their (the Global North's) level of development…there is also a need to define, to come up with our own definition so that we can serve ourselves better…it's solutions for our own problems. I have seen it as problematic replicating everything Western...but we must find a way of synergising their definitions with our own contexts in a way that it's possible to drive our agenda (Kachigamba, 2022).

This statement is significant because it makes a direct connection with what Matarasso and Landry (1999: 11) believe is a prerequisite of cultural policy development; the need for defining the parameters of the cultural domain. The absence of any attempt(s) to transfer the creative industry and creative economy concepts through an interpolation so that they respond to the level at which Malawi's arts and culture sector was in at the time provides the genesis for the failure of the National Cultural Policy in the future. Similarly, any potentially effective recontextualisation is negatively impacted by the central government's development agenda and the barriers placed on the MDAs managing the arts and culture sector. The attempt to mimic the application of the creative industry and creative economy concepts as a quick fix on the assumption that what worked elsewhere could apply in the same manner in Malawi ultimately affects the agenda of the National Cultural Policy. Having established how the recontextualisation process failed, it becomes important to understand the factors contributing to this and their ramifications on the process of developing the National Cultural Policy.

Arriving at the Development Dimension; the Alignment of the National Cultural Policy in the National Development Agenda

For Matarasso and Landry, there is nothing inherently wrong with recognising the developmental role of the arts and culture sector, to them it is both timely and important (1999: 17). In essence, there should be no real fault placed upon the central government for seeing the benefits that could come with making a better connection between the arts and culture, the economy, and tourism, as this has the potential to benefit many Malawians. However, as Matarasso and Landry (1999) posit there is a need to establish a balance between the central government's agenda of revenue generation and the non-state actors' desires for a conducive environment and self-actualisation.

However, as Makoza (2017) identifies in his exploration of the causes of Malawi's National ICT Policy not having its intended outcomes being adequately realised, sometimes stakeholders have different interests in the development of a public policy, and that politicians and the central government can dominate a policy's subsequent implementation in a top-down manner. Though not directly linked to the arts and culture sector, these observations are pertinent as the socio-economic background that informed the development and design of that policy also bears significant parallels with the environment that informed the National Cultural Policy. The adverse effect of the policy's inability to find a balance between the differing visions its stakeholders had for it meant that the National Cultural Policy ultimately fails to uphold Article 11 of the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions that encourages the active participation of non-state actors in all facets of policy including decision-making, implementation, and reporting (UNESCO, 2005: 7).

In 2010 Malawi ratified the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions respectively as part of initial efforts to enhance the welfare of arts and culture practitioners and provide a conducive environment for activities within the sector following the transition to a democratic system. While the ratification of these conventions is in line with the original direction of the National Cultural Policy, namely, to uphold and enhance the rights of non-state actors, there still existed some resistance in the cabinet for further action. When asked about the challenges this presented in the development of the policy document the UNESCO Executive Secretary intimates:

> …not that there was no expertise. Nor that the creative and cultural fraternity itself did not see the need for it. I think it was at the decision-making level where everything got stuck (Magomelo, 2022).

The challenge of convincing the cabinet of the need for a cultural policy arose because the central government had made wealth creation, sustainable economic growth, and infrastructure development, the priority areas across MDAs as per the MGDSII. This means that, despite the Department of Culture pushing for the successful ratification of the two (2) UNESCO conventions, the priority remained those aforementioned areas. In the context of the arts and culture sector, this means that seeking the establishment of a conducive environment to enhance the welfare of non-state actors is forsaken as this aspect is perceived as not directly contributing towards the support of tourism development (Government of Malawi, 2011: 11) that arts and culture has been anchored to under the MGDSII.

The emphasis on attaining economic gains through tourism was exacerbated following the launch of the Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) - a short to medium-term national development agenda - anchored by the directive to concentrate on "quick win" strategies (Government of Malawi, 2012)[36] intended to accelerate revenue generation. The priorities of the central government and their impact on the MDAs responsible for the governance and management of the arts and culture sector are evident in, the Department of Culture's Annual Report for the 2011 – 12 Financial Year that stated funds planned for cultural policy development initiatives had been reallocated towards ERP-themed activities and strategies (Department of Culture, 2011). Similarly, in the 2012 – 13 Financial Year the Department of Culture's planned EU/UNESCO Technical Mission in 2012 had to be postponed. These documents highlight the constraints that underscore the environment the National Cultural Policy was being developed in. Furthermore, the impact of financial constraints subjects MDAs to the role of a "subservient institution"[37] and this lack of freedom prevented the policymakers from establishing a balance between the expectations of non-state actors, and the central government's agenda for sustainable economic growth. The combination of these underlying factors subject the National Cultural Policy towards what Schmitt (2011) would ascribe as a "steering" of the central government's agenda and it becomes important to see how the impact(s) of this manifest in the policy document's development and design.

[36] This policy emerged in 2012 in the wake of the shortage of foreign currency reserves, and the scarcity of fuel and essential drugs in hospitals. The ERP was launched by the (then) President Dr. Joyce Banda to ensure that Malawi "returns on track to prosperity" through interventions in commercial agriculture, tourism, energy, mining, and infrastructure development in the immediate, short, and medium term to attain this goal. The ERP was underscored by "the need to focus on few priorities that are pro-growth, represent quick wins, and are highly effective". See Government of Malawi (2012).

[37] In their investigation of power relations between government institutions Fatille and Adejuwon (2009) outlines the "Power Theory" which is a form of Inter-Governmental Relations (IGR) that determines the level of freedom for, or constraints on political action. In instances where one institution has more authority, constraints are placed upon the lesser institution, and they thereby become the subservient institution. See Fatille and Adejuwon (2009: 101).

An Incoherent Vision

When asked about his perceptions of why the National Cultural Policy has failed, the Director of the Culture Foundation said he believes that its failures emanate from the absence of clear objectives to measure the policy's implementation against (Mkandawire, 2022). Similarly, Matarasso and Landry (1999: 17) posit that the value of cultural policy needs to be monitored, tested, and articulated. This speaks to the vision of the National Cultural Policy and the ability to assess its strengths and weaknesses, or in this context the lack thereof. Though taken from the field of strategic management of the arts, Lidia Varbanova's definition of an organization or company's vision is that it is the expression of its desired portrait, and therefore acts as its beacon for the future, as it represents a desire or a dream that should come true (Varbanova, 2012: 61) is apropos for extrapolating how the National Cultural Policy fails to meet its vision in both its development and design.

In 2013, as groundwork continued on the development of the National Cultural Policy, the Copyright Society of Malawi (COSOMA) convened a consultative meeting to disseminate the findings of the "the Economic Contribution of Copyright-Based Industries in Malawi" research study[38]. The study that was commissioned by the government through COSOMA in light of the increasing importance of copyright goods and services to Malawi's economy (Chikoti, Kamanga, and Ndawala, 2013: 7) turned out to be a pivotal moment, as the release of the findings would have an impact on the National Cultural Policy's development. A presentation by the Chief Statistician at the National Statistical Office (NSO), Mrs. Lizzie Chikoti would reveal that in 2009 the copyright-based industries contributed 3.46% of the GDP and 3.35 % to the total employment demonstrating that these industries could be important for the economy (Ibid: 8). These represented figures faired comparatively well against other sectors viewed as "essential" by the central government[39]. The availability of statistical data had a significant impact as they provided a "language" which could appeal to the central government and politicians (Mazibuko, 2022).

[38] These are the findings from "The Economic Contribution of Creative Industries in Malawi' research study conducted in 2009, by the Copyright Society of Malawi (COSOMA) in conjunction with the National Statistical Office of Malawi (NSO) based on the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Guide of 2003. The main objectives of the research were to quantify the economic contribution of copyright and related rights-based industries in Malawi by estimating their contribution to the GDP, share of national employment and revenue generated from foreign trade, and to identify the comparative advantages of the copyright-based industries with regard to other local industry sectors and the relation of these to major trade partners. See Chikoti, Kamanga, and Ndawala, (2013).

[39] The contribution of the copyright-based industries to the national economy based on GDP was higher than those of: mining and quarrying, human health, education, construction and transport and storage sectors Mining and quarrying contributed 0.8% to the GDP, accommodation and food services contributed 2.2%, and information and communication contributed 4.4%. See Chikoti, Kamanga, and Ndawala, (2013).

