

**BALANCING POWER AND DEMOCRACY: A FRAMEWORK FOR  
MANAGING CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN DEMOCRATIC  
MALAWI**

**PhD THESIS (TRANSFORMATIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT)**

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**MZUZU UNIVERSITY**

**JANUARY 2026**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES,  
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TRANSFORMATIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**MZUZU UNIVERSITY**

**JANUARY 2026**

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis titled, “Balancing Power and Democracy: A Framework for Managing Civil-Military Relations in Democratic Malawi”, has been written by me and is a record of my research work. All citations, references, and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. It is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Transformative Community Development) of Mzuzu University. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.



05 January 2026

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Thokozani Andrew Chazema

Date

## DECLARATION OF PUBLICATIONS

Parts of the materials presented in this thesis have been published and appear as:

- a) Chazema, T., Tembo, M., Mphande, C., Kerr, R., Nundwe, V., & Kumwenda, D., (2023). Aetiology of the Equilibrium of Civil-Military Relations in Malawi. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 11, 372-382. <http://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2023.118026>.
- b) Chazema, T., Tembo, M., Mphande, C., Kerr, R., Nalivata, C., Nundwe, V., & Kumwenda, D., (2023). Drivers Keeping Civil-Military Relations in Equilibrium in Malawi: A Quantitative Approach. *International Journal of Membrane Science and Technology*. <http://doi.org/10.15379/ijmst.v10i1.2614>.
- c) Chazema, T. A., Tembo, M., Mphande, C., Kerr, R., Nundwe, V., & Kumwenda, D., (2024). Balancing Civil-military Relations for Democratic Development in Malawi: The Rhombus Diamond Framework. *Recent Research Advances in Arts and Social Studies Vol. 4*, 129–147. <https://doi.org/10.9734/bpi/rraass/v4/7297E>.
- d) Chazema, T. A., Tembo, M., Mphande, C., Kerr, R., Nundwe, V., Kumwenda, D., & Nalivata, C., (2025). The Taxonomy of the Interaction of Key Civil-Military Relations Players in the Democratisation Process in Malawi. *Social Sciences*, 14(2), 123-135. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ss.20251402.16>.
- e) Chazema, T., Tembo, M., Mphande, C., Kerr, R. & Kumwenda, D. (2025). *Reframing Civil-Military Relations in Africa: Empirical Insights from Malawi's Rhombus Diamond Model*. *Social Sciences*, 14(6), pp.11. [doi:10.11648/j.ss.20251406.11](https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ss.20251406.11)
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## CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

I, the undersigned, certify that this thesis is a result of the author's own work, and that to the best of my knowledge, it has not been submitted for any other academic qualification within the Mzuzu University or elsewhere.



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## **DEDICATION**

To my first-degree relations, mentors, students and friends, I say each one teaches one!

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>CMR</b>	Civil-Military Relations
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisations
<b>DC</b>	District Commissioner
<b>DCAF</b>	Democratic Control of Armed Forces
<b>DSC</b>	Defence and Security Committee
<b>DSTC</b>	District Security Technical Committee
<b>IPO</b>	Input Process Output
<b>MACA</b>	Military Aid to Civil Authorities
<b>MDF</b>	Malawi Defence Force
<b>MNS</b>	Malawi National Service
<b>MoD</b>	Ministry of Defence
<b>MoE</b>	Measure of Effectiveness
<b>MP</b>	Member of Parliament
<b>MYP</b>	Malawi Young Pioneers
<b>MZUNIREC</b>	Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee
<b>NSC</b>	National Security Council

<b>PME</b>	Professional Military Education
<b>PMF</b>	Police Mobile Force
<b>POC</b>	Protection of Civilians
<b>SAPs</b>	Structural Adjustment Programmes
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed at understanding civil-military relations in a democratic Malawi. Evidence in the global south suggests a recurrent unconstitutional changes of governments through coup d'états, hence portraying militaries negatively. Globally, coup d'états have been given much scholarly attention, but this study focused on situations where civilians and the military have defended democratic values, which have not received adequate pedagogical attention. A mixed-method research design was used, and data were collected using a structured questionnaire and interview guide. A total of 386 respondents completed a structured questionnaire to address the first objective, while 65 key informants were interviewed to address the second and third objectives. The fourth objective synthesised the results of the first three objectives. Quantitative data analysis for objective one used multiple regression. The data from key informants was analysed qualitatively using content analysis, once the data had been saturated. The study found that merit-based promotions, merit-based appointments, joint training, representational recruitment, reforms, specialisation, professionalisation, and delivery of public goods and services are the driving factors of stable civil-military relations and that these factors have a significant contribution to the military as a stabiliser and a precondition for democratisation. The study revealed varied consequences of the interaction of key civil-military relations players, such as upholding constitutionalism and oversight over the military. The study further revealed that there was active participation through deliberations, monitoring and reporting civil-military relations issues, administration of justice, the presence of peace and security and the military's satisfaction of the given tasks and missions as measures of effectiveness. The study integrated data from the three objectives and developed a Rhombus Diamond Framework, which demonstrates that the military is a fulcrum that keeps civil-military relations in equilibrium. The Rhombus Diamond Framework promotes good governance and accountability and informs policy development and decision-making in the

security sector. However, politicisation and participation overload of the military, resistance to change, inadequate resources and role familiarisation gaps remained civil-military problematic areas that need improvement. The study recommends awards based on meritocracy and education in the civil-military relations academic field to resolve the civil-military relations problematic areas. The Rhombus Diamond Framework can further be theoretically developed. Further research could refine and expand the framework, exploring its applicability in different contexts and regions.

**Keywords:** *Civil, Effectiveness, Meritocracy, Military, Relations*

# **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Introduction**

Chapter One introduces the study and highlights the background information, the evolution of civil-military relations (hereinafter CMR), the problem statement of the study, which identifies contextual issues in balancing power and democracy in the field of CMR in a democratic Malawi. The Chapter further describes the main objective, specific objectives and research questions that address the research problem. The Chapter also addresses the significance of the study, and structure and organisation of the research.

## **1.2 Background**

This study on CMR in Malawi was necessitated by the changes in the global political order. The third wave of democracy that resulted in the breakup of the Soviet Union and the proliferation of democracies in the 1990s meant that both international and national structures had to change to fit democratic values. The third wave of democracy is a significant global trend that began in the mid-1970s, when numerous countries transitioned from authoritarian regimes to democratic forms of governance. This wave is characterised by the widespread adoption of democratic practices, including free and fair elections, the establishment of civil liberties, and the emergence of political pluralism. It has essential implications for hybrid regimes and illiberal democracies, as many nations during this period experienced a blend of democratic and authoritarian traits (Huntington 1991).

The third wave of democracy is a period during which more than 30 countries transitioned to democracy between 1974 and the early 1990s, significantly impacting global political landscapes. Prominent examples include the democratisation processes in Southern Europe like Spain and Portugal, Latin America, and parts of Africa and Asia. This wave was

influenced by various factors, including the end of the Cold War, international pressure for democratisation, and popular uprisings demanding political change. Despite the successes, many countries that underwent transitions during the third wave of democracy have faced challenges in consolidating democratic norms, leading to hybrid regimes and illiberal democracies. The third wave of democracy was also evidenced in Malawi and informed structural adjustments in the instruments of national power (Huntington 1991; Huntington 1996). Structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) refer to significant changes made to a country's economic or institutional structures in response to economic challenges or crises. SAPs occurred in two forms, firstly in the form of changes to the economic policies, institutions or regulations to promote growth, stability and efficiency and secondly in the form of changes to the organisations, management and functioning of institutions such as government agencies or public enterprises (Kingsly 2024). SAPs respond to changes in a global order. The global order changed when the Soviet Union was formally dissolved as a sovereign state on 26 December 1991 (Fukuyama 2012; Huntington 1991; Huntington 1996). The demise of the bipolar region weakened the political clout of Malawi, and anti-authoritarian campaigns sprouted.

Among the most significant events in Malawi at the end of the twentieth Century was the 1992 Lenten Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Episcopal Conference that sparked the first public acknowledgement of the injustices of forty years of repression under Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda. The letter was read out in pulpits across the nation, which informed of injustices amidst poverty and repression. A cascade of dissent followed; one-party rule was dismantled over two years, and the effort to recover democracy began (Ross 1996). The Pastoral Letter, as an instrument of change, had been established. The other instrument of change was the university students' demonstrations. The student-led anti-government demonstrations were held in March 1992. Their main demands were to legalise political parties, end single-party rule, reinstate

multiparty politics, and get political prisoners released (Brown 2004). The climax of the anti-government and Malawi Congress Party campaign was ‘Operation Bwezani’.

Operation Bwezani, or ‘Chitedze’, as it was also known, was triggered by the shooting of three soldiers by Malawi Young Pioneers (MYP) cadres in Mzuzu on 1 December 1993, following a bar room brawl. At that historical juncture, the year-old democratisation struggle neared a crisis point. Before Operation Bwezani, the government had agreed to a National Consultative Conference to discuss the fate of the estimated 1,500 MYP paramilitaries, known as the ‘armed party’. The MYP received more support from the executive than from the military. The situation resulted in unhealthy civil-military relations between the executive and the military. The Malawi opposition further argued that the MYP presented the most formidable obstacle to a democratic multiparty election. Under pressure from the international community, the government agreed, at the National Consultative Conference, to gradually demobilise and disarm the Pioneers, incorporating the ‘armed party’ into the police and military institutions (Charman 2015).

The disarming of the MYP created a conducive political environment to advance the multiparty reform process. The election that was subsequently held in 1994, bringing the United Democratic Front (UDF) into power, was noted for the political tolerance that existed amongst competing parties. Operation Bwezani was equally significant in reforming the military institution. After the operation, President Banda took immediate steps to address some of the grievances within the rank and file. On 7 December 1993, President Banda addressed the nation, appealing for calm, and announced the immediate appointment of a Minister of Defence, a portfolio that he had guarded since independence (Chirambo 2004).

This crucial reform marked a significant step toward civilian control over the armed forces. The new Minister of Defence, Major General Mponela, was tasked to address army grievances.

Although the issues at stake were never made public, they were reported to include dissatisfaction with the proposal to incorporate the MYP para-militaries into the army. The investigation into grievances resulted in the improvement of service conditions, including pay increases and better allowances (Charman 2015; Chirambo 2004). The transition from authoritarianism to democracy requires significant structural changes as it builds a country from a polarised position. Social cohesion is required to foster a sense of national identity among diverse groups. One such element of social cohesion is civil-military relations, where cooperation between the citizenry, political elites and the military harmonises how their relations would be. Transitions to democracy bring about social changes like new government structures, separation of powers that put in place a system of checks and balances to prevent one branch of government from dominating others, and establishing a legal system that encourages human rights and national security.

The acclaimed Malawi Defence Force (MDF) professionalism stems from the vestiges of colonial legacy, where British soldiers are deemed professional worldwide. The isolation of the Malawi military by President Banda, who preferred the MYP, is attributed to the development agenda, where the MYP was initially designed to function as a national youth service programme focused on rural development and political indoctrination. The MYP was also more loyal to the Banda regime, allowing the regime to suppress dissent (Chirambo 2004; Kings 2011). In contrast, the MDF was viewed as less loyal and more professional, the reason the MDF has purportedly remained professional as they know their position as a national armed force serving the nation rather than a regime. The MDF is seen as a symbol of national pride and patriotism defending the country's sovereignty and protecting the citizens.

The core of CMR in political transitions to democracy is to decrease the presence of the military in public spaces. However, evidence suggests the contrary, as the MDF has incrementally

increased its presence in the public spaces. MDF's presence in the public domain has increased in that the force is now involved in guarding forests, escorting fuel tankers during fuel crises, and protecting the Malawi National Examinations. The MDF is also involved in elections management, providing security to polling materials and providing logistical support in areas of air, naval and ground transportation of electoral materials. MDF has been further deployed during disasters and the management of demonstrations since 1994 up to 2024. The climax of the direct interaction of the MDF with the local population was during the 2011 protests aimed at winning political and economic reforms or concessions from the government of Malawi and the 2019 protests, which were a series of nationwide rallies and strikes about government pensions. Results of the 2019 general elections and demands for democratic reforms brought the MDF closer to the public, as the force protected civilians in their exercise of human rights through conducting demonstrations (Institute for Security Studies 2011; Nundwe et al. 2023). The increased presence of the MDF in the public domain perhaps signifies the internal security gap MYP left. In the security domain, these constabulary tasks are for the police (Mambo 2025). However, some of the tasks, for example, security management of examinations, were delegated to the MDF as the public lost trust due to the national examinations' leakage before the MDF took over the task from the police.

This study examines the CMR since Malawi embraced multiparty democracy in 1994. It focuses on the interface between the military on one hand, and the state and the citizenry on the other hand. The study focuses on the various responsibilities of the military, elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities, and the judiciary. The military category is represented by members of the Malawi Defence Force (MDF); the elected authorities are represented by Members of Parliament (MP) and the Defence and Security Committee of Parliament (DSC); the civilians' category comprises the media, the local population, and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). The civil authorities' category is represented by the Ministry of Defence

and the District Security Technical Committees (DSTC). The DSTC is composed of the District Commissioner (Chairperson), District Intelligence Officer, District Commander of MDF, District Police Officer-in-Charge, District Immigration Officer, District Prisons Officer and any other co-opted member. In the judiciary category, the focus was on the role of judges in handling cases that are primarily political.

Political system changes in a country necessitate institutional changes. One such institution is the military, alongside other instruments of national power. In the wake of the demise of the bipolar region, a third wave of democratisation swept the non-democratic countries, including Malawi. Malawi reintroduced multiparty democracy in 1994, following the referendum that ended a one-party rule imposed after the country attained a Republican status in 1966. One of the notable developments following this change has been the growing debate on CMR. The classical scholars of CMR, such as Sun Tzu (1971), Clausewitz (1989), Huntington (1957), and Janowitz (1960), agree with contemporary scholars such as Bruneau and Tollefson (2006), Bryden and Olonisakin (2010), and Owens (2012) that CMR describes the interactions among the people of the state, the various institutions of that state, and the military of the same state. These interactions revolve around the civilian democratic control, efficiency, and effectiveness of the military in discharging its duties, and the state's role in managing its public affairs. However, scholars such as Chuter (2011) and Feaver (1996) argue that within this interaction, the military is likely to have the upper hand, considering their capacity to exert coercive force if no proper measures are implemented. Feaver (1996) coined this interaction imbalance as a "civil-military problematique". In the civil-military problematique thesis, Feaver (1996) argues that CMR is based on a dilemma that requires a polity to balance two concerns on the CMR spectrum. The polity must create a strong military to protect the state and somehow ensure that the military does not harm the same state that established it (Feaver 1996; Owens 2010). The response to the "civil-military problematique" is a bargain negotiated among the citizens, the

civilian governmental authorities, and the military, which can allocate prerogatives and responsibilities among the parties.

The study brings a unique feature of CMR in the civilian subcategory of the local population in the cultural and historical context of Malawi. The local population is included in this study owing to the thoughts of classical philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes (1588 – 1679), in his book titled *Leviathan* and John Locke (1632 - 1704) in his work *Two Treatises of Government*, who argued that authority to govern is given by the people and that people and the state relationships centre on a social contract that can be withdrawn if contractual obligations are not met (see Boucher & Kelly 2004). As such, this study recognises the power of the local population in influencing the CMR. The study assesses the power of the local population, drawing from the 2019 and 2020 persistent demonstrations against the results of the 2019 tripartite elections, which led to the nullification and conducting of fresh presidential elections in Malawi. The power of the people brought into CMR discourse a circumstantial democratisation feature that made security forces protect the population rather than the regime.

The study noted that CMR, among key stakeholders in emerging democracies, varies depending on circumstances and historical nuances (Newport 2017; Schiff 1995; Williams 2017). Studies conducted in the United States of America, Argentina, Spain, Ghana and Zambia have shown that various stakeholders are expected to discharge their duties within their mandates. Under normal circumstances, the elected authorities play a crucial role in shaping government policies (Griner 2016). Civilians play an oversight role in monitoring the activities of the military, while civilian authorities provide expertise in non-core military tasks such as budgeting, procurement, and policy drafting and the judiciary plays a crucial role in legal interpretation of the military's role in managing domestic affairs (Bruneau & Matei 2013;

Bruneau & Tollefson 2006; Forman & Welch 1998; Hutchful 2008; Idrees & Khan 2018; Kohn 1997; Owens 1986; Pantev 2005).

The military, also known as the armed forces in this study, is involved in the defence and security of a nation. The military is a highly bureaucratic and organised force principally intended for warfare. It has a monopoly of the use of force and becomes a threat to the sovereigns because of the coercive power it possesses. The military functions as a discrete social subculture, resulting in conclusions that “the military is a state within the state or the deep state” (Sabharwal 2022). The military has dedicated infrastructure such as buildings, schools, utilities, logistics, hospitals, legal services, food production, finance and banking services. Outside warfare, the military is employed in sanctioned and non-sanctioned functions within the state, including internal security, promotion of political agenda, disaster and emergency response services, engineering construction and promoting social ceremonies (Jordan et al. 2016). The functions of the military aim at the defence and security of their nations, including its people.

Contrary to the functions of the military of protecting the people, studies of civil-military relations in Zimbabwe showed that security forces are politicised, as they sided with the political elites and violated human rights of the local population to protect the regime (Hlatywayo & Mangongera 2020). While in Malawi, studies have shown traces of unhealthy civil-military relations as evidenced by Lieutenant Colonel James Njoloma’s mutiny in 1995, who organised a few soldiers to topple President Bakili Muluzi; General Manken Chigawa’s murder on 18<sup>th</sup> April 1995, who was eliminated for allegedly turning a blind eye to Lieutenant Colonel Njoloma’s mutiny; and the Daily Times raid in January 1998, when the military raided the media house for carrying an article purporting the widespread HIV-AIDS in the MDF (Charman 2015;

Phiri 2008). However, circumstances where the military has sided with civilians in defending democratic values have stagnated at the level of rhetoric, with no meaningful scholarly attention.

This study also inquires the effectiveness of the key CMR players in Malawi. Studies on the democratisation of African states, Latin America, Southern Europe and Asia portend that the effectiveness of the civil-military relations takes the democracy-building approach (Forman & Welch 1998). These democracy-building effects of civil-military relations are the voluntary restraint of the military, democratic civilian control, the essentiality of joint training of civilians and military personnel and balance of civil-military relations through a gradual reduction of military presence as the only key state-run agency responsible for internal security and development (Bruneau & Tollefson 2006; Bryden & Olonisakin 2010; Chuter 2011; Forman & Welch 1998; Houngnikpo 2010; Pantev 2005; Siegle 2022;). However, the Gallup Poll in USA noted that there is a familiarity gap between the roles of the military and the citizenry, and this has resulted into concluding that militaries are effective in achieving their roles by the citizenry who do not know the roles of the military (Williams 2017). Hence, the roles of the military are to be brought to bear for the right conclusions to be made about the military.

This study took cognizant that a nation's (in)stability and democratisation processes revolve around the management and governance of CMR. The management and governance of CMR determine factors and consequences, which result in the state of CMR in a country. The study further realised that the variation and effectiveness of the roles of the key CMR players are significant in understanding the state of CMR. As such, conducting a deep exploration of CMR in a country is warranted. Therefore, an in-depth analysis of the relations between the state, the citizenry and the military in managing the state's affairs in Malawi remains a critical area of study. Earlier studies paid much scholarly attention to the historical side of power relations between the military and political elites, and partially to institutional challenges of civilian

control (see Charman 2015; Phiri 2008). However, the causes of stable CMR, the interplay between the citizenry and the military in safeguarding democratic values, and the effectiveness of CMR in a democratic Malawi, remained subjects for academic enquiry.

### **1.3 Evolution of Civil-Military Relations**

Civil-military relations are traced to the classical military theorists Sun Tzu (544 BC - 496 BC) and Carl von Clausewitz (1780 - 1831), who claimed that military institutions were predominantly the servants of the state (Clausewitz 1989; Houngnikpo 2010; Sun Tzu 1971). To this end, states controlled the militaries because states and armies were inseparable, and many generals were heads of state. However, as states metamorphosed and delineated between the civilian and military bureaucracies, fault lines emerged over the question of who controls who and the delineating lines of civilian and military bureaucracy became blurred. The debate of the blurred bureaucracy between the military and civilians refers to the complex and often contentious interactions between military and civilian institutions in a country's governance structure that leads to confusion and conflict (Da Cruz 2024). However, the coercive power of the military dominated the civilian word.

Civil-military relations scholars agree that concerns about a growing militarism in society, mainly coming from the experiences of the first half of the twentieth Century, provoked an examination into the impact of militaries. The ramifications of the Cold War, specifically the American decision to maintain a large standing army for the first time in its history, led to concerns about whether a liberal democracy could effectively maintain such a military structure. Samuel P. Huntington and Morris Janowitz published seminal books on the subject, effectively bringing civil-military relations into academia (Huntington 1957; Janowitz 1960). Since then, the seminal works of Huntington (1957) and Janowitz (1960) have been replicated in the developed world, albeit with gaps in the developing world.

In *The Man on Horseback*, Samuel Edward Finer countered some of Huntington's and Janowitz's arguments and assumptions and offered a look into the civil-military relationships in the underdeveloped world. Finer (1988) observed that many governments lack the administrative skills to govern efficiently, which may open opportunities for military intervention. These options are not as likely in more developed countries. Finer (1988) argued that a stage of political development is a measure of civil-military relations. The stage of political development presents an opportunity for the military to intervene in internal politics. A common issue that ruins civil-military relations is when civil political leaders attempt to resume or gain civilian control after a transition, conflict or dictatorship, but do not possess the necessary capacities and commitment to handle defence affairs.

The increased incidence of military *coup d'états* since World War II, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, brought about a growing interest in the academic domain in studying the nature of such coups. Political upheavals in Africa and Latin America led to military take-overs or unconstitutional change of governments in Togo, Congo, Uganda, Ghana, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Zimbabwe, Bolivia (189 military coups in its first 169 years of existence), Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay, were largely a result of forces attempting to stem the increasing influence of left-wing and communist-led uprisings (Andrain 1994; Bruneau & Matei 2013; Decalo 1976; Eshiet 2022; Hounnikpo 2010; Hutchful 2013; Salihu 2019; Sany 2022). During the bipolar region, the military was a closer tool for the state to project power on another state. As such, armies were more concerned with the defence of territorial integrity than internal politics, while political elites were more concerned with the security of the political ideology. However, the winds of change and uncertainty blew when the bipolar region collapsed.

The end of the Cold War led to a new debate about the proper role of the military in society, both in the United States and the former Soviet Union. However, as before, much of the discussion revolved around whether the state's powers were in decline and whether an appropriate level of civilian control was being brought to bear on the military power (Buzan, et al. 1996; Collins 2013; Desch 1989; Desch 2001). Security analysts pondered the military's role if a human being became a referent object to security. Huntington (1996) opined that the end of the Cold War meant an increase in internal conflicts, as people started aligning themselves with ethnic lines and predicted that many of the conflicts would be a clash of civilisations. A clash of civilisations is a thesis that people's cultural and religious identities will be the primary source of conflict in the post-Cold War world. Huntington's (1996) thesis on the clash of the civilisations put the military's role in a dilemma.