Because the 2013 NSO/COSOMA Study was centred on data gathered from Core Copyright-Based Industries[40] and Interdependent Copyright-Based Industries[41] respectively that are heavily populated by practitioners and activities in the arts and culture sector, they were immediately latched on to by MDAs as the Chief Arts Officer intimates:

> The 2013 NSO/COSOMA study had an impact on the ministry responsible for culture…as the ministry responsible for culture, we took it as something important to stand on (Maulidi, 2022)

The 2013 NSO/COSOMA study thus readily appealed to the central government. With its repeated usage of the term "creative industry", and its ability to provide evidence of the sector's potential to generate revenue it was susceptible to instrumentalisation (Yudicè 2003, Holden, 2006; O'Connor and Gibson, 2016). However, the problem with the focus being placed on the "tangible" evidence of the sector's economic value that the study could provide, ultimately leads to the undercutting of the institutional and instrumental values (Holden, 2006; Holden, 2009) that the 2013 NSO/COSOMA Study could have provided for the National Cultural Policy framework. The Chief Arts Officer believes that this represented a missed opportunity:

> An opportunity was missed because I think it (the 2013 study) could have been used to make "noise" on the importance of the arts and culture and maybe that would've been the time to intensify the lobbying for more funds but also the importance of the sector to the national development agenda (Maulidi, 2022).

The findings of the 2013 NSO/COSOMA Study have the potential to be a key instrument in the development of the National Cultural Policy. Beyond providing evidence of the arts and culture sector's propensity to contribute to the economy, it provides a reference point through which a strategic analysis of the state of Malawi's arts and culture landscape should have been conducted. This potential for strategic analysis is emphasised by COSOMA's Head of Documentation and Reforms Coordinator who says:

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[40] These are defined as those industries that are wholly engaged in creation, production and manufacturing, performance, broadcast, communication and exhibition, or distribution and sales of works and other protected subject matter. See Chikoti, Kamanga, and Ndawala (2013: 12).

[41] These are defined as those industries that are engaged in production, manufacture and sale of equipment whose function is wholly or primarily to facilitate the creation, production or use of works and other protected subject matter. See Chikoti, Kamanga, and Ndawala (2013: 12).

> The first thing that should've happened after the release of the findings was to map the arts and culture sector. To map and quantify the costs in order to improve that (the sector). Then there could've been a deliberate programme in the National Budget to support these industries to grow further. This was an opportune time to make these industries more vibrant (Kachigamba, 2022).

This statement demonstrates an understanding that despite the adoption of the creative industry concept, and the coinage of the cultural and creative industry that had emerged in the National Cultural Policy that there remained a significant knowledge gap as to what the local cultural and creative industry itself looked like and the strategies and initiatives that were needed to ensure its continued growth. This statement also speaks to what Matarasso and Landry (1999: 55) posit about the vibrancy of culture being provided by the attention that is given to the activities, products, and performances, and the need for constant redress of what happens within the arts and culture domain. This statement also speaks to the need for having a conceptualisation of what the vision for the arts and culture should be that would be enhanced through the availability of the National Cultural Policy. Instead, with the focus on the economic gains and benefits what these statistics ended up providing is the basis for what Matarasso and Landry (1999: 28) ascribe as the growth of disaffection and cynicism among non-state actors as reflected in the following statement:

> That (revenue generation) is the easiest benchmark to point at. For most people If you look at the success of a creative project or a creative product you look at the bank balance, how much money has it made, how much money in terms of tourism. This is what the government focuses on "how much money was made?" "How many jobs were created?" We however lose out on harnessing the creative or production aspect itself because you can only have a finished product to sell when you have harnessed what came before. This is before looking at the money or how much has come from the creative industry (Mkandawire, 2022).

The 2013 NSO/COSOMA study should have provided a useful tool for the development process of the National Cultural Policy. As alluded to, a mapping exercise following the release of the findings would have provided the foundation from which to establish the parameters of Malawi's emerging "cultural and creative industries" - in line with the new direction policymakers were taking -, baseline figures for the number of practitioners, a baseline of the creative workforce, and a deeper understanding of the strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities within the local arts and culture sector . Therefore

the 2013 NSO/COSOMA study had the potential provide a clearer vision and/or direction for Malawi's arts and culture sector. A deeper understanding of the local arts and culture rooted in the realities on the ground and not assumptions made by the government should have provided a clearer situational analysis of the sector thereby preventing the disconnects that emerge in the final policy document. Instead, placing emphasis solely on the availability of the economic data and using this aspect as the basis of the National Cultural Policy leads to what Matarasso and Landry (1999: 7) argue as the state's efforts in one direction producing unexpected, and unwanted, results elsewhere. Attention must now be paid to how the decisions to utilise the 2013 NSO/COSOMA study culminated in the National Cultural Policy's framework.

Evidence that the National Cultural Policy is "Working": The Economic Imperative and Tangible Success

Despite the MGDSII explicitly identifying the tourism industry as a priority area, Malawi's arts and culture sector lacked a set of policy guidelines to guide development towards the central government's desire for the development of the tourism sector. Emanating from the inadequate recontextualisation process, the alignment of arts and culture to national development as an instrument to enhance tourism, void of a clearly conceptualised vision for the arts and culture sector, and anchored by the belief that the arts and culture sector only attained value through its propensity to generate revenue and create jobs, the National Cultural Policy was designed to attain three Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): i) the rehabilitation of the Blantyre Cultural Centre (BCC); ii) the rehabilitation of the *Pa Bwalo* Amphitheatre; and, iii) the establishment of the National Arts and Heritage Council (NaHeC). This was informed by the push for revenue in the wake of the ERP, and latterly the need to prove that "government is working".

In 2014, a need to demonstrate that the National Cultural Policy was "working" emerged following what the National Reforms Commission identified as the need for urgent and sustained reforms that would align the allocation of resources and operations in the public service to support the achievement of the MGDSII's Outcomes (Malawi Government, 2014: 3). This culminated in the pilot National Public Service Reforms Programme which included the following performance agreement:

> …resources (financial, human, and material) would only be provided to those ministries in the forefront of 'making Malawi work' by ensuring that good performance is rewarded, and poor performance is sanctioned appropriately (Ibid: 6).

The signing of these performance agreements across selected MDAs including the (then) Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Culture placed external pressures on MDAs to perform. The emphasis being placed on the provision of tangible results can explain why the National Cultural Policy came to pursue what

Matarasso and Landry (1999: 28) describe as "Grands Projets". The priority being placed on initiatives that politicians could easily point out (Matarasso and Landry, 1999; Yudicè, 2003; Holden, 2006; O'Connor and Gibson, 2016) came at the expense of other areas of the arts and culture sector; a belief that was summarised by the VAAM President as follows:

> Sometimes it feels as if the National Cultural Policy is just targeting tangibles like the NaHeC, and how much money is being made, and a certain number of big events and/or activities. But can we not go beyond that? Not just things that allow them to say: "we have done it" (Mpakule, 2022).

To secure the allocation of resources, and to justify the programming of initiatives, strategies, and activities linked to the National Cultural Policy the relevant authorities overseeing the management of the arts and culture sector gave directives prioritising only those which could be cross-checked with the performance agreement (Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Culture, 2015)[42]. It is in this context that some of the focus of the National Cultural Policy became skewed toward infrastructure. Matarasso and Landry (1999:54) posit that cultural policy may erroneously lean towards infrastructure as a visible asset that can appear on a balance sheet and can be opened by a local politician, who can point to it and say, 'See what I have delivered'.

This draws further parallels with the National ICT Policy. Makoza (2017) noted that the underlying assumption of the policy was that the supply of technology to address the availability gap would rectify the situation on the ground. He laments that so much focus was placed on the increased availability of ICTs for end users that it lacks consideration for the inadequate skills capacities, processes, programmes, and availability of laws that could contribute towards attaining the desired overall impact (2017: 2). This attention to consumption that anchors the National ICT Policy is mirrored by the National Cultural Policy that highlights the improved creation, production, dissemination/distribution and access to cultural products and services within five years as being a key outcome. The underlying assumption being that greater productivity leads to greater economic returns that will ultimately culminate in an enhanced cultural and creative industry. COSOMA's Head of Documentation and Reforms Coordinator suggests that there should be focus beyond consumption:

[42] The Principal for Youth, Sports, and Culture warned officials during the 2015 – 2016 National Budget Preparation Workshop that he would not approve any activities or initiatives that were not directly linked to performance indicators in the Annual Workplan if they could not be linked back to anything contained in the performance agreement. See Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Culture (2015). 'Item 4: PS Remarks: Guidelines and Recommendations'. Minutes of 2015 – 2016 National Budget Preparations Workshop, 4th – 7th May 2015, Kamuzu Institute for Youth and Sports, Lilongwe.