The basis of civil-military relations is a dilemma. Feaver (1996) coined this dilemma as the civil-military problematic, which requires a given polity to balance two concerns. On the one hand, it must create a robust military establishment to protect the state. On the other hand, it must ensure that this same military establishment does not turn on the state that established it. Owens (2012) and Williams (2017) argue that the response of a polity to the civil-military problematic in the current world order can be seen as a bargain negotiated among three parties: the citizens, the civilian governmental authorities, and the uniformed military. This bargain aims to allocate prerogatives and responsibilities among the parties to keep civil-military relations in equilibrium and ensure participatory democracy in state affairs.

The interactions between the military and the polity have been a dilemma. Much of the interaction has been perceived in a negative spectrum. Instances of unconstitutional changes of governments aided by the military have made the polity negatively perceive the military. However, the military institution is a requirement in statecraft, where the institution is

mandated to protect its citizenry and territory from external aggression. Militaries also act as labour reserves during times of emergencies, providing the required services during disasters for the nation's survival. This study set out to examine the interactions of key civil-military relations actors in a democratic Malawi, drawing from lessons from the controversial interventions in politics by the other global south countries from Latin America and Africa.

#### **1.4 Civil-Military Relations in Context**

Civil-military relations refer to the dynamics and interactions between civilian authorities and the military establishment within a state. This relationship influences political stability, governance, and national security, often determining the extent of military involvement in civilian affairs. At the core of civil-military relations are two critical components: military professionalism and civil oversight. Military professionalism emphasises the need for a well-trained and neutral military that respects democratic principles (Huntington 1957; Janowitz 1960; Eshiet 2022). Conversely, civil oversight ensures that civilian leaders maintain control over military actions and policies, safeguarding democratic governance (Schiff 1995).

Civil-military relations are the structural relationships between modern military forces and their host societies encompassing issues of the relationship between the military, the State and the society, which have been a significant factor since the mid-twentieth Century (Huntington 1957). This is an interaction between the armed force of a state as an institution, and the other sectors of the society in which the armed force is embedded (Janowitz 1960).

The purpose of CMR is to harness military professional power to serve vital national security interests, while guarding against the misuse of power that can threaten the well-being of its people (Huntington 1995). Studies of CMR often rest on a normative assumption that it is preferable to have the ultimate factors influencing CMR such as State's history, traditions, mentality, legislative framework, domestic politics, international and regional security context,

the military's role in the society, the image of the military profession in the public mind and the personal characteristics of the rank and file, and society at large, drawn from the idiosyncratic tendencies (Schiff 1995).

Huntington (1957), Janowitz (1960) and Schiff (1995) agree that key components of CMR are military professionalism, civil oversight, control and mutual respect and trust. Military professionalism portends that the military must maintain a high degree of professionalism, which encompasses adherence to ethical standards, expertise in military operations, and a commitment to serving the state rather than specific political interests. Military professionalism refers to the ethical standards, training, and competencies that define military personnel's conduct and operations. It encompasses a commitment to competence, honour, and the rule of law, which are crucial for maintaining the integrity of armed forces in civil-military relations. Professionals in the military operate under a framework of accountability and responsibility, which includes adherence to international humanitarian law and the principles of proportionality and necessity during conflict. Such ethical commitments foster trust and legitimate military authority in democratic societies (Huntington 1957; Janowitz 1960).

In modern conflicts, military professionalism significantly impacts operational effectiveness. A highly skilled and disciplined military can execute complex missions, often requiring collaboration with civilian forces. Thus, professionalism becomes a cornerstone for successful civil-military relations. Additionally, military professionalism must adapt to evolving threats, including cyber warfare and asymmetric conflicts. Continuous education and training ensure military personnel remain prepared to address these challenges, while maintaining respect for civilian oversight (Feaver 1997; Schiff 1995; Bruneau 2018; Greentree 2021).

Civil oversight and control means that civilian authorities should exercise effective oversight over military operations and policies to ensure accountability. This oversight can manifest

through legislative bodies, executive decisions, and public debates (Bruneau & Matei 2013). Civilian oversight refers to the mechanisms through which civilian authorities monitor, regulate, and exert influence over military operations and governance. This relationship is essential for maintaining the balance of power between civilian institutions and the military, ensuring that armed forces remain aligned with democratic principles (Feaver 2012). In democratic societies, civil oversight is typically exercised through various institutions, such as legislatures, judiciary systems, and independent bodies that assess military actions. These institutions foster transparency and accountability, ensuring that military decisions are subject to civilian scrutiny and align with national interests (Griner 2016). Effective civil oversight can be seen in countries like Sweden and Norway, where robust frameworks exist for civilian participation in defence policies. These nations exemplify how civil-military relations can enhance democratic governance while promoting stability and security (Feaver 2012; Bruneau & Matei 2016). However, challenges persist, particularly in regions where military influence undermines civilian authority. Striking a balance between military readiness and civil control remains a critical issue in civil-military relations, shaping the dynamics of modern conflicts (Feaver 1997).

A healthy civil-military relationship is marked by mutual respect and trust between civilian and military leaders. Mutual respect is attained when civilians and military personnel understand and respect each other's roles, responsibilities and expertise in their respective fields of influence. Open, transparent and respectful communication helps to build civilian and military trust and foster cooperation (Kjellén & Wong 2023). More so, both the military and civilian personnel's appreciation and understanding of each other's cultures, values and perspectives serve as an antidote to a healthy civil-military relationship. On the part of trust as a key feature in civil-military relations, it is attained when civilian and military personnel demonstrate reliability, competence and integrity in the use of public resources. Trust is further shown when

both parties work towards common objectives, such as national security and stability and when both parties are held accountable for their actions when working towards national security and development. Mutual respect and trust are vital for effective communication and cooperation during both peaceful and conflict situations (Schiff 1995). The military professionalism and civilian control together shape the nature of civil-military relations, influencing how militaries engage in modern conflicts and their role in democratic societies, including Malawi as a democracy in transition. Such situations, however, are more influenced by the level of knowledge of the key CMR stakeholders such as the military, elected authorities, civil authorities, civilians and the judiciary as centres of power in the national realm.

CMR in democratic societies are characterised by the principle of civilian supremacy over the military. This relationship is vital for maintaining a balance between national security and democratic governance. It ensures that military power is regulated and accountable to civilian authorities (Feaver 1997; Huntington 1957; Janowitz 1960). The key aspects of CMR in these contexts include the election of civilian leaders, where elected officials are responsible for making critical security decisions. Legislative oversight is where parliamentary bodies review military policies, budgets, and operations and public engagement, where civil society participates in discussions regarding military roles and responsibilities. The election of civilian leaders, legislative oversight and public engagement in democratic societies foster a security environment where the military supports and defends democratic values. This relationship not only underpins effective governance but also enhances public trust in military institutions (DCAF 2005; Pantev 2005). Ensuring transparency and accountability is paramount to the stability of civil-military relations and these factors ensure a stable nation. The question to this extent is whether Malawi's state of affairs is a result of stable civil-military relations or endogenous factors prevalent in the Malawi Defence Force. A dilemma that provoked a deep

dive into this study to bring to bear why the Malawi military keeps its right in the presence of flirting opportunities not to unconstitutionally change the government (Nundwe et al. 2024).

## **1.5 Problem Statement**

Civil-military relations studies conducted by Huntington (1957), Bruneau and Tollefson (2006), Hounnikpo (2010), Hutchful (2008), Bruneau and Matei (2013), Salihu (2019), Agyekum (2022), Eshiet (2022), and Sany (2022) focused their attention on the style of governance in the context of civil-military relations that can bring imbalance and threat in the management of state affairs. While much of the classic literature on civil-military relations in democratic societies focuses on the United States of America, Canada and the United Kingdom (see Finer 1988; Huntington 1957; Janowitz 1960), there are numerous examples from the Global South to add to the discourse. Despite Ghana managing to arrest and reverse the civil-military relations imbalance into a reasonably robust democracy, with evidence of the past recorded coups in 1966, 1972, 1979, and 1981, and the successful coups in Mauritania (2008), Niger (2010), Guinea (2021), Mali (2021), and Burkina Faso (2022), the general conclusion has been to portray the militaries in the global south negatively. While evidence of military dictatorship in Argentina has provided much adequate scholarly attention, situations where civilians and the military have worked in defence of democratic values through upholding the country's Constitution have not been given much scholarly attention (see Bruneau & Matei 2013).

Furthermore, it is noted that civil-military relationships do vary in form and consequence depending on the sort of state they are found in be it strong democratic or weak authoritarian states, developed or under-developed states, or in states at war or in peace (Yousef 2012; Williams 2017; Newport 2017). Yousef (2012) and Bruneau (2018) expound on this point, explaining that all nations will have differing civil-military relations, though they will share

many common features because each society has a different culture and faces different issues and challenges in the international arena. As such, there is a strong case for avoiding any overarching framework about civil-military relations. Herein gain, lies a significant gap in the literature, as there was much writing on civil-military relations in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, yet recent studies on civil-military relations have been few and far between, and most of the studies have focused on civil-military relations in the context of established democracies. For the few that have included new democratic regimes, there is a distinct lack of a conceptual framework to guide the research; rather, it is analysed on a case by case basis.

In Malawi, for example, Chapter XVI, Section 160 of the Constitution empowers the MDF to uphold and protect the constitutional order and assist the civilian authorities in properly managing public affairs. This constitutional mandate calls for an interface and interaction between the military and the citizenry. Scholars of Malawi's civil-military relations, such as Phiri (2008) and Charman (2015), have focused on the historical context of power relations between the military and political elites and partially on institutional challenges of civilian control. But the factors that keep civil-military relations in equilibrium; situations where the interaction of citizenry and the military have worked in defence of democratic values; the effectiveness of the civil-military relations towards democratisation in Malawi and the complexities that come with pluralism at a nascent level such as resistance to change, limited accountability and inadequate representation that disconnect the military and the citizens, have stagnated at the rhetoric level. Furthermore, the context-specific management framework owing to the distinct cultural and management values of Malawi is absent. Bruneau (2018) argues that the current conceptual approaches in civil-military relations are deeply flawed and no longer effective in analysing modern and contextual issues as they primarily focus on warfighting and neglect other roles that the military forces play. Furthermore, the traditional civil-military relations frameworks do not provide coherent models to promote democratic

governance and human rights, and enhance stability, security and effectiveness in civil-military relations. Hence, this study focused on the factors that maintain civil-military relations equilibrium, consequences of the interaction and effectiveness of players in civil-military relations with a view of developing a framework for the management of civil-military relations in a democratic Malawi.

## **1.6 Main and Specific Objectives**

### **1.6.1 Main Objective**

This study aimed to examine the interactions of key actors in civil-military relations in a democratic Malawi.

### **1.6.2 Specific Objectives**

To achieve the main objective, the study was guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To assess the factors that can keep civil-military relations in equilibrium in Malawi.
2. To analyse the consequences of the interaction of the elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities, the judiciary and the military in civil-military relations in Malawi.
3. To examine the effectiveness of the elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities, the judiciary and the military towards democratisation in Malawi.
4. To develop a framework for the management of civil-military relations in Malawi.

## **1.7 Research Questions**

The study of the interactions of the key civil-military relations players as the centres of power in a democratic Malawi answered the following questions:

1. What are the factors that can keep civil-military relations in equilibrium in Malawi?

2. What are the consequences of interaction among the elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities, the judiciary and the military in civil-military relations in Malawi?
3. How effective are the elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities, the judiciary and the military towards democratisation in Malawi?
4. How can a framework for managing civil-military relations in Malawi be designed to promote the equilibrium?

### **1.8 Significance of the Study**

The study is important because it increases the public knowledge of the military, connecting the key civil-military relations players like the elected authorities, the civil authorities, civilians, and the judiciary with the military. The study holds significance for the academic and scientific community due to its comprehensive exploration of civil-military relations in a specific context. Its focus on Malawi's historical, cultural, and geographical nuance adds depth to the discussion of democratisation, consequently promoting Sustainable Development Goal number sixteen (SDG 16), which encourages peace, justice, and strong institutions capable of maintaining global peace and security (United Nations 2015).

The study contributes to CMR practice and policy in security sector reform, civil-military dialogue and capacity building. It informs security sector reform efforts in Malawi, emphasising the importance of civilian oversight, military professionalism and community engagement. The study further promotes the civil-military dialogue as a crucial aspect of effective CMR, encouraging regular engagements between civilian leaders, military officials, and civil society representatives. The study also highlights the need for capacity building within the military, civilian institutions and civil society to ensure effective CMR.

The framework created through the synthesis of this study helps to promote democratic governance, enhance stability and security, promote human rights and improve military effectiveness. The framework ensures that the military is accountable to the citizenry and operates within the bounds of democratic governance and prevents military intervention in politics and promotes stability and security in Malawi. The framework also ensures that the key CMR players are effective in their roles and able to respond to security challenges in a way that is consistent with the country's needs and priorities.

## **1.9 Structure and Organisation of the Research**

This research is organised into six chapters. Chapter One is an introduction, that gives a background information and the evolution of CMR to understand the phenomenon under study. The Chapter further includes the problem statement, main objective, specific objectives, and research questions to address the research problem and the significance of the study.

Chapter Two presents the theoretical and empirical literature. The study presents and merges the Institutional Theory and Concordance Theory to come up with a conceptual framework, which guided the study. The conceptual framework was also a result of the fusion of the theoretical literature and the empirical literature from the landmark studies of CMR. The conceptual framework helped to organise and structure ideas, concepts and theories and identified relationships between variables, concepts and theories related to civil-military relations in a democratic Malawi.

Chapter Three presents a research methodology to ensure the research was conducted in a systematic and unbiased manner. The Chapter includes the study's design, site, population, sample, sampling techniques, data collection methods, data analysis, ethical considerations, limitations and dissemination of the results. This Chapter was crucial as it informed data

collection, data analysis, and ensured validity and credibility of research findings, thereby enhancing credibility and trustworthiness of the findings.

Chapter Four contains results from the quantitative and qualitative analyses that used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences and NVivo, respectively, to address the first three research questions. Chapter Four further contains results from the synthesis of the first three research questions to address research question number four. Chapter Five discusses and theorises how the results have answered the research questions. Furthermore, Chapter Six contains the conclusions and recommendations on the controversies, policy and practice implications and suggestions for further research.

## **1.10 Conclusion**

This chapter has provided the background, the evolution of civil-military relations, the statement of the problem, the objectives, and the research questions of the study. The chapter has further outlined the structure and organisation of the study. The chapter has noted that the reintroduction of democracy in 1994 necessitated the reconsideration of the role of the military. Democracy made CMR central in the debates of the centres of power in Malawi. While *coup d'états* increased in parts of the global south, and that Malawi was presented with conditions and opportunities for the military to be involved in domestic politics, contrary to the public expectations, the military upheld democratic values and supported democratic manoeuvres. While such was the case, the study has noted inadequate scholarly attention to the idiosyncratic and systemic behaviour of the MDF and its partners in CMR.

The chapter has noted a considerable coverage of the aspects of Malawi's CMR history and institutional challenges. However, the gap was noted on issues about military involvement in politics, where the military and the citizenry had supported democratic values despite political elites and conditions inclined to the military takeover. The question that has been asked over

and over is what makes the Malawi military and its leadership human-centric. Given the opportunities for power grabs presented to the military leadership, the habit of excellence has remained. Hence, this study set out to understand the factors of healthy civil-military relations prevailing in the Malawi Defence Force and its civil-military relations partners. The study further inquired into the consequences and effectiveness of the interactions of the key civil-military relations that inform the prevailing security status of Malawi. The next chapter provides a review of the theoretical and empirical literature from the theorists and scholarly landmark works on CMR.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This Chapter provides a review of civil-military relations (CMR) theories and landmark studies. It is divided into two parts; the first part deals with the study's theoretical orientation, while the second part reviews the empirical literature. It focuses on factors that keep CMR in equilibrium, the consequences of interaction, and the effectiveness of key CMR players in a democratic Malawi.

### **2.2 Theoretical Literature Review**

Scholars have proposed several theoretical frameworks to explain and understand CMR (Ali 2014; Feaver 1996; Finer 1988; Huntington 1998; Schiff 1995). Among the many CMR theories are Institutional Theory and Concordance Theory. Institutional Theory has stood the test of time. The central argument of the Institutional Theory is that the optimal means of controlling the military is to professionalise them (Feaver 1997). Huntington (1998) identifies three explanatory variables that shape civil-military relations: external threat level, the constitutional structure of the state, and the ideological makeup of society. Concordance Theory is a contemporary CMR theory and argues that effective civil-military relations are achieved through a cooperative relationship among three key partners: the military, political elites, and the citizenry. Unlike the traditional Institutional Theory, which advocates for a clear division between military and political institutions, Concordance Theory suggests that a high level of integration and agreement among these three partners can prevent domestic military intervention (Schiff 1995).

Institutional and Concordance Theories are dovetailed to guide this study. On one hand, the classical Institutional Theory fits into this study because of the subordination of the military to the democratically elected civil authorities who control the military. On the other hand, the

Concordance Theory adds to the Institutional Theory as it advocates cooperation among the key civil-military relations players.

### **2.2.1 Institutional Theory**

The Huntingtonian CMR Institutional Theory assumes that the ordering of CMR is based on a nation's military security policy. The objective of this policy at the institutional level is to develop a system of CMR that maximises military security at the expense of other social values like political, environmental, economic and societal security. This objective involves a complex balancing of power and attitudes among civilian and military groups to have a greater advantage in the search for security, to avoid squandering resources and running into uncalculated risks (Huntington 2000). In Huntington's (2000) thinking, the nation will have an edge and be secure when it has a strong military because a weaker nation would not attack the stronger, and that equal power military cannot attack each other, as a result there is a stalemate. Russett et al. (2009) call the condition of having a stronger military "*Peace through strength*", suggesting that military power can help preserve peace. Huntington (2000) further argues that a potent military is a result of attitude among civil-military key players that support the arming and professionalisation of the military security sector. Huntington (1957) focused on the officers' corps as the professional leaders who manage and lead the armed forces and the civilian politicians who are elected or appointed officials who set national policy and oversee the military. Huntington's (2000) work focuses on the relationship between the officers' corps and the political, elites, exploring how the two groups interact and how to maintain a balance between military professionalism and civilian control.

Institutional Theory describes the separation of powers between civil and military institutions. Since its adoption, Institutional Theory has been widely applied in CMR studies (Demirel 2005). Several studies such as that of Bryden & Olonisakin (2010), Harig, et al (2022), Schiff

(2012), and Bilms (2022) have reported positive contributions of militaries to domestic political and economic development, for example, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, peacekeeping operations, technological innovations, environmental conservation, and law enforcement and security. However, given the concentration of Huntington's (2000) work, which focused on officers' corps and political elites as key civil-military relations players, the contemporary human security environment requires a whole-of-the-society approach to manage civil-military relations. The whole-of-society approach emphasises the importance of societal factors such as culture, values and institutions in shaping civil-military relations. A whole-of-society approach embraces both formal and informal institutions in seeking a generalised agreement across society about policy goals and the means to achieve them (Kjellén & Wong 2023). The approach recognises that the military is not isolated from society but instead influenced by the interactions with the broader social context, hence this study incorporated the military as a whole, not only the officers' corps, civilians, civil authorities and the judiciary as additional centres of power that influence the status of civil-military relations in Malawi.

Huntington (1957) argues that there exist societal pressure and functional pressure between society and its military institutions. The functional imperative stems from threats to the society's security and a societal imperative arises from social forces, ideologies, and institutions dominant within the society. The interactions between societal and functional imperative shape military institutions. Clausewitz (1989) and Huntington (1957) argue that the nation needs a professional officer corps with good morals obligated to subordinate themselves to civilian control to mitigate this conflict. This subordination to civilian control is not necessarily growth or transition to democracy. The relationship between the state and the military does not mean a balance between the two entities. The underlying truth is that the ultimate source of the threat of violence resides in the hands of the officer corps, rather than the established government.

Nordlinger (1977) established that a unified officer corps always maintains a civilian government in office or takes self-control and restraint. Huntington (1957) suggests that the officer corps must be imparted with knowledge of civil-military relations and respect for civilian control as a moral obligation, rather than depending solely on legal or institutional frameworks (Schiff 1995). This is a critical issue when the officer corps is faced with weak, corrupt, or self-serving civilian leadership. In this regard, a bureaucratic, managerial, and nationalistic military officer corps may decide that intervention is the best for the nation.

Huntington (1957) further notes that the relative power imbalance between the civilian government and the military is the only option to minimise military power. Huntington (1957) suggested two ways involving separation: 'subjective' or 'objective' civilian control. Subjective civilian control of the military power is through legal or institutional mechanisms. It achieves its goal by transforming the military into the mirror of the state. In this form of control, the military is directed to conduct various operations that would normally be civilian responsibilities.

In contrast, objective civilian control is less rigid and can only occur in the presence of a professional military establishment. Objective control seeks to turn the military into "the tool of the state" by providing it with a certain amount of autonomy in exchange for non-intervention in the political arena (Coffman 1991). This type of control is possible where the military is professional and that subjective control is out of place in any society in which the division of labour has been carried to the point where there emerges a distinct class of specialists in the management of violence (Huntington 1957). Institutional Theory is state-centric as it focuses on the power balance between the state and the military, and the external threats. The study partially employed the Institutional Theory to examine the power relations between the military and political elites.

Despite its positive contribution to civil authorities, some studies have reported the threat that military poses to the civil authorities and societies (Eshiet 2022). These threats include intervention of the military in domestic politics in the form of a *coup d'état*, the military's freedom of choice of policies and the culture of the polity and society raising the military to a sacrosanctity level, where the military becomes sacred (Eshiet 2022; Owens 2012; Williams 2017). The studies recommended Institutional Theory as the remedy to domestic coercion and dominance by the military (Ahmad 2010). The debate about CMR prompted theorists to develop modern theories on how the military can be incorporated into civilian government. Huntington (1998) and Feaver (1996) noted that the separation concept assumes that the international environment and a nation's external threat greatly influence domestic politics. Institutional Theory further assumes that nations with higher external threat conditions are more prone to military intervention in politics than those with lower external threats.

On the one hand, Institutional Theory ensures civilian supremacy, democratic accountability, and professional autonomy of the military. On the other hand, Institutional Theory can create a gap between the military and society, a lack of civil-military dialogue, and a potential for civil-military conflict. The focus of the Institutional Theory on political elites and officers' corps of the military as the key civil-military relations actors reduces the civil-military relations to be a business of the government only leaving out the contemporary centres of power that are critical in the maintenance of a healthy civil-military relations status in a democracy. Furthermore, reducing the military power to the officer's corps only is a misnomer as the ranks-and-file of the military have grown in influence and contribute to the day to day running of the military institution, hence this study examined the military as a whole. As such, the weaknesses of the Institutional Theory were overcome by the Concordance Theory.

### **2.2.2 Concordance Theory**

Schiff (1995; 2008; 2012) proposed the Concordance Theory based on historical and cultural nuances of the polity. The main argument of the Concordance Theory is that effective civil-military relations are achieved through a cooperative relationship among three key partners: the military, political elites, and the citizenry. Unlike the traditional Institutional Theory, which advocates for a clear division between military and political institutions, Concordance Theory suggests that a high level of integration and agreement among these three partners can prevent domestic military intervention.

Concordance Theory identifies four key indicators that need to be aligned for healthy civil-military relations. The indicators are; social composition of the officer corps, political decision-making process, recruitment method, and military style. The Concordance Theory purports that when the social composition of the officers' corps, the political decision-making process, the recruitment method of the ranks and file, and the military style of leading, commanding and managing the military establishment is in harmony, the likelihood of military intervention in domestic politics is reduced.