> If you go out and see the majority of those employed in the informal sector you will find 70-80% of those are involved in the creative sector, just imagine those are operating without direct intervention by the government. So, if it had been that there was the political will to sustain these and grow them further, their economic contribution would be even more substantial. There is very big potential in sustaining the economy of the country (Kachigamba, 2022).

It is possible to make the inference that the thinking behind the emphasis on infrastructure leading to greater productivity – and with it, greater revenue - is heavily informed by the focus placed on "getting the country out of the mess it was in economically" (Mazibuko, 2022). However, as Kachigamba (2022) intimates there is a greater need to understand what has allowed the practitioners to perform as well as they are despite the absence of direct intervention from the government. Not only does this link to his earlier point about the need to establish a greater understanding of what defines the local cultural and creative industries and the successes and challenges that would be derived through a mapping exercise, but that there is also a need to invest across the arts and culture sector to have an even greater impact. This is a sentiment echoed by the Executive Director of the Culture Foundation:

> We should harness the creative industry from all aspects. I'm talking about capacity. The whole value chain needs to be reviewed…this issue of performance indicators. People are so fixated about what you can show to demonstrate that certain things (within the arts and culture sector) are going well. No! Let's be doing things correctly and certain other things will fall into place (Mkandawire, 2022)

In highlighting the value chain and the capacity of practitioners within the arts and culture sector this statement underscores the need for more balance between the provision of infrastructure and the promoting of activities and strategies on the ground, for as Matarasso and Landry (1999: 55) contest while it is easy to emphasise erecting infrastructure, this is useless if the sector lacks life, and cultural goods cannot be produced.

Similarly, the emphasis on establishing the NaHeC within five years has proved problematic. Not only because this is yet to happen, but also because non-state actors remain cynical that its establishment will not be the "be-all-and-end-all" to problems in the arts and culture sector (Daka, 2022).

The NaHeC was conceptualised to be the public entity "responsible for mobilising and managing resources for activities and projects to be carried out by players in the cultural and creative industry" (Malawi Government 2015: 8). Establishing the NaHeC is amongst the key reforms devised under the National Public Sector Reforms Programme informed by the best practices of "Modern Governance"[43] at its core, especially decentralising the governance structure of the arts and culture to ensure the inclusion of non-state actors in the implementation of the National Cultural Policy (Phiri, 2021: 20). The NaHeC is to serve as the embodiment of the understanding that in democratic Malawi the implementation of the National Cultural Policy is not solely the responsibility of the government (Ibid). While in my previous research on the National Cultural Policy, I implied that the continued absence of the NaHeC hampers the ability to successfully implement the policy, it is being argued here that this continued absence is the result of the failure to contextualise the NaHeC within the micro-environment.

Previously, I argued that the governance structure and the National Cultural Policy Implementation Framework did not provide a conducive environment for the policy document primarily because of the failure to replace the governance structures from the single-party administration with new ones in democratic Malawi (Phiri 2021). Now it is important to look at how the continued existence of the governance structures that predate the National Cultural Policy negate the recontextualisation process.

5.3. The Democratisation Predicament: Centralised Authority in Democratic Malawi

Matarasso and Landry (1999: 36) posit that cultural policy must uphold and nurture the interest(s) of the minority. Similarly, they state that decentralisation is an important aspect of cultural policy as when it is attained it enhances participation in cultural activity (Ibid: 48). However, wider participation is not attainable with the continued existence of legislation from the single party administration governing Malawi's arts and culture. For a long time, the perception held by the central government was that there was no need to have a cultural policy with UNESCO-NATCOM's Executive Secretary revealing that:

> The decision-makers deemed that the various pieces of legislation that had been guiding the arts and culture (before the transition to the democratic system) were taken as being enough to guide action in the culture sector (Magomelo, 2022).

[43] A principle outlined by Thomas Schmitt in his analysis of governance systems developed in the wake of government responses to the demand by the public for more autonomous rule over various sectors of the State. In this context the State loses or delegates an increasing proportion of its power and its competences to various local, national and international "entities". See Schmitt, T. (2011: 5).

This underscores a failure to appreciate that these legislations characterised by the desire to control channels of communication to consolidate the State's power (Sahle, 2001; Lucida, 2002; Msiska, 2016; Zimba, 2019) are not conducive in a democratic environment. This is exacerbated by the fact that the practice of centralised governance became accepted across MDAs as 'the way things are' (Phiri, 2021). The clearest example of why this would be problematic in the development and design of the National Cultural Policy is the explicit policy within the 1990 Arts and Crafts Act that empowered the Minister responsible for the arts and culture to:

> … oversee all matters relating to Malawi's arts and culture…make regulations for the better carrying out of this Act…is hereby given the prerogative to adhere to or ignore the 'advice' of the Arts and Crafts Advisory Council[44] (Government of Malawi, 1990: 3).

Thus, ensuring the Minister responsible for the arts and culture as an erstwhile representative of the Office of The President - and thereby the central government – had centralised authority. This creates a scenario in which decisions with countrywide dimensions are made in a top-down manner under the justification that they are being done on behalf of, and not in conjunction with non-state actors (Fatille and Adejuwon 2009, cited in Phiri, 2021: 22). The impact of the combination of the continued existence of outdated legislation governing the sector and the centralised governance structure is not lost non-state actors who believe that there is a need to provide greater autonomy within the mandated government institutions overseeing Malawi's arts and culture with LYCO's Executive Director stating that in the absence of the National Arts and Heritage Council that:

> The (central) government needs to empower the Department of Culture (both) financially and technically because the Department lacks resources to implement activities and strategies. Personally, I feel that even in the absence of NaHeC, the Department should still be in a position to implement some of the objectives of the National Cultural Policy (Kitchen, 2022).

[44] The Arts and Crafts Advisory Council originally comprised of the Secretary for Education and Culture (or their representative), the Secretary for Youth and Malawi Young Pioneers (or their representative), the Secretary for Trade and Industry (or their representative), the Vice Chancellor of the University of Malawi (or their representative), the General Manager of the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation, the Copyright Administrator and four members appointed by the Minister "on account of their knowledge and interest in arts and crafts" (Government of Malawi, 1990: 3). However, according to the Senior Arts Officer in the Department of Culture following the transition to a democratic system and in line with the many institutional reforms and changes in the governance structure, the Council while not legally dissolved in an operational sense has been unofficially accepted as being made redundant and apropos replaced by non-state actors (Thole, 2022).

Some feel that there is a greater need to establish smaller-scale policies and/or initiatives to complement the National Culture Policy such as city councils initiating public art space policies (Mpakule, 2022; Msendera, 2022). For others, the continued failure to establish the NaHeC is a mere scapegoat for the deficiencies on the ground:

> Does it necessarily require the (establishment of) NaHeC for the government to assist in capacity building of artists, or to provide resources? What the people (non-state actors) are looking for isn't necessarily the NaHeC structure, but the things they should be getting (now). If the government had the resources it would not have to wait for the NaHeC. Government should not postpone the provision of resources or the provision of capacity building, there are so many instruments available to provide those (Mkandawire, 2022).

While the establishment of the NaHeC is a welcome strategy for its potential to modernise the governance of Malawi's arts and culture sector, it has unfortunately been beset by problems emerging from the failure to reconcile the governance structures of the single party-administration and the democratic system. While the inability to redress the legal frameworks necessary for the establishment of the NaHeC has contributed to its continued absence, what the void has worryingly revealed is how the focus on infrastructure at the national level on the assumption that doing so would boost economic gains limits the level of activity at lower community levels. The absence of the NaHeC only serves to expose the National Cultural Policy's inability to organise local cultural activities either due to inadequate resources for the responsible MDAs or officials, and/or politicians scapegoating the absence of NaHeC for the challenges being faced in the present. The failure to provide solutions results in what Landry and Matarasso identify as the breakdown of key mechanisms for local capacity building and community development necessary for the sustainability of the arts and culture (1999: 37).