The Concordance Theory states that the separation of civil and military relations given by Huntington (1957) not only fails to give an adequate account of domestic military interventions in emerging democracies, which have the more immediate threat of coups, but also attempts to impose the American model of civil-military relations on it (Finer 1988; Schiff 1995; 2008; 2012). The Concordance Theory considers national contexts where the balance of military involvement in civilian life depends significantly on historical events, institutional nuances, and cultural realities (Ali 2014; Rawal 2022).

On one hand, the Concordance Theory can foster a sense of mutual trust, respect, and understanding among the three partners, and a shared responsibility for national security. On

the other hand, it can entail a loss of civilian control, a politicisation of the military, and a divergence of interests and values among the partners.

### **Towards a Hybrid Approach**

This study adopted a hybrid theory by merging some of the aspects of the Institutional Theory and the Concordance Theory. Management of CMR is diverse as social aspects influence its outcomes. As such, a balance was struck through weighing the benefits and drawbacks of each approach. On the one hand, Institutional Theory ensures civilian supremacy, democratic accountability, and professional autonomy of the military. On the other hand, Institutional Theory creates a gap between the military and society, a lack of civil-military dialogue, and a potential for civil-military conflict. The Concordance Theory, on the contrary, can foster a sense of mutual trust, respect, and understanding among the three partners and a shared responsibility for national security. However, the Concordance Theory can also entail a loss of civilian control, a politicisation of the military, and a divergence of interests and values among partners.

This study combined the principle of civilian control and involved the military in the political decision-making process, especially on matters of national defence and security. The integration of the two theories respects the military professional expertise and autonomy as well as ensure that the military reflects the social diversity and values of society.

The study further incorporated the development of a military style that is compatible with the national culture and identity and adaptable to the changing security environment and challenges. The study noted that there can be no one-size-fits-all solution to civil-military relations and that each country can find its optimal model based on its historical, cultural and political context. Hence, this study adopted a hybrid approach, drawing on the insights of both

Institutional Theory and Concordance Theory to achieve a more harmonious and effective civil-military relationship in Malawi.

## **2.4 Empirical Literature Review**

### **2.4.1 Factors that Keep Civil-Military Relations in Equilibrium**

Guided by Institutional Theory and Concordance Theory, the study sought to assess the factors that keep the civil-military relations in balance among key players in Malawi. Bruneau & Matei's (2013) study on key CMR stakeholders of Argentina found that the country has strengthened and increased its responsibilities in several critical areas of the military organisation. The Argentina Ministry of Defence (MoD) has taken more initiatives such as defining military roles and strategies; controlling budgets and implementing a logistics control system; managing personnel including taking control over military promotions; military justices; limiting military intelligence exclusively to external roles; and several processes limiting the role of the armed forces. For example, the Air Force has lost control over the military police, meteorology and air traffic control (Bruneau & Matei 2012; Battaglino & Pion-Berlin 2022).

Argentina MoD was entrusted with both operational and oversight functions which can be conflicting and diminish the line between civilian control and military operations. Given operational and oversight roles, the increased demands on the Argentina MoD and its initiatives, critics question the ability of the MoD to fulfil the expanded competencies and argue that the military has been limited in their operational effectiveness as there is over control by the civilians in both operational and oversight roles. To make things worse for the expanded roles, literature further shows that there is no stability for civilians in positions of authority (Bruneau & Matei 2013). There is instead a veritable revolving door with all but very few

civilians having any stability, let alone developing their expertise and exercise their authority (Battaglino & Pion-Berlin 2022)

Argentina, as a once militarism-ravaged country for much of the twentieth century chose to strengthen civil control while paying less attention to the material dimensions of the defence. In real terms, defence spending has steadily declined for decades, even during times of economic expansion, and when spending on internal security has increased. Ninety per cent of the defence budget is spent on salaries and pensions, leaving only ten percent for operations, training and equipment, signifying an intention to reduce the capability of the armed forces thus defence ill-preparedness to defend the territory (Battaglino & Pion-Berlin 2022). The imbalance between civilian control and defence preparedness undermines national security and the state of civil-military relations which leads to frustration of the armed forces. As such, Argentina armed forces remain a threat to the civilian government due to over-controlling in both oversight and operational matters.

The Argentine MoD is not equipped to adequately fulfil all the operational and oversight responsibilities it has taken on board (Bruneau & Matei 2012; (Battaglino & Pion-Berlin 2022). The problems that restrict its capability include the Argentine state mechanisms coupled with weak political parties, unions, and civil society organisations in general. The state lacks the autonomy and means to implement many policies. Secondly, Bruneau and Matei (2013) argue that the MoD, with some 700 employees, is the smallest of the ministries in Argentina, in charge of 75,000 personnel in the armed forces. Furthermore, despite efforts by past and present civilian leaders in the MoD, there is no specialisation, where civilians can develop their expertise in issues of national security and defence, and make a career out of it. Bryden and Olonisakin (2010) corroborate with Bruneau and Matei (2013) in the context of Nigeria that:

*“...in circumstances where civilians frequently lack knowledge and understanding of military affairs, and the apportioning of civilian and security responsibilities often depends on the security institutions or a small coterie of elected civilian officials close to the president. This has led to a further lack of accountability and the assumption of an all-powerful executive branch. Elected authorities have also not prioritised restructuring the military sector as they are afraid to venture into unknown territory...”*

Bruneau and Matei's (2013) study makes a comparative analysis of Romania, Hungary, France, and Slovenia to correct the knowledge gap misnomer. The study affirms that these countries' civilians working in the MoD have stable and attractive careers, with promotions based on merit, knowledge and education, which enable them to develop and consolidate defence and security expertise. Cleary and McConville (2006) affirm that the specialisation of civilians working in the MoD is important as they make informed decisions and provide advice.

Bruneau and Matei's (2013) comparative study of Romania, Hungary, France and Slovenia proposed building stable human resources and structures as one of the factors of stable civil-military relations. Personnel should specialise in specific career fields to develop expertise, and promotions should be on merit. Training and knowledge in military matters should be attained through joint and specialised training. Professional military education (PME) and professionalisation of the military is another identified coping strategy for healthy civil-military relations. Shah (2014) agrees with Bruneau and Tollefson (2006) and (Powell & Townley 2015), that PME objectively restricts the officers' corps, both the subalterns, the field and flag grade officers to be involved in internal politics. Shah (2014) asserts that officers stay in their professional lane when they are exposed to PME. Military personnel exposed to PME develop into authentic leaders. PME conveys a broad body of professional knowledge and develops the habits of mind central to the military profession (Powell & Townley

2015). PME develops military personnel to be critical thinkers, capable of understanding the security environment and responding to uncertainty, anticipating and leading transitions through change, and operating with trust and understanding in the realm of civil-military relations.

The Hutchful (2008) found that in Ghana's CMR, the judiciary enforces the rule of law and fulfils its role in protecting human rights and curbing abuses of military powers. The judiciary authorises warrants for investigations and communication intercepts by intelligence agencies, and reviews certain decisions of military courts. The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, among a range of other functions, is given specific, though limited, powers to investigate complaints concerning the functioning of the military. The Ministry of Finance (MOF) controls the budgeting and budgetary allocations, and the auditor general's department audits all government ministries, departments and agencies, including the military and reports to parliament and is thus a key instrument of fiscal control and financial probity and transparency.

The Hutchful (2008) study alludes that Ghana's media and civil society have historically had a conflictual relationship with the military institution because of the politicisation of the military. Although they have often been vocal about issues with the military, they could not engage with the military in an informed way. Part of the reason may be the absence of research institutions, think tanks on security issues, and media journalists trained in the military domain. Hutchful's (2008) study collaborates with Habasonda's (2010) study in Zambia. Habasonda (2010) argues that many government sectors are increasingly becoming open and accountable to the citizens, but some public institutions, such as the military, remain hidden from public involvement. Civil society in Zambia has started to influence the process of government, but has not yet taken the opportunity to engage with the military establishment regarding issues such as defence

spending and defence policy. This is partly because civil society lacks an agenda for such engagement and because comments on military matters are not welcomed by the government.

However, the recent emergence of a small number of civil society organisations (CSOs) with a specialisation in security issues in Ghana, such as African Security Dialogue and Research, the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development, and the Legal Resource Centre, is promoting security literacy and transforming this situation. Malawi can learn from Ghana's strides in institutionalising CMR so that key players are acquainted with the tenets of healthy CMR required for a stable nation. As such, the Hutchful (2008) and Habasonda (2010) informed the interrogation of Malawi's CMR stakeholders' balancing factors in a democracy. The involvement of the military, judiciary, elected authorities, civil authorities and civilians towards democratisation was examined in Malawi to fill the existing knowledge gap in a democratic Malawi.

Kuwali's (2022) study on nation-building in Malawi noted that despite attaining democracy, Malawi remains a bitterly divided country although unity is one of the country's guiding principles. The disunity has glaringly manifested not only in the voting patterns along regional and tribal lines during presidential elections, but also through deep-rooted nepotism, which is commonplace in employment in public and private sectors. Kuwali (2022) prescribes options to overcome racism, nepotism, regionalism, and tribalism that have been deepened by geographic discrimination and cultural claustrophobia in Malawi. Among the options are fair recruitment and promotions at the national level, a philosophy Kuwali (2022) coined '*Malawianity*', a viewpoint that can be replicated at the CMR stakeholder level.

Societal representation in the armed forces is another balancing factor. Ethnic diversity in the armed forces plays a pivotal role in shaping military effectiveness and operational success (Agyekum 2022). Conflicts have become increasingly complex, and including diverse

perspectives enhances the ability of armed forces to address multifaceted challenges transformatively (Brewer 1991; Perez & Strizhko 2018). It has been noted that diversity exhibits higher levels of morale and cohesiveness required in a healthy civil-military relations system. Diverse armed forces members develop mutual respect and understanding, appreciating each other's contributions (Brewer 1991). This bond strengthens the military institution's cohesion, which is critical for operational success and balanced civil-military relations. A study in the USA found that the military is a unifying factor when it has a representative ethnic diversity (Perez & Strizhko 2018). This is due to the armed forces' deliberate efforts to prioritise teamwork and the shared mission over individual identity. The ethnic representative military mitigates the patronage system where minority ethnic groups identify with high-ranking officers from the same ethnic group, posing a danger to the internal cohesion of the military institution. This study tested the significance of representational recruitment of armed forces personnel, among other factors, in the state of civil-military relations in Malawi.

Phiri's (2008) and Charman's (2015) studies on Malawi CMR focussed on institutional challenges and historical nuances. The studies reveal that the executive powers in Malawi work against healthy CMR. The consistent firing of Defence Force Commanders by the Commanders-in-Chief showed superiority of the civilian control over the military and a weak link to the democratisation process. Not only did Phiri (2008) and Charman (2015) concentrate on executive powers, but also touched and recounted the Malawi Army's behaviour towards civilians. The raid of the then Malawi Army personnel on the Daily Times' newsroom after the publication of an article in January 1998 entitled "Aids and men in the military", was a low bar for CMR. The article purported that HIV-AIDS was rife in the army, reporting that as many as 19 or 20 soldiers were identified as HIV-positive every month. This claim could be true, given that in 1998, 67% of people living with AIDS in the world were in Sub-Saharan Africa (Gilks

1999). The civil society criticised the raid. However, just like in Ghana, they could not engage with the military in an informed way.

The studies by Phiri (2008) and Charman (2015) further reveal that the judiciary and human rights organisations questioned the conviction of Lieutenant Colonel James Njoloma to fifteen years with hard labour after he was found guilty of inciting a mutiny among junior officers by a military court martial. The court-martial raised several contestable legal issues: why was Section 76(3)(a) of the Malawi Army Act, which limits military jurisdiction to cases of officers below the rank of captain, not applied? Hence, critics argued why the case was not referred to a court of competent jurisdiction. This issue formed the basis of a long-running appeal case as the judiciary weighed in for legal oversight, departing from the authoritarian rule where silence was golden.