SECTION SIX: ADDRESSING THE FAILURE OF THE NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY: RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

As Matarasso and Landry (1999) posit, the decisions of the government in the making of cultural policy often leads to unexpected and even unwanted results. The findings of this research study show that many of the decisions made in developing the National Cultural Policy have culminated in numerous unwanted results creating disconnects with what non-state actors had expected from the policy. However, as Matarasso and Landry (1999: 7) note the nature of arts and culture is that it is constantly changing in response to its environment. The conceptual framework model has aided in identifying the overarching problems with the National Cultural Policy emanating from the failure to recontextualise the creative industry and creative economy concepts namely, the failure to reconcile the more central role of arts and culture in democratic Malawi with that it held during the single party era, and the significant lack of non-state actor involvement in developing the cultural policy.

The failure of the National Cultural Policy in the eight years following its enactment has come to emphasise the point made by Matarasso and Landry (1999) that governments should seek to influence, rather than direct change in the arts and culture sector. The negative perceptions held by non-state actors towards the National Cultural Policy emphasise the error made in taking this direction. The ceding of influence by the central government is the starting point for redressing the disconnects that have emerged.

6.2. (Re)Defining Malawi's Arts and Culture Domain

One of the underlying principles of cultural policy is that it must provide a platform to undertake reflections about the past as contemporary cultural activity is very much shaped by what has preceded it. This is because, in one way or another, the past may exert a deep influence on what is done today, since all cultural activity is done in relation to what has gone before (Matarasso and Landry, 1999: 38). Shepherd and Robins (2008: 2) notes the importance of heritage in the negotiation of issues such as culture, identity, and citizenship in countries with contentious histories such as those on the African continent that have been affected by biased dispositions of local cultures. An example of the instrumentalisation of cultural policy being used to redress these issues is the 1996 South African White Paper on Arts, Culture, and Heritage which explicitly states the importance of utilising arts and culture as a driver for reconciliation and that failure to invest in the arts, culture, and heritage would constitute grave short-sightedness on the

part of the government. This is because arts and culture have healing and recreational potential for regeneration and restoration (Department of Arts, Crafts, Science, and Technology, 1996: 11). The parallel with South Africa is a notable one because Malawi is also a country with its own complicated relationship with arts and culture because of the totalitarian rule during the single party era. There was a significant need for reflection by the Malawi government over all sectors from the ground up following the transition to the democratic system. Maralack (2021: 390) suggests - in the context of South Africa - there is a need to reflect on the inherited arts and culture infrastructure, policy framework, and policy challenges, as well as the trajectory and rationale of the policy interventions implemented since democracy. Similarly, there is a significant need to conduct such reflection(s) as a means to move Malawi's cultural policy further forward.

With the movement from an authoritarian state (Apartheid) towards democracy and similar social and economic challenges, there is a strong connection between South Africa and Malawi. It is against this background, and as the findings have shown there is a need to address the lingering impacts of the single-party era on the arts and culture sector in Malawi in the present. One possible solution is the fostering of a greater appreciation for arts and culture. Indeed, the Executive Director of Zaluso Arts suggests enhancing arts education stating that:

> …(there is) a need from the outset to start developing curricula from the grassroots and growing a mindset that favours the arts. The greater population is not aware of its (arts and culture's) benefits and this goes back to the lingering issues from the single-party era (Ndalama, 2022).

However, I believe there is a need for a more comprehensive solution with potentially long-term impacts. In line with Matarasso and Landry's assertion that a prerequisite of cultural policy is to define the parameters of the cultural domain itself (1999: 11) and with the consensus amongst non-state actors being that the National Cultural Policy in its current iteration is a failure, I recommend the need to utilise the imminent National Cultural Policy review process to develop a new "road map" to guide the future, and direction of the arts and culture as a sector. As has been established the coinage of the 'cultural and creative industries' emerged in the wake of the ERP and MGDSII and the need to justify the alignment of the arts and culture sector with the national development agenda. By attempting to transfer the creative industry and creative economy concepts as they were applied in Global North contexts, there was no actualisation of what Malawi's industry consisted of, nor how the related economy anchored in the activities of the arts and culture sector's performance could be monitored. One of the significant aspects

of Shepherd and Robins (2008) is the attempt to provide definitions for "keywords" to be applied in implementing South Africa's cultural policy. It is disconcerting to note that not once does the National Cultural Policy define the terms: culture, cultural and creative industries, creative industries, and creative economy. Similarly, despite the National Cultural Policy being touted as providing a coherent and unified vision for stakeholders (Malawi Government, 2015: 8) it does not articulate what that vision is.

Against this background, the National Cultural Policy Review presents the ideal opportunity to conceptualise these terms, and more importantly to define the domain of culture in Malawi. Contemporary discourse on the definition of culture is often based on deciding whether it encapsulates the way of life and doing things, or as being synonymous with creative and cultural expressions, or as an amalgamation of the two (Williams, 1976; Matarasso and Landry, 1999; Shepherd and Robins, 2008). In choosing the relevant application of the term culture within the Malawian context, policymakers will then be able to develop a clearer concept of what it is they want to achieve through arts and culture. Similarly, the path through which to redress perceptions of arts and culture can be laid out. Such as the recommendation by the Executive Director of Zaluso Arts for fostering arts appreciation through increased arts education. Against this background, the development that a Curriculum Review Process was initiated by the Malawi Institute of Education (MIE) to introduce syllabi for arts education at primary and secondary schools[45] is very timely. Developing explicit policies aligning arts as one of the core subjects from primary to secondary school in conjunction with the MIE curriculum review level warrants inclusion in the National Cultural Policy Review Process.

"We Have a Very Rich Culture": Developing Strategic Choices for Malawi's Arts and Culture Sector

In discussing the impact of the development agenda approach on Nigeria's cultural policy, Onyeator (2019) suggests that the successes of the Global North that informed the cultural policy are not being actualised because the earning potential of the creative industries in Nigeria cannot be maximized without grounding them into the local realities. Furthermore, Onyeator argues the disparity between the successes experienced in the Global North and the minimal impact felt in Nigeria is the result of the failure of creatives, the creative workforce, and policymakers to conceptualise the terms 'creativity' and 'culture' (Galloway and Dunlop, 2007, cited in Onyeator, 2019: 54). As the findings have shown not only did the use of the terms creative industry and creative economy distort the understanding of the role of arts and

[45] At present arts-based subjects are only taught at a limited number of private schools across primary and secondary school levels. There are no arts-based subjects in any of the government (public) schools. For many students their first formal introduction to an arts-based subject is at tertiary school level.

culture in Malawi, but it also failed to achieve the economic gains that characterise those concepts. As I have already highlighted, the failure to define the parameters of the creative industry and culture in Malawi has left an unclear vision/path towards achieving the desired results. It was argued during the National Conference 2022 that:

> …the government's obsession with economic gains could likely have been met to a degree if there was investment in the support of artists, and the empowering of communities through the promotion of the many festivals, showcases, performances, and activities happening within the arts and culture sector (Group 1, National Conference, 2022).

What is noticeable about this statement is that non-state actors are not reluctant to acknowledge the central government's focus on revenue generation. They are cognisant of the importance of income generation. This is evident in the VAAM President's interpolation of the creative industry and creative economy concepts:

> (The) Creative industry is one that makes money through creativity. More especially it has the potential to generate foreign exchange. When breaking it down even further to an individual level it means because creatives have done something or produced something creative through their talents they are then able to earn a living…(A) creative economy occurs to (sic) an environment where there is a flow of revenue that is rooted in the arts and culture. Products are made, money is given for it, and it is a continuous process and the people involved are able to meet their needs. (Mpakule, 2022)

What underlies these statements is a loose understanding of the connection between creativity, activity in the arts and culture sector, empowerment, and the economy. These sentiments demonstrate that there is a potential foundation for the government and non-state actors to develop a plan and strategies that though they may not produce the desired mass outcomes (Holden, 2006) can still produce results that will demonstrate the value of arts and culture. There is room for negotiation(s) between the government and non-state actors to conceptualise the outcomes that could be achieved by approaching arts and culture from an industry perspective. After all, as Matarasso and Landry (1999: 7) suggest, the development and management of cultural policy requires a 'balancing act'. What is now needed is a platform to engage in negotiations for the development of a plan in conjunction with the government that

will allow non-state actors to leverage their works. As COSOMA's Head of Documentation and Reforms Coordinator argued:

> …imagine that small survey in 2009, it surpassed those industries that we think of as major contributors to the GDP and employment…The first thing that should've happened after the release of the findings in 2013 was to map the (arts and culture) sector. Map and quantify the costs in order to improve the industries…Had it been that there were such deliberate interventions following (the release of) these results, they would've informed us about the next course of action to be taken…we could've been somewhere (much further) in terms of the creative industry. Had it been that our creative industry was vibrant we would be speaking of Malawi as a tourist destination…(Kachigamba, 2022).

As he rightly suggests, the 2013 NSO/COSOMA study provided the starting point for the mapping of the sector that would help to concretise the local cultural and creative industry. Furthermore, the statistical data collected could be used to establish a baseline for the financial performance of the industries. The baseline(s) in turn would provide room for strategic management of the arts and culture sector to be enhanced through SWOT and PESTEL analyses respectively. These should have been conducted to develop various strategies such as capacity building, the introduction of duty waivers, levies, and incentives that would boost the productivity of the sector. Even more importantly the mapping would provide the reference point for the development of distinctive indicators, economic, and otherwise, that could be used to monitor and measure the performance of the arts and culture sector over a set period of time. In this way the National Cultural Policy would be grounded and more reflective of the local realities that Onyeator (2019) argues are necessary to begin reducing the disparity between the success of the Global North contexts with those in the Global South. It would be fair to suggest that it would be easier to identify "successes" in the local context if the goals, objectives, and targets were not being compared with results in the Global North. This grounded approach would fall in sync with Matarasso and Landry's assertion that the arts and culture sector must be afforded the means to express its value by itself (1999: 17). COSOMA's Head of Documentation and Reforms Coordinator suggests that broadening the conceptualisation of value in arts and culture will provide benefits across sectors:

> This value is on two fronts. We're talking about the cultural identity to be gained through the arts, and then we're also talking about the economic element. We have a very rich culture…not just (a single) one…there is diversity and that should give us an added advantage that we can exploit that in a way that benefits the country to market ourselves and our products, both locally and abroad. In terms of the economy, (in the past) we have

> dwelled much on agriculture, but there is a lot (more) that the creative sector can do... (Kachigamba, 2022).

This statement underscores just how possible it is for common ground to be reached that appeases both non-state actor and government interests in the arts and culture sector. It seeks to balance the importance of the intrinsic values of creative and cultural expressions, while also making a connection to the economic benefits. There is even value addition that would be increasingly beneficial for the tourism sector as well, thus ticking the boxes of the agendas set in the ERP and MGDSII. While the 2013 NSO/COSOMA study portrayed the potential economic benefits of Malawi's arts and culture, it should not have reduced the thinking around arts and culture to economic value. Rather it should have informed strategic thinking around Malawi's arts and culture. It is imperative that the 2013 NSO/COSOMA study should become a key instrument in the framing of, and design of the revised National Cultural Policy.

6.3. Fostering Collaborative Governance

If as Sigh, Thomas, and Harris (2013: 466) suggest that the level of mid-level policy actors' involvement in the work of policy interpretation and translation determines the success of the new policy developed then the findings have only emphasised the extent of the National Cultural Policy's failings. The ideal policy development process should have entailed the engagement of both government and non-state actors in the decision-making process, the subsequent coordination of policy activities, and the sharing of roles and responsibilities in the policy's implementation. However, Malawi, like most developing countries, places constraints to participation of the citizenry in economic, social, and political activities (Avgerou, 2010; Brown and Grant, 2010; Hassan, 2016 cited in Makoza, 2017: 9).

The constraints to non-state actor involvement in the National Cultural Policy were informed by the continued existence of legislation from the single-party administration. These legislations underscored by control (Zimba, 2019) combined with the governance structure that ensured centralised authority in decision-making (Phiri, 2021) were incompatible with the premise of cultural policy in a democratic system; ensuring that governance of the arts and culture sector is not the sole responsibility of the government (Schmitt, 2011). Establishing the steps that foster the democratisation of the National Cultural Policy will be cardinal to increasing the policy's successful design and implementation moving forward.

The democratisation of the National Cultural Policy requires a recognition by the central government of the need to cede power/influence, or at the very least, the redistribution of power amongst stakeholders if a conducive environment to enable the meaningful participation of non-state actors is to be attained

(Arnstein, 1969; Schmitt, 2011). Similarly, there is a need to limit the influence of the central government through the establishment of improved channels for interaction between MDAs mandated to govern the arts and culture sector, the central government, and non-state actors (Fatille and Adejuwon, 2009; Vestheim, 2012) that will ultimately enhance the National Cultural Policy's implementation.

As I have stated, the continued existence of outdated legislation and the governance structure from the single-party era requires redress. Zimba (2019) and Phiri (2021) extrapolate how the law can either create an enabling regulatory framework or act as an impediment to the modernisation of the arts and culture sector. As the first policy for the arts and culture thorough and substantial legislative changes needed to be made to concretise the democratic government's departure from the marginalisation and restriction of arts and culture during the single-party era. The availability of Article 26 in the constitution enshrining the protection and promotion of creativity and freedom of expression is not sufficient to reflect the changes that have taken place. Therefore, the long-term solution lies in a legislation review that will necessitate the rational reconfiguration and reorganisation of the current procedures, models, settings, and legal foundations of the cultural policy (Bannik and Osserwaarde, 2012; Vidović, Žuvela, and Mišković, 2018). Just as the mapping of Malawi's arts and culture sector will enable the conceptualisation of the cultural and creative industry, a legislation review will enable the reconceptualisation of the arts and culture landscape through clearly defined roles and functions of stakeholders, a concise outline of the policy implementation framework, clearly articulated channels for information sharing, negotiation processes, and decision-making mechanisms.

However, as Tapscott (2000: 19) notes, legislation on its own is unlikely to promote greater cooperation and coordination. He argues that administrative capacity and the evolution of the accepted models of interactions are of equal, or even greater importance. After so many years of centralised authority collaborative governance will not be so straightforward. This is evident in the continued failure to establish the NaHeC as a means for reducing the central government's influence over arts and culture. Needless to say, this has fostered a level of cynicism amongst non-state actors and a level of trust must be forged between the government and non-state actors in the interim. It is against this background that the need for a short to medium-term intervention is implemented that will not only provide a solution that is responsive to the prevailing environment (Varbanova, 2012), but will also create a platform to introduce non-state actors' entry into the decision-making structure.

A solution can be derived from the National Conference 2022 that itself was the product of collaborations between the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, UNESCO-NATCOM, and non-state actors. The

conceptualisation and implementation of the event were made possible by increased cooperation amongst stakeholders as the UNESCO-NATCOM Executive Secretary revealed:

> Of late there has been more collaboration, and a willingness to give and take…there is a sense that they (the government and non-state actors) cannot keep squabbling…(Magomelo, 2022).

Central to this enhanced sense of cooperation is the mitigation of the centralised authority model that emerged in the wake of the National Public Sector Reforms Programme. Phase Two of this programme launched in 2016, catered for the reorganisation of the Department of Culture. This occurred with the establishment of three (3) departments namely, the Department of Arts, the Department of Museums and Monuments, and the Department of National Records and Archives. These institutions granted their respective directors a level of autonomy through the devolution[46] of powers. This new structure aids in the circumvention of the provisions of the 1990 Arts and Crafts Act that had previously granted the Director of Culture vetoing authority. In an environment in which the position of Director of Culture no longer exists within the framework on the ground, the directors of these newly established departments have been granted more flexibility under the parameters of this new hierarchical structure:

[46] As part of the process to establish these new departments, the Ministry of Local Government engaged with officials from the (then) Ministry of Information, Tourism, and Culture to determine whether they would seek to "deconcentrate" or "devolve" the functions of their respective offices. In this context de-concentration is an institutional process whereby officers at local level operate autonomously, but report to the central Government, whereas devolution occurs when all functions and corresponding resources are moved to the local level; as such, the local authorities operate as autonomous entities. See Ministry of Local Government. (2015). Minutes of Meeting on Devolution 24 April 2015, Ministry of Local Government Conference Room, Lilongwe.