However, Phiri's (2008) and Charman's (2015) studies do not postulate the power balance between the military, judiciary, elected authorities, elected civilians and civilians in the democratisation process. These two studies fell short of examining the interaction of the blurred bureaucracies of the military and civilians, and the widening familiarity gap between the military and society. These factors and the hidden hand of the military culture affect the state of CMR. This study fills this gap, where different CMR centres of power in Malawi interact and generate contextual CMR outcomes.

#### **2.4.2 Consequences of Interaction of Elected Authorities, Civil Authorities, Civilians, Judiciary and Military to the State of Civil-Military Relations in Malawi**

The study sought to analyse the consequences of interaction in CMR in a democratic Malawi. The consequences in CMR are far-reaching, as they affect the balancing aspects between

elected authorities, civil authorities, civilians, the judiciary, and the military. The consequences can be positive or negative. Janjua (2010) notes that:

*“The ideal civil-military equation is achieved with a military “strong enough to do anything, the civilians ask them to do with a military subordinate enough to do only what civilians authorise them to do.”*

In this context, the challenge that confronts the civil-military hierarchy undeniably is the attainment of an optimum balance between the functional imperative of the military to protect society and its societal essential to protect its values, ideologies, and institutions. The above balance is indeed the holy grail of the ideal civil-military equation, as Janjua (2010) notes. The military, as an enduring profession, guards against the erosion of its values brought about by the need to subject the military to civilian control, whereas the civilians would want to exert power on the military to be in control during their tenure in office. The advantage of the equilibrium of civil-military relations is that it leads to improved national security, as civilians and the military work together to address common challenges affecting the nation. The equilibrium of civil-military relations refers to the state of balance and stability between the military and civilian institutions in a country (Janjua (2010; Bruneau 2018). Stable civil-military relations promotes effective governance as military forces are accountable to civilian authorities and operates within the bound of law. Stable civil-military relations also contributes to economic development through provision of stable security environment that attracts investments and enhance economic growth. Furthermore, stable civil-military relations are critical for democratic consolidation as they ensure that the military is subordinated to civilian authorities and respect democratic institutions. The negative consequences of CMR lead to imbalance. Conflict and instability as the key CMR players, may have competing interests and priorities.

To improve CMR, scholars such as Kohn (1997); Pantev (2005); Chuter (2011); Bruneau and Matei (2013); Hutchful (2008); and Idrees and Khan (2018), have conceptualised and differentiated the key players' methods of interaction in CMR. Differentiating the methods and their consequences in CMR is meant to improve the effectiveness of the CMR system. The apparent variation of responsibilities and rights between the centres of political power represents one of the key packages of preconditions for successful democratisation. The constitutional system and judicial definition of the relationship among the various centres of authority have a decisive impact on the character and tempo of democratisation. However, this study realised that a healthy system needs a holistic functioning of the whole. Conversely, the hard truth is that in a global approach, multiple players centre on self-respect and protection from the other players. As such, in democracies, the multiple players; elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities, and the judiciary, have multiple, sometimes divergent interests driven by political mandates promoting political agenda (Dulani 2011; Lembani 2013). In this instance, the elected authorities' role is to give policy directions for the development of any democracy.

The responsibilities of elected authorities, such as presidents (Commanders-in-Chief) and members of parliament (MP), are portrayed directly or through the Executive and Legislature. The responsible Defence Minister and Deputy Defence Minister, as representatives of the ruling cabinet, carry out the civilian democratic control by the executive power in shaping and formulating the national security policy. They may use different assistance forms, including seeking civil society representatives' advice. However, the political parties that have nominated them bear a special moral responsibility in providing feedback on the issue.

The responsibility of the Defence Ministry is to provide a qualified internal professional control over the process of defence policy formulation, implementation, and reviews. The Defence

Policy looks at how best to deploy military and civilian resources to ensure the protection of national interest (Cleary & McConville 2006). In the Defence Policy processes, CMR studies note that the self-control and self-restraint of particular military personnel matter significantly for the Defence Policy to yield national interest results (Bruneau & Matei 2013; Cleary & McConville 2006; Pantev 2005).

In the United States of America, elected authorities play a pivotal role in shaping defence policy. The President, Congress and Senate ensure military control through the trinity of CMR (Bruneau & Tollefson 2006; Campbell & Auerswald 2015). According to Bruneau and Tollefson (2006), the CMR trinity encompasses democratic civilian control, effectiveness and efficiency of the armed forces. The CMR trinity ensures that the military is well-resourced, accountable and responsible for achieving tasks of national interest. To conform to the democratisation dictates, Argentina embarked on reforms of CMR by asserting civilian control of the armed forces. The country established an elaborate legal basis, the civilian-led MoD, and gradually the civilians assumed control over central areas of national security and defence policy (Bruneau & Matei 2013).

The role of parliaments in civil-military relations varies across political systems. In the United States, Congress has significant power to shape defence policy, as demonstrated by the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act (Campbell & Auerswald 2015). While the British Parliament appears less influential, it still plays a role in setting the agenda for defence reforms (Campbell & Auerswald 2015). In Nepal, the parliamentary defence committee is crucial for civilian control of the military, deciding on issues such as budget and procurement (Bhandari & Sharma 2020; Rawal 2022). The UK Parliament has recently increased its role in representing the intersection of government, military, and public interests (Greentree 2021). However, in Indonesia, poor parliamentary post-legislative scrutiny has hindered security sector reforms, allowing the

military to maintain involvement in civilian affairs and resist change (Nainggolan & Katharina 2020). Effective parliamentary oversight is essential for maintaining democratic control of the military and ensuring proper civil-military relations.

A study conducted in Bulgaria found that MPs in CMR are involved in budget appropriation and contribute to national defence matters during parliamentary deliberations (Pantev 2005). However, the MPs are well represented in the CMR with a parliamentary committee on defence and security (DCAF 2005; Rawal 2022). The Defence and Security Committee (DSC) is a specialised body of parliament that advises and recommends laws and decisions about national defence and security of citizens (Feaver 2005; Rawal 2022). The DSC exercises oversight powers to investigate major policy issues, defective administration, accusations of corruption or scandals. The DSC's responsibilities, among others, include holding hearings or enquiries, summoning military personnel, civil servants or experts to testify, scrutinising transparency and efficiency of defence spending, examining petitions and complaints from military personnel and civilians concerning the defence and security sector, and visiting and inspecting military bases and other security sector installations as well as the deployed troops (Barany 2012; DCAF 2005).

Hutchful's (2008) study of Ghana's military governance revealed great strides in democratisation as Ghana has arrested and reversed the civil-military relations imbalance to a reasonably robust democracy. Ghana has restructured the security sector to achieve civilian control of the armed forces. The president exercises overall control of the security services, appointing service chiefs and senior commanders in consultation with the Council of State and service councils. The president also appoints to the National Security Council (NSC), the Council of State, and the three service councils. The administration and operational command and control of the services rest with the chiefs of the individual services, subject to control and

direction of the service councils on policy matters. To ensure strong links with the apex of the government, the secretary of the cabinet also acts as the secretary of the NSC.

In the Malawian context, conceptually, the country adopted the civil-military relations trinity; thus, democratic civilian control, effectiveness and efficiency of the armed forces to embrace democratisation. Phiri (2008) and Charman (2015) studies reveal that since 1994, there have been significant security reforms, such as the disbanding of the repressive Police Mobile Force (PMF), outlawing the draconian security legislation that allowed security forces a wide range of human rights violations. The repealed laws included the Forfeiture Act, the Decency in Dress Act and Detention without Trial, among others (Mutharika 1996). Civilian military control was adopted by appointing a parliamentary Defence and Security Committee and creating a MoD.

The MoD, among other functions, was established so that it formulates national defence policies in liaison with the defence force and acts as a headquarters through which government policy decisions are translated into operational plans and orders. However, Phiri (2008) argues that the MoD has not been effective in its operations as most of its tasks are performed by the military itself, because the MoD is understaffed and lacks the necessary expertise in defence issues to manage the military effectively. In furtherance of the reforms, the Law Commission reviewed the Malawi Army Act to align with democratic norms. The president is the Commander-in-Chief who appoints the Defence Force Commander (Charman 2015; Phiri 2008). For the elected authorities to function appropriately, they require the support of civil authorities.

Civil authorities support elected authorities in exercising their duties. Civil authorities provide expertise in areas of their profession such as policy drafting, budgeting, human resource management, planning, organising, coordinating and procurement (Bruneau & Matei 2013). Regarding civil authorities, studies have concentrated on those who are required to provide

civilian expertise to the elected authorities necessary for the management of the military institution. In Argentina, Ghana and Malawi, institutional issues of lack of capacity by civil authorities in line ministries at the national level are well documented (Bruneau & Matei 2013; Charman 2015; Hutchful 2008; Phiri 2008; Salihu 2019). However, these studies overlooked the perspective of delivering public goods and services to the population through civil-military relations at a local level, for example, at an administrative district level. As such, this study zips on the District Commissioners and the DSTC as principals representing the population and the military as agents to ensure the delivery of public goods and services at a local level. The DSTC is responsible for coordinating security initiatives among various stakeholders, including civil authorities, military institutions, law enforcement, and community leaders. Obi (2008) revealed that the collaborative approach enhances trust and ensures that security efforts are aligned with local needs. The DSTC is pivotal in managing security crises through effective communication and resource allocation. During emergencies, the DSTC facilitates rapid responses and mobilises resources to ensure public safety. The DSTC conducts outreach programmes and community dialogues to address grievances and gather insights on security concerns, fostering mutual respect and understanding (Phinos & Ogbu 2019). While civil authorities represent the interests of elected authorities and civilians, in some cases, they might be compromised and lean on one key player, thereby compromising the required neutrality. In this case, civilian organisations such as CSOs and media houses complement civil authorities to ensure checks and balances for the perceived biases from the District Commissioners, as agents of elected authorities.

CSOs play a civilian role in civil-military relations. The responsibilities of CSOs, their expert institutions and the media have become indispensable in implementing democratic civilian control over the military process in established democracies like the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada. Civilian democratic control has arisen in emerging

democracies from the need to increase society's democratisation and deal with the rising complexity of military issues, requiring additional competence and professional assessments. The public demands and expects that the funds provided to the state would be spent most effectively; a fundamental reason for civil society representatives to have a say on national security policy issues (Bruneau & Matei 2013; Habasonda 2010; Pantev 2005). In Pakistan, the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement, which aims to protect human rights of the ethnic Pashtun people, challenged military practices, leveraging societal legitimacy to elicit concessions and contest military behaviour publicly. The power of civil society in Pakistan underscores the importance of CSOs in shaping civil-military relations (Aslam & Neads 2020). Thus, vibrant civil societies, typical of established and progressive democracies, guarantee that the national security issues of the state do not turn into an area for selected groups of people.

The media plays a complex role in civil-military relations, often reflecting societal attitudes, while also shaping public perception. In Israel, despite appearing more confrontational since the 1990s, the media continues to reinforce military ethos and construct enemy images, impeding the development of a post-war society (Peri 2007). Similarly, during NATO enlargement debates in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the media highlighted a gap between the governing elite and public opinion on military matters (Sarvaš 2000).

To guard against politicisation of information by CSOs, countries like the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada have specific legislation on access to various types of information as the central feature of established and functioning democracies (Bruneau & Tollefson 2006). In mature democracies, news provided by the media must meet specific criteria as truth in areas of accuracy and fairness. The "right to knowledge", as a fundamental right in a democratic society, is guaranteed through the efficient work of the media (Bruneau and Matei 2013; Pantev 2005). However, in emerging democracies such as Argentina, Ghana,

Zambia and Malawi, the role of CSOs and the media in civil-military relations has been superficial. CSOs and the media have not fully exploited their responsibilities due to a lack of expertise and ignorance of the roles of the defence forces (Bruneau & Matei, 2013; Cawthra et al. 2007; Chuter 2011; Hutchful 2008; Pantev 2005; Salihu 2019). The widening familiarity gap presents an oversight problem and puts into question who is supposed to guard the guardians (Schafer 2017; Williams 2017). This is a potential threat to democracy, because armed forces can operate without being accountable to the population that employs them. Vibrant CSOs and the media are essential in the democratisation processes. CSOs also contribute to developing standards around new weapons and military technologies, often undertaking broader roles than the narrow review mechanisms adopted by states (Rappert et al. 2012). Consequently, active CSOs and the media, typical of established democracies, guarantee that the national security issues of the state do not turn into an area for selected groups of people.