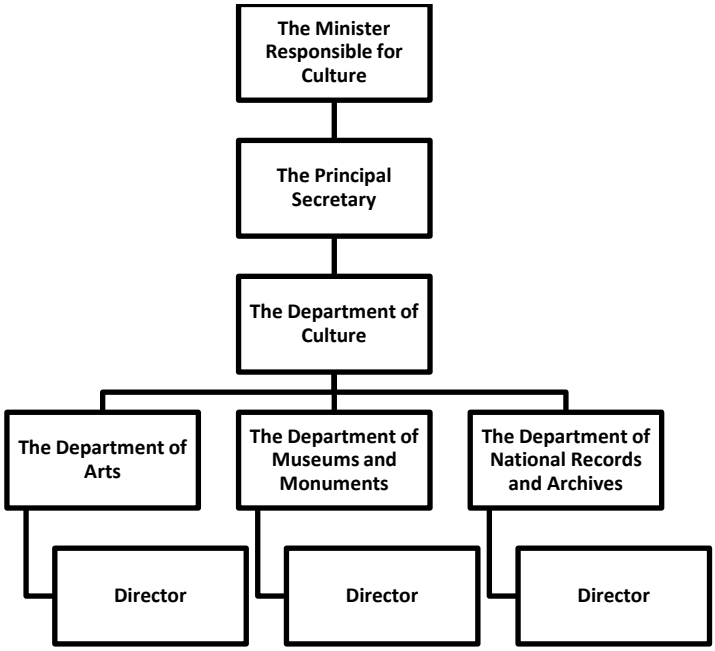

Fig 3: The revised hierarchical governance structure of arts and culture following devolution.

The National Conference 2022 was the culmination of this flexibility with the respective directors setting up the task force committee behind the National Conference 2022. Though the directors in the Department of Culture mobilised the committee for the purposes of the 2022 National Conference, they should now prioritise initiating the processes and mechanisms required to legitimise this committee into a sector working group whose main purpose will be to regularly share information, develop and design strategies for collective initiatives in the arts and cultural sector, and the mobilisation of resources. In keeping with Matarasso and Landry's point that the government must influence and not direct change, the government through the Department of Culture would serve in the sector working group in a secretariat capacity. This will help to foster trust amongst non-state actors that they would be in a position to influence decision-making. The sector working group will then play a crucial role in the impending National Cultural Policy review process as a platform to both collect input and engage in negotiation(s) for the development of common goals and activities. It is imperative the negotiation or bargaining processes within this sector working group will enable participants to listen to each other and generate collective decisions based on due consideration of various perspectives and choices (Fung and Wright, 2002: 24; Fischer, 2012). It is envisioned that this will not only encourage inclusivity but also create room for participatory governance to develop over time.

SECTION 7: CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD:

7.1. What Did the Research Study Establish?

This research study set out to investigate the perception held by non-state actors that the National Cultural Policy had failed since its enactment in 2015 because of a misplaced vision, and a set of goals that have been placed on the arts and culture sector that do not meet the needs of its beneficiaries, nor the realities of Malawi's arts and culture landscape. The research sought to establish that this perceived failure of the National Cultural Policy was not just the result of the different set of expectations for the National Cultural Policy held by non-state actors and the central government following the transition to the democratic system, but the manifestation of disconnects that emerged from the attempt to mimic the creative industry and creative economy concepts utilised in cultural policy in the Global North to the Malawian context without adequate recontextualisation.

This investigation reveals that while inadequate recontextualisation was being put forth as the root cause for the disconnects that emerged in the National Cultural Policy, it is the absence of an actual recontextualisation process exacerbated by an imbalance in power relations that caused this failure. As Singh, Thomas, and Harris (2013) postulate it is the interactions between the agencies (in this context, the government and non-state actors) responsible for the translation and interpretation of concepts from one context to another that will determine the success of the new policy that is developed. The absence of this negotiation process instantly categorises the National Cultural Policy as a failed policy, but more significantly it is what occurred in its stead that has had the most negative impacts on the National Cultural Policy's development and design.

The National Cultural Policy Must Exist in the Past, the Present, and the Future

The development and subsequent enactment of the National Cultural Policy came against the backdrop of trying economic times for the government of Malawi. The dependency on agriculture as the country's main foreign exchange earner left it "vulnerable to shocks" and the fuel crisis and the lack of foreign reserves that occurred between late 2011 and early 2012 resulted in the impetus to attain immediate economic benefits (Malawi Government, 2011: 7). This emphasis on revenue generation through quick-win strategies (Malawi Government, 2012) informed the tendency of the central government's domination of policy development (Makoza, 2017). In the context of the National Cultural Policy, this meant the discarding of objectives rooted in the development and promotion of creative and cultural expressions, the empowerment of arts and culture practitioners, and self-actualisation for an emphasis on

infrastructure development and the enhanced contribution to tourism. As Matarasso and Landry (1999:7) note the choices in one direction tend to lead to unexpected and unwanted results in another direction. The result in Malawi is the shift towards increased productivity and consumption of arts and culture-based goods and products at the expense of efforts at redressing the negative impacts of the single party administration's marginalisation of arts and culture (Zimba, 2019; Phiri, 2021). This results in the failure to reconcile the shift from an ideology that reduced arts and culture to the side-lines of national development with its more recent central alignment in national development in democratic Malawi. In the sudden shift to accruing economic results, policymakers have failed to develop a holistic conceptualisation of culture and the strategies and initiatives that will lead to the desired outcomes through arts and culture. The National Cultural Policy failed because it did not utilise Malawi's past to inform its present and ultimately its future.

The Economic Imperative Was Flawed

In the wake of the emphasis placed by the central government on revenue generation through quick-win strategies and the identification of arts and culture as a driver of socio-economic development in the MGDSII, the Department of Culture latched on to the fast cultural policy of the creative industry and creative economy concepts that had proved successful in the Global North (O'Connor and Gu, 2006; De Beukelaer and O'Connor, 2016). In a similar vein, the findings from the joint NSO/COSOMA study that the core copyright-based and interdependent copyright-based industries contributed 3.46% of the GDP in 2009 were utilised as a demonstration of the potential of the arts and culture sector. The result of which was the coinage of the cultural and creative industries in the local lexicon of the cultural policy. This packaging of Malawi's arts and culture sector as an industry helped to validate the newly acknowledged importance of the sector in national development. Most significantly, it ensured resources linked to strategies and activities for the development of the National Cultural Policy would continue to be provided. The problem with this approach however is what Banks (2015: 37) argues was that it proved nothing more than a codification providing little substance, especially as Malawi's so-called cultural and creative industry is yet to be mapped and remains without the statistical data available to demonstrate how the industry-based approach is working. The failure to demonstrate the performance of arts and culture has led to the increased instrumentalisation (Yudicè, 2003; Holden, 2006) of the arts and culture sector through tourism development as per the MGDSII.

A Vibrant Arts and Culture Sector, Not Just Infrastructure is Key to Development

The instrumentalisation of arts and culture for tourism development leads to the overreliance on what Matarasso and Landry (1999: 28) ascribe as prestigious cultural investment as exemplified by the explicit policy to prioritise the rehabilitation of the Blantyre Cultural Centre and the *Pa Bwalo* amphitheatre respectively. Similarly, the establishment of the NaHeC was deemed as a key performance indicator of the National Cultural Policy. The shift towards infrastructure development is twofold in that firstly it provides politicians and the central government obsessed with mass outcomes (Holden, 2006) something that they could unveil to the public as evidence that the cultural policy is working. Secondly, on the assumption that the availability of infrastructure will culminate in increased revenue generation with an increase in the levels of activity within the arts and culture sector and more arts and culture-based goods and services for people to consume. However, policymakers did not foresee delays in the establishment of the NaHeC or the challenges on the ground that hinder practitioners from turning out arts and culture-based goods and services at the central government's desired rate because as they argue the prevalent conditions do not allow them to earn a living solely off arts and culture (Chibambo, 2022; Mpakule, 2022, Ndalama, 2022). The consensus amongst non-state actors is that priority should instead be paid towards capacity building, skills development, and investment in smaller arts and culture activities that will provide longer-term value. Needless to say, that resources being prioritised towards strategies that have yet to be completed gives rise to scepticism and resentment from non-state actors who believe they could have been effectively utilised elsewhere.