The judiciary, as a key player, plays an important oversight role in CMR in areas of the rule of law. The judiciary's role in CMR involves interpreting the law on matters concerning the military, the citizenry and the state. The judiciary validates military interventions during power voids in times of internal political dynamics and weak political institutions based on the doctrine of necessity (Idrees & Khan 2018). Additionally, the judiciary plays a supporting role, holding military individuals personally accountable in ways that prevent military interference in politics and assure that officers know they will be punished for law violations (Hutchful 2008; Kohn 1997). United States of America, Argentina, Ghana, Zambia, and Malawi judiciaries enforce the rule of law, protect human rights and curb abuses of military powers. The judiciary authorises search warrants and reviews certain decisions of the military courts (Bruneau & Matei 2013; Cawthra et al. 2007; Charman 2015; Chuter 2011; Hutchful 2008).

Studies in Latin America and Pakistan indicated the importance of the judiciary. The judiciary was found to be playing a mediator role post-armed conflict. However, in an increasing change in the nature of contemporary security, the courts are also involved in policing the nature of military operations so that they do not infringe on human rights. The mediation role during post-conflict situations has helped in confidence-building for reconciliation and cemented a solid base for peacebuilding (Khan & Jaffari 2023; Rios-Figueroa 2016; Wilén & Strömbom 2021).

The role of the judiciary in keeping the equilibrium of CMR is unprecedented as it operates on the principle of equality before the law; meaning no one is above the law. The relevance of the judiciary in national security issues is to weigh the pros and cons of the situation at hand and act in the interest of the safety of the citizens (Ibu 2023). However, the effectiveness of such an assertion needs to be interrogated to ascertain the judiciary's role as a key CMR player in the democratisation of Malawi. The judiciary's roles are central in CMR, and so are the roles of the military.

The military, as an enduring bureaucracy, brings about the stabilising role in civil-military relations linked to democratisation (Pantev 2005). The military brings on the relations-table factors such as professionalism, and progressive and continuous education in exchange for neutrality (Huntington 1957; Rapp 2015). The military is involved in defending the territorial integrity and constabulary tasks (military assistance to civil authorities (MACA)) to ensure the state's survival (Forman & Welch 1998; Harig et al. 2022; Janowitz 1960; Owens 2013). Classical theorists agree that the military is a fulcrum in healthy civil-military relations (Clausewitz 1989; Huntington 1957; Janowitz 1960; Sun Tzu 1971). However, evidence in Ghana before 1981, Mauritania, Niger, Guinea, Mali and Burkina Faso have shown unhealthy CMR as militaries have intervened in politics through coups (Agyekum 2022; Eshiet 2022;

Salihu 2019; Sany 2022). Furthermore, the CMR imbalances have also manifested, owing to the systemic socio-political factors.

The more civilians intervened in the military space; the more unprofessionalism sprouted. A case in point is the South African Arms deal. The South African Arms Deal was a major arms procurement programme that was meant to equip the South African National Defence Force to modernise the force in the post-apartheid era. The Arms Deal was criticised for its justifiability of the scale and cost of the package; while others questioned the strategic usefulness or prudence of specific contracts under the package, which characterised improper procurement processes, profiteering, fraud, corruption, bribery, racketeering and money laundering by bureaucrats and political elites (Mallik & Saha 2016; Seriti 2015). The situation strained the relationship of the military, the citizenry and the opposition. The Arms Deal affected military operations as equipment was bought before a thorough needs assessment to match the intentions and capabilities of the adversary.

Procurement scandals have not only strained South African civil-military relations but also those of Malawi. The public domain has allegations of abuse of power and corruption in the civil-military domain. The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) issued restriction notices on 3 November 2021 to the Malawi Defence Force from dealing with several procurement contracts, suspecting fraud and corruption (Croft et al. 2022). Such occurrences shape the outcomes of interactions among key CMR players. The outcomes would be a loss of trust and reduced legitimacy as people may become dissatisfied with the civil-military relations system and lose faith in the ability of the military to serve and deliver services and goods required for the public.

In the realm of civil-military relations, politics have a diverse systemic influence. Politics shapes the dynamics among the key CMR players as it influences the distribution of power, prioritisation of policies, military appointments, and defence budgeting. Politics affects the

level of accountability and oversight of the military, affecting good governance (Feaver 2012). In a democracy, political control is tenured, and political morality becomes a problem. Political elites venture into profiteering to recover what they lost during campaigns to consolidate power. As a result, politicisation of the military institution creeps in, resulting in polarisation, loss of trust, and ineffective decision-making among the key CMR players.

### **2.4.3 Effectiveness of Elected Authorities, Civilians, Civil Authorities, Judiciary, and Military to Maintain Healthy Civil-Military Relations**

The study qualitatively examined the effectiveness of the key CMR players in a democratic Malawi. The degree to which CMR is successful in producing a stable nation is termed CMR effectiveness (Bruneau & Tollefson 2006). Bruneau (2018), argues that there are three main requirements for civil-military relations effectiveness. The first is a defence policy or plan which defines a goal and the means to achieve it. In most cases there is an understanding of national security policy, objectives, and priorities that interplay to produce a negative or positive outcome of civil-military interaction. The effectiveness of the roles of CMR takes the democracy-building approach (Forman & Welch 1998). The effects of CMR include the voluntary restraint of the military, democratic civilian control, the essentiality of joint training of civilians and military personnel for democratisation and development, and balance of CMR through a gradual reduction of military presence as the only key state-run agency responsible for internal security and development (Bruneau & Tollefson 2006; Bryden & Olonisakin 2010; Chuter 2011; Forman & Welch 1998; Houngnikpo 2010; Pantev 2005; Siegle 2022).

This study employs the case studies of the United States of America, Argentina, Ghana, Mauritania, Guinea, Niger, Madagascar, Zimbabwe and Malawi CMR after the transition to democracy. The case studies are essential because the United States of America presents a mature democracy. Argentina and Ghana bring into the academic sphere countries that were

prone to military coups but have stabilised, whereas Mauritania, Guinea, Niger, Madagascar, and Zimbabwe were grappling with military coups during the period of this study. In contrast, Malawi only experienced a mutiny post-democracy.

Since the late 1970s, the American public has consistently rated the military with high confidence levels, compared to other U.S. institutions (Newport 2017; Williams 2017). In a 2017 Gallup Poll, 78 per cent of those surveyed rated confidence in the military as a "great deal" or "quite a lot". The same poll listed the army's role and effectiveness as a few factors for high confidence. If the American public consistently maintains such high confidence in the military, why do critics believe there is a growing divide in CMR? The growing familiarity gap between citizens and the military resulted in increasing levels of ignorance about the role and engagement of the U.S. military, despite the support and respect the public maintains for the military.

Further unprecedented support and lack of familiarity created a situation where force could be used increasingly liberally without public oversight (Schafer 2017; Williams 2017). As a result, the American public is largely unaware of military decisions and operations until they become controversies and tragedies. For example, before the death of four United States of America troops in Niger in October 2017, many Americans were unaware of U.S. military involvement in Africa (Williams 2017). The combination of ignorance and admiration for the military is a civil-military relations problematique and could lead to unexamined risks, and the public dissociating itself from defence issues. This dissonance illustrates that perception of effectiveness, rather than knowledge of effectiveness, drives the public to have an accidental confidence in the military. This study filled the gap in society's understanding of the military and how it can influence the confidence levels of society over the military.

Argentina is a crucial case study in civil-military relations for several reasons. The military dictatorship in Argentina was arguably the most repressive and brutal of several military dictatorships in the region (Bruneau & Matei 2013). For this reason, the Argentinean military experiences stigma from the civilian political elite. Under these historical circumstances, much of the political energy and efforts of the democratic transition period between 1983 and 1990 dealt with the military, mainly preventing the success of several attempted military coups (Bruneau & Matei 2013).

Serious reform of civil-military relations began in 2003 when Nestor Kirchner (1950-2010) became president, and he never made significant accomplishments in anything beyond asserting civilian control of the armed forces. The period saw the establishment of an elaborate legal basis, the civilian-led Ministry of Defence was strengthened, and gradually the civilians assumed control over central areas of national security and defence policy. However, the effectiveness of civil-military relations of the institutions that control the military remains weak and civilian expertise is limited, mainly because civilians in the MoD are not hired permanently and cannot acquire and consolidate defence and security knowledge (Bruneau & Matei 2013).

Furthermore, while democratic civilian control over the armed forces has been implemented and consolidated to a certain extent, military effectiveness is an extremely low priority. The armed forces are limited to external defence and only against state actors. The potential roles of the military are severely restricted in peace support operations (PSO) and military support to civilian authorities in natural disasters (Bruneau & Matei 2013). It is evident from this case study that Argentina's CMR is aimed at restricting the coercion of military power. Instead of integrating CMR, the Argentine politburo seems to be scared of the power that the military holds. The disintegrative role of the Argentinean elected authorities may be a causal factor for unhealthy CMR that may present potential security threats.

Recent military coups in African countries such as Mauritania, Guinea, and Niger and the military intervention in Madagascar remind us that some military leaders have failed to read the “no-more-coup” memorandum or refuse to heed the African Union’s clear and loud message regarding military takeovers on the continent. Traditional excuses used to topple civilian leaders continue to prevail. In the first years of independence, there were high hopes that the end of colonialism would bring freedom, social regeneration, and rapid economic growth. Unfortunately, this never materialised. Instead, Africa confronted many problems, including frequent military coups (Decalo 1976; Eshiet 2022; Hounnikpo 2010; Sany 2022).

Those who question democracy perceive that military institutions must have a dominant role in society through the politicisation of the military. Others perceive the absence of coups as a military role in a healthy CMR. However, the notion of no coups should not equate to good health. The mere elevation of the military to a level of ‘sacrosanctity’ in public discourse and creating an environment where the military can pick and choose which policies to heed is unhealthy (Chuter 2011; Finer 2002; Owens 2012; Williams 2017). Conversely, in Zimbabwe, military intervention in state affairs resulted in the politicisation of the military. Instead of protecting the sovereigns, the military sided with the regime, in some cases violating human rights of the citizens (Hlatywayo & Mangongera 2020).

Hutchful’s (2008) and Salihu’s (2019) studies of Ghana’s military governance revealed great strides in democratisation against the backdrop that Ghana accumulated an unusual record of militarism and political instability between the 1960s and 1980s, with a string of successful coups (in 1966, 1972, 1979 and 1981) and countless failed attempts. However, Ghana has arrested and reversed the CMR imbalance to a reasonably robust democracy. Ghana underwent a restructuring of the security sector to achieve civilian control of the armed forces. The president exercises overall control of the security services, appointing service chiefs and senior

commanders in consultation with the Council of State and service councils. The president also makes appointments to the NSC, the Council of State, and the three service councils. The administration and operational command and control of the services rest with the chiefs of the individual services, subject to the control and direction of the service councils on policy matters. To ensure strong links with the apex of the government, the secretary of the cabinet also acts as secretary of the NSC.