The Need for Democratic Governance in a Democratic State

Lastly, this research study establishes that all the directions in which the central government have sought to steer Malawi's arts and culture has only resulted in negative and unwanted impacts. This has given credence to the assertion made by Matarasso and Landry that the role of government in cultural policy should be to facilitate change, and not to dictate it (1999: 7). The unwanted results that manifest in the National Cultural Policy are all rooted in the failure to redress the centralised authority that engendered a "government knows best" approach. This research study supports the advocacy made by Zimba (2019) and Phiri (2021) for the need to review the legislation that informed the development of, and the National Cultural Policy, and ultimately its implementation framework. The institutionalism of the single-party administration's need for excessive control culminates in the isolation of non-state actors and reduces the government ministries, departments, and agencies responsible for arts and culture to the level of a subservient institution (Fatille and Adejuwon, 2009). This approach taken by the central government that is consistent with top-down governance fostered a power imbalance that hindered the development of

working relationships and/or systems and processes necessary for the successful development and implementation of the National Cultural Policy in a democratic environment. Yet the irony is that this research study establishes through the respondents' interpolations of the creative industry and creative economy that non-state actors are not opposed to the advantages of the enhanced economic performance of the arts and culture sector. What they want is to ensure that less tangible outputs are not ignored by the National Cultural Policy. What is required is for the central government to appreciate the need for establishing a balance that will only be fostered through negotiation.

7.2. Way Forward and Further Research

Just as the research findings establish that the central government and non-state actors have room for compromise regarding the economic value of arts and culture, there is further room for the development of an improved National Cultural Policy. This research has highlighted selected literature from the Global South that identifies the importance of reflecting on the "journey" of cultural policy (Coombs, 2003; Shepherd and Robins, 2008; Maralack, 2021), and in a similar manner the impending National Cultural Policy review process provides a unique moment for stakeholders to review the National Cultural Policy's journey thus far. It also provides the opportunity as Matarasso and Landry (1999) suggest for the cultural policy to learn from its past. Against this background, the starting point is for policymakers to rectify the 'framework dilemma" as Matarasso and Landry (1999) posit in order to identify what it is that is being sought through the cultural policy. The prerequisite is to define culture from a Malawian perspective, and what the vision is for Malawi's arts and culture. There is no need for an "either-or" approach to it, or for the National Cultural Policy to be at either extreme of culture as a way of life, or culture as synonymous with cultural expressions. The central government must come to appreciate that there are strategic choices that need to be made that will reflect the direction in which Malawi's arts and culture will take. These choices can be developed once a mapping of Malawi's arts and culture sector takes place. This will not only help to concretise the cultural and creative industry that has been touted emptily for so long but will also provide a situational analysis of the arts and culture sector, identify the value chain, and provide the statistical baselines that can aid in the monitoring of the sector's performance that is in sync with the national development agenda's goal of increased revenue generation..

Long-term solutions lay in the review of legislation to replace those which informed the governance of Malawi's arts and culture before the transition to democracy in 1994. Their continued existence is not conducive to a democratic cultural policy and thus they heavily negated the development and design of the National Cultural Policy. The formulation of the National Conference 2022 taskforce committee that

was developed in the wake of National Public Sector Reforms Programme gives evidence of avenues for informal solutions to be found. This particular informal structure can be legitimised into a sector working group that can take on a much larger role moving forward. The central government has shown through the National Public Sector Reforms Programme that there would appear to be a shift away from the centralised authority model of the single-party era. This shift must be consolidated through the legal review that will provide the foundation for the formal replacement of outdated governance structures as well. Similarly, the onus is now on MDAs to find means to develop trust amongst non-state actors and provide them entry into decision-making systems and processes. This research study shows how poor policy development and design can manifest years later as failed cultural policy, but it is limited by the time available to delve deeper into the disconnects. There is room for further investigation of what other ways the lack of recontextualisation manifests as a failed National Cultural Policy. Conversely the research identifies the emphasis by the central government on the economic imperative, however, as was the case globally the Covid-19 pandemic caused a shutdown of creative industries. It would be interesting to investigate whether the impacts of the shutdown had any impact(s) on whether the central government still pursues the Global North-centric development agenda, or whether the "non-tangible" benefits of arts and culture will find a new impetus and how these manifests in the strategic management and governance of the arts and culture sector.

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APPENDICES:

APPENDIX A: Interview Questions for Non-state Actors

Research Title: Where Did Things Go Wrong? An Investigation of the Adoption of Creative Industry and Creative Economy Concepts in Malawi's National Cultural Policy

1. **The cultural policy is the embodiment of the arts and culture sector as a key factor in national development decisions. Can you say that the seven (7) years since its enactment have felt like this?**
2. Earlier this year non-state actors staged demonstrations against the National Cultural Policy saying that it has failed. What is your view on this, was it justified?
3. **What do you feel are the problems with the National Cultural Policy?**
4. Do you feel there were issues or areas not fully resolved following the end of single-party rule that required addressing through the National Cultural Policy?
5. **Had you heard of the terms creative industry, and creative economy before the National Cultural Policy? How would you describe these terms in your own words[47]?**
6. **Do you feel that either of these is important in the Malawian context? Do they capture what is needed from a Malawian perspective?**
7. Do you feel that non-state actor were adequately engaged in the process of developing the National Cultural Policy? Were you provided with a platform through which to provide your input(s) as to what the National Cultural Policy should aim for?
8. **Do you think your input(s) as a stakeholder in the development of the National Cultural Policy was taken on board or ignored in the final decisions made by the government in the final draft of the policy implementation?**
9. In your opinion, were non-state actors able to influence the decision-making process for developing the National Cultural Policy?
10. Were there platforms/fora available through which updates were given with room for engagement/negotiation?
11. **The National Cultural Policy is due for a review process and subsequent revision. What would you suggest needs to be changed, or even maintained, in the cultural policy development processes?**
12. **Do you feel as if there is too much emphasis by the government placed on the economic aspect(s) of the arts and culture and as such other areas are ignored?**
13. Do you think the creative industry and/or creative economy should remain key components in a revised National Cultural Policy? If not, what would you like to see prioritised?
14. Any other comments or observations?

Thank you for your time.

[47] The creative industries are defined as those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill, and talent which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property. The creative economy is used to describe the connection between the rapidly growing global trade in goods and services ranging from traditional arts and crafts such as paintings, music and performing arts; to books, newspapers, and technology-driven products such as film, design, audio-visual works, television, and radio, and including "new media" products, and how creativity and human talent are quickly becoming powerful engines for economic growth and development.

APPENDIX B: Interview Questions for Government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies

Research Title: Where Did Things Go Wrong? An Investigation of the Adoption of Creative Industry and Creative Economy Concepts in Malawi's National Cultural Policy

Questions:

1. **Despite a switch to the democratic system and article 26 of the constitution that protects freedom of expression and association, Malawi's art and culture sector operated without a cultural policy. What, as far as you can tell were some of the obstacles in putting a cultural policy document in place?**
2. What were some of the core arguments being given by non-state actors as the need for having a National Cultural Policy?
3. **The year 2010 was a significant one in the sense that many conventions and agreements were ratified and assented to. Can you recall the justifications or the reasoning behind the ratification all at once of these conventions and protocols?**
4. **2011 was also a significant year as for the first time, arts and culture was identified as a key socio-economic driver in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy Phase Two (MGDS II). Would you say that this had an impact on your organisation's goals and/or objectives moving forwards, and if so, what were they?**
5. Despite this development, there was still no serious push towards developing a cultural policy until a subsequent joint European Union (EU) and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in 2012. Would it be accurate to make this assessment? If so, why do you think this was the case?
6. **This technical mission would have addressed some areas for consideration along the lines of Global North ideologies espoused in documents such as the UNCTAD Report of 2008. Would you say that they isolated prevalent issues in Malawi's arts and culture sector that were to be addressed? If not, what were some of the areas that also needed articulating?**
7. What was the role of your institution in the process of developing the National Cultural Policy?
8. **What do you feel about the level of involvement of non-state actors in the development of the policy document? Was the level of representation adequate? Were they allowed to bring forth their objectives/goals for inclusion in the National Cultural Policy?**
9. If there were differences in views regarding certain aspects of the policy's intentions, would you say that the differences were adequately resolved? Was there room for negotiating?
10. In 2012, the ERP was launched by the (then) President Banda. How did this manifest in relation to the development process of the National Cultural Policy?
11. **The 2008 UNCTAD Report highlighted the propensity of developing countries to boost their economies through the arts and culture. Similarly, the findings of the 2009 NSO Report on the contribution of the sector to the GDP. Do you feel that this had any impact on thinking about the cultural policy?**
12. Were non-state actors engaged for feedback before the final draft was presented for approval for subsequent enactment? What channels were used to acquire this feedback?
13. **Have there been any efforts since the National Cultural Policy was enacted to engage with non-state actors over the content of the document? What is your general impression of the responses?**
14. Have these in any way influenced your organisation's thinking before the policy review process, and if so, in what way(s)?

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX C: Interview Participants

	Name	Position	Organization	Category	Description	Interview Date
1	Dr. Lovemore Mazibuko	Director	Department of Museums and Monuments	Government Department (MoTW & C)	Department in the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife, and Culture	31st October 2022
2	Mrs. Qipase Maulidi	Chief Arts Officer	Department of Arts	Government Department (MoTW & C)	Department in the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife, and Culture	2nd November 2022
3	Mr. Lightwell Benjamin Kachigamba	Senior Licensing Officer	Copyright Society of Malawi	Government Parastatal	Parastatal mandated to oversee and fund the activities of the creative civil society. Also, the regulatory body for issues of copyright, reprographics, and Intellectual Property (IP).	2nd November 2022

	Name	Position	Organization	Category	Description	Interview Date
1	Mr. Christopher Magomelo	Senior Assistant Executive Secretary	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)	International Organisation	A local branch of the international organisation that monitors and reports on the activities of the arts and culture sector and provides support through capacity building for the local sector through grants, and training.	31st October 2022
2	Mr. Gilbert Mpakule	President	Visual Arts Association of Malawi (VAAM)	Creative civil society organisation	National body for visual artists, galleries/visual arts venues, visual arts managers	18th October 2022
3	Mr. Ezaius Mkandawire	Executive Director	The Culture Foundation	Not-for-profit organisation	An organisation committed to promoting and preserving cultural heritage. They work closely with community leaders and community-based organisations to amongst others. organise cultural events and implement arts education programs to promote cultural diversity and initiate cross-sectoral dialogue.	3rd November 2022

4	Mr. Gladson Msendera	Program Manager (Vocational Skills) and Music Teacher	Music Crossroads Malawi	International Organisation	An international NPO. Situated in a high-density zone in the capital, it is a musical hub for young musicians from Malawi, Africa, and beyond. Music Crossroads (Malawi) promotes the sharing of knowledge through cultural exchanges, musical activities, and research. Music Crossroads (Malawi) also provides capacity building through courses of varying lengths	26th October 2022
5	Mr. Thomas Chibambo	Founder and Executive Director	Blantyre Arts Festival (BAF)	Private organisation	Malawi's longest-running arts-based festival. Aside from staging the annual event, BAF also contributes towards capacity building within the sector through training, workshops, and cultural exchange programmes.	25th October 2022
6	Mr. James Kitchen	Executive Director	Light of Youth Creative Organisation (LYCO)	Not-for-profit organization	An NPO based in one of the highest-density locations in the capital. LYCO utilises the performing arts to engage with school-age learners and vulnerable youths to reduce risk and provide incentives to pursue the performing arts as a viable professional career path.	26th October 2022
7	Mr. Macpherson Ndalama	Executive Director	Zaluso Arts	Visual arts collective & Multimedia company	An entrepreneurial visual art collective as well as multimedia company including broadcast news, a podcast network, an FM Radio station, and community outreach	13th November 2022

APPENDIX D: The 2022 National Conference on Arts and Culture, Malawi Programme



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Malawi National Commission for UNESCO

Norwegian Embassy

2022 NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ARTS AND CULTURE, MALAWI, PROGRAMME

TIME FRAME	ACTIVITY	RESOURCE PERSONS
DAY 1 : 24th OCTOBER 2022		
08:00 - 08:30	Registration of Participants	UNESCO-Natcom/Taskforce
08:30 – 08:45	All participants and invited guests are seated	Taskforce
08:50 – 10:00	Arrival of Guest of Honour, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Wildlife, Hon. Dr. Michael Usi	Taskforce
	Guest of Honour Inspects Pavilions	Taskforce
	Guest of Honour takes his seat in the Conference Hall	Taskforce
	Singing of the Malawi National Anthem	Moderator
	Introductory Remarks	Moderator
	Objectives of the Conference	Moderator
	Performance by Music Crossroads Band	Moderator
	Remarks by UNESCO ROSA	Moderator
	Speech by Norwegian Ambassador to Malawi	Moderator
	Speech by Principal Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Wildlife	Moderator
	KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY GUEST OF HONOUR	Moderator
	Chitedze Indigenous Games Youth	Moderator
10:00 – 10:30	**SESSION 1: THE STATE OF THE CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTOR; POLICY FRAMEWORK, PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES**	
	Presenter	Selman Chavura
	Q&A	Moderator
10:30 – 10:40	Group Photo and Media Interviews	Taskforce
10:40 – 11:00	**HEALTH BREAK & NETWORKING**	
11:00 – 11:30	**SESSION 2: CULTURE AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES; DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**	
	Presenter	Morton Sibale
	Q&A	Moderator
11:30 – 11:40	Performance by Music Crossroads Band	Moderator

11:40 – 12:10	**SESSION 3: CULTURE, GENDER EQUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT: IMPLICATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES**	
	Presenter	Tawonga Kayira
	Q & A	Moderator
12:10 – 14:00	**LUNCH BREAK**	
14:00 – 15:00	**GROUP WORK**	Moderator/Taskforce
15:00 – 16:10	GROUP SESSION: PRESENTATIONS AND PLENARY *(20 minutes/group, with 10-minute performance by Music Crossroads Band in-between)*	
16:10 – 16:15	**DAY 1 CLOSING**	
16:15 – 16:30	**REFRESHMENTS AND NETWORKING**	
DAY 2: 25TH OCTOBER 2022		
08:30 – 09:00	RECAP OF DAY 1	
09:00 – 09:30	**SESSION 4: RIGHT TO CULTURE AND ARTISTIC FREEDOM; DIGITAL PLATFORMS AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION**	
	Presenter	William Maulidi
	Q&A	
09:30 – 09:40	Performance by Mtendere Cultural Troupe	Music Crossroads
09:40 – 10:10	**SESSION 5: REFLECTION ON CULTURE AND HERITAGE IN MALAWI'S EDUCATION SYSTEM**	
	Presenter	Henry Chiwaura
	Q&A	Moderator
10:10 – 10:30	**HEALTH BREAK & NETWORKING**	
10:30 – 11:00	**SESSION 6: UNDERSTANDING MALAWI CULTURAL VALUES IN BUSINESS AND SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS: CONTRIBUTIONS FROM INTERACTIONAL STUDIES.**	
	Presenter	Rachel C. Phiri (Ph.D.)
	Q&A	Moderator
11:00 – 11:10	Performance by Mtendere Cultural Troupe	
11:10 – 12:30	**GROUP WORK**	Moderator
12:30 – 14:00	**LUNCH BREAK**	
14:00 – 15:00	GROUP SESSION: PRESENTATIONS AND PLENARY *(20 minutes/group with a 10-minute performance by Mtendere Cultural Troupe)*	
15:00 – 15:10	Performance Mtendere Cultural Troupe	
15:10 – 16:40	**SESSION 7: CONSULTATION ON DEVELOPMENT OF MALAWI CULTURAL POLICY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY IN LINE WITH 2005 CONVENTION.**	
	Dr. O. Malijani and Mr. F. Farai Mpfunya	Moderator
	Plenary	Moderator
16:40 – 17:00	**CLOSING REMARKS** **MALAWI NATIONAL ANTHEM**	Moderator

APPENDIX E: List of Participants at the 2022 National Conference on Arts and Culture, Malawi

No.	NAME	ORGANISATION	MOBILE NO. / EMAIL ADDRESS
1	Austine Jalasi	Fashion Association	0888070002
2	Morgan Pota	Department of Museums & Monuments	0999432403/pota.morgan@yahoo.com
3	Edwin Chibisa	Department of Museums & Monuments	0884547079
4	Lottie Banda	Department of Tourism	0991559436
5	Dalitso Mnthambala	Department of Tourism	0992026659
6	Moses Nyirenda	Malawi News Agency	0884810288/mosesnyirenda81@gmail.com
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