Ghana emphasised the centrality of discipline in the military. Groups within the military perceived to be a source of indiscipline were eliminated. The military also introduced a forum for expressing grievances known as “the monthly durbar,” an overhaul of the military judicial system and a reinforced appeal to model soldierly values. The military leadership further emphasised that soldiers must live by rules and regulations. These values were instilled in the soldiers during their training at the Recruit Training Centre (RTC) and the military academies. Ghana further introduced PME to attract high-quality personnel into the military to improve the professional standards of the institution. Recruitment is representational of ethnic groups so that no group would feel superior (Agyekum 2022; Hutchful 2008). In his landmark study, Hutchful (2008) concludes that the quality of security sector governance has improved in Ghana. However, the prevailing mechanisms remain fragile, and reform of the security sector does not seem to be a priority. This reflects a gap that must be addressed between formal institution building and the need to transform informal power relations within the country for greater democratisation (Cleary & McConville 2006). In Malawi, the lack of comprehensive security sector reforms (SSR) has impeded viable CMR. Chirwa (2015) proposes that security sector reform in Malawi would improve CMR and transition the country to a greater democratisation.

Seemingly, all these reforms indicate the democratisation of Ghana. The enforcement of civil control, discipline, education, and recruitment is a form of military governance system that pervades rule by patronage and misuse of the governing instrument of coercion to entrench political and social exclusion, to preserve regimes rather than the state and its citizens. In this regard, the Ghana case study informed the Malawi study on the importance of merit-based promotions, representational recruitments, education, and discipline in ensuring the effectiveness of the role of CMR in democratisation. Furthermore, the study focused on filling the gap between formal institutional building and the need to transform informal power relations in Malawi.

Malawi exudes knowledge gaps in CMR, yet people applaud the military for the absence of militarisation and political instability. While the quality of military governance is evolving, the prevailing mechanisms remain fragile, and reforms do not seem to be a priority (Chirwa 2015). Phiri (2008) and Charman (2015), in their studies of Malawi's CMR, reveal that since 1994, there have been significant security reforms, such as the disbanding the repressive PMF and outlawing the draconian security legislation that allowed security forces a wide range of human rights violations. Civilian military control was adopted by appointing a parliamentary Defence and Security Committee and creating a Ministry of Defence. The Law Commission reviewed the Malawi Army Act to align it with democratic norms.

However, transitions bring unique problems to CMR. The case of Kenya where political elites, business persons and bureaucrats captured the business environment with tenderpreneurship, put the nation on a path of unhealthy CMR (Ouma & Shilungu 2022). The term 'tenderpreneurship' describes a new class of insiders who use contacts to corruptly benefit from the public procurement process. The term tenderpreneur first popped up during the rule of Thabo Mbeki in South Africa (Piper & Charman 2018). Tenderpreneurs are neither

entrepreneurs, development specialists, nor project managers. Nevertheless, tenderpreneurs pose a serious procurement threat to ethics in public procurement. Studies by Mallik and Saha (2016) have indicated that tenderpreneurship raises relative prices of commodities above 20%. Defence procurement needs expertise in procurement, which is ethical. Procurement management entails upholding ethical procedures and maintaining a correct procedural approach that aims at ensuring the best quality and value for money. However, bid rigging, tenderpreneurism, political arm-twisting, fraud, corruption, fronting and insider deals are regularly cited as catalysing the erosion of value in the public procurement system (Mallik & Saha 2016). Lack of expertise and an unprofessional approach to procurement through the use of supplier-connected bidders pose significant professional challenges, necessitating the penetration of unethical activities in militaries. The negative procurement procedures are a case that needs an academic interrogation of its effect on the state of CMR in a democratic Malawi.

Scholars for Malawi CMR have focused on the historical context of power relations between the military and politicians, and the challenges of civilian control, excluding the consequences of the interaction and effectiveness of the key CMR players (Charman 2015; Phiri 2008). Phiri (2008) focused on the civilian control of the military and the relationship between the executive and the legislature in military oversight. Phiri (2008), in the study of constitutional challenges of CMR in Malawi, revealed that power relations between the executive and legislature contribute to various challenges in a democracy. Phiri (2008) argued that presidential powers remain the dominating factor in the country's CMR and go unchecked despite embracing democratic principles.

Charman's (2015) study brings out three salient issues on the CMR of Malawi, despite presenting institutional reforms. Charman (2015) portends that since 1994, evidence emerged that the army's respect for the 'supremacy of democratic civilian government' and its tolerance

of the emerging civil society was not unshakeable. The incidents worth considering in evaluating the future internal development of the Malawi military towards the democratic ideals of an apolitical, internationally operable, professional institution had started to emerge. Firstly, the supposed army mutiny engineered by the late Lieutenant Colonel James Njoloma, and secondly, the raid on the Daily Times Newspaper. The murder of Army Commander General Manken Chigawa in April 1995 shocked the nation and drew attention to the rise in crime and civil disorder following the democratic transition. To critics, this meant Malawi's civil-military relations were bleak and needed a reset. The literature of Charman (2015) reveals the effectiveness gap between key players in civil-military relations as the effectiveness CMR strand was not covered in his work. Charman's (2015) work has a cut-off time of 1998, further exposing a gap to cover the effectiveness of CMR towards the democratisation of Malawi, a gap this study endeavoured to cover.

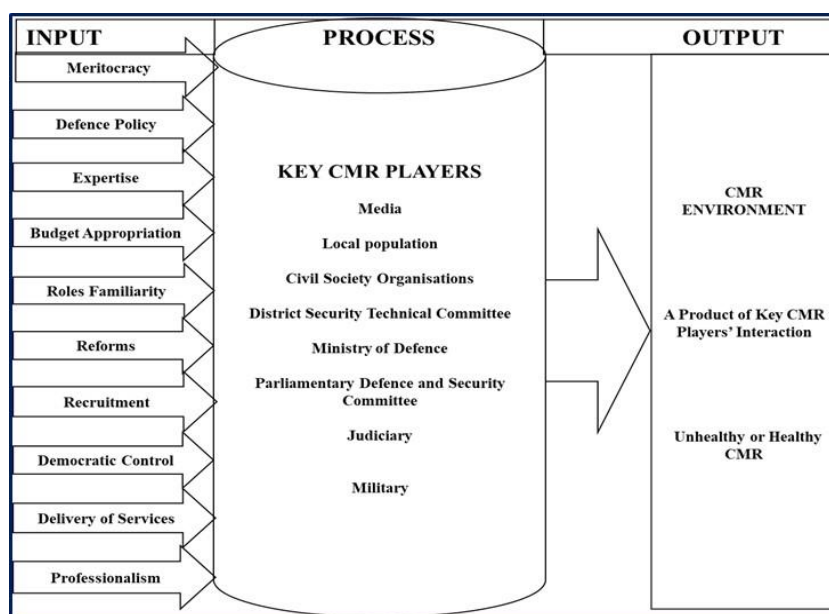
Charman (2015) noted that the public perceives the Malawi military as one national security institution independent of politics. The public, however, wants the military to be involved in many internal security operations due to its professionalism and competence. There has been a spate of operations where the military has been involved in curbing crimes of armed robbery, civil unrest, human trafficking and ritual killings, to mention a few. All of these have had severe consequences on the human and material resources of the nation, hence the inevitability of military involvement in the country's internal security. However, the problem confronting the military is a participation overload (role overload) where the military has become *a go-to tool* whenever internal security issues arise. The trend is likely to wear down internal security organisations, rendering them useless at the expense of taxpayers' money. The increased presence of the military in the public domain rather than the line internal security organisations is a setback in a democracy. Pantev (2005) and Houngnikpo (2010) assert that reduced military presence in the constabulary duties is a sign of healthy civil-military relations. This study

sought to discover the perceptions of key civil-military relations players on the increased roles of the military at the expense of the core internal security organisations.

## **2.5 Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual frameworks in civil-military relations provide essential lenses through which the dynamics between civilian authorities and military institutions can be understood. This framework sets a foundation in analysing how power is distributed, exercised, and contested within a democratic Malawi. The framework is based on the civil-military relations inclusion of direct and indirect dealings that people and institutions have with the military (Yousef 2012). This comprises legislative negotiation over the funding, regulation, and use of the military, as well as complex bargaining between civilian and military elites to define and implement national security and military policy. These relationships vary in form and consequence depending on the sort of state they are found in: strong democratic or weak authoritarian states, developed or under-developed states, or in states at war or in peace (Yousef 2012; Williams 2017; Newport 2017). Yousef (2012) and Bruneau (2018) expand on this point, explaining that all nations will have differing civil-military relations, though they will share many common features because each society has a different culture and faces different issues and challenges in the international arena. As such, there is a strong case for avoiding any overarching framework about civil-military relations. Herein lies a significant gap in the literature as there was much writing on civil-military relations in the 1960s and 1970s, yet recent studies on the subject have been few and far between, and most have focused on civil-military relations in the context of established democracies. For the few that have included new democratic regimes, there is a distinct lack of a conceptual framework to guide the research; rather, it is analysed on a case by case basis, hence this study was guided by a modified input-process-output (IPO) business and management model to underpin civil-military relations.

The IPO model is a framework used to understand and analyse systems, processes, and relationships in business and management studies (Zelle 2010). The input in this IPO model is the information that enters the CMR system, which are independent variables. A civil-military relations based on meritocracy, expertise, professionalism and familiarity of each other's roles lies on a strong foundation of mutual trust and respect among the stakeholders resulting in a stable nation. Likewise, the type of oversight exercised over the military in areas of recruitment, reforms, budget appropriation, delivery of goods and services, reforms and civilian control affects the civil-military relations key actors. The process is the interaction of the key CMR players within the CMR system (dependent variable) that converts inputs into outputs. The interaction of the media, local population, civil society organisations, District Security Technical Committee, Ministry of Defence, Defence and Security Committee of the Parliament, judiciary and the military after the inputs determines the outcome and state of the civil-military relations in a particular environment. The state of the civil-military relations in this framework is the output which is the result, products or services that the system generates which can either be a healthy or unhealthy civil-military relations (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1: Input-Process-Output Conceptual Framework**

*Source: Modified from Huntington, (1957); Schiff, (1995); Pantev, (2005); Zelle, (2010)*

The conceptual framework is drawn from the literature that revealed the divergent roles of elected authorities, civil authorities, civilians, the judiciary, and the military. The civilians were added to fill the literature gap, realising that civilians have become an important part in balancing the democratic centres of power. The conceptual framework determines that the degree of success of a healthy CMR is measured in the positivity of the roles with the democratic civilian control of the military, professionalism, expertise and cooperation as key factors (Huntington 1957; Pantev 2005; Schiff 1995).

In this IPO model, the measure of effectiveness is achieved when the elected authorities, civil authorities, civilians, judiciary and the military harmonise in shaping the defence policy, provide expertise in the noncore military issues such as budget appropriation, provision of different views, interpretation of laws, validating military interventions, voluntary restraint of the military, joint training, reduction of military presence, restructuring and prioritising reforms, and provision of professional military education. When the measures of effectiveness are absent or negative, the result is an imbalance and unhealthy civil-military relations that lead to military interventions in politics. The use of the IPO framework helped identify the relationship between inputs, processes and outputs, allowing a better understanding of how key CMR players interact and impact each other.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

The theoretical framework integrated the Institutional and the Concordance Theories to bridge the gaps in each theory. On one hand, Institutional Theory succinctly checks the institutional power relations between the political elites and the military. On the other hand, Concordance Theory buttresses the Huntingtonian Western-centric CMR knowledge with the contextual Afrocentric views that inform Malawi's study in space and time. The integration of the separate

roles of institutions and the concordance of the history, culture and partnerships interrogated and harmonised the hybrid approach towards CMR in Malawi.

The empirical literature exposed key performance indicators' gaps in CMR that turned into focused variables for the study. The literature further exposed the factors that determine the equilibrium of the CMR, which are building stable human resources and structures, specialisation to develop expertise, merit-based promotions and appointments, joint training and education, and military professionalisation. The empirical literature further exposed the generic themes of the roles of elected authorities, civil authorities, civilians, the judiciary, and the military effectiveness.

The literature further revealed the roles' effectiveness problematic that brings civil-military tensions, such as expertise of the civil society, media, think tanks, research institutes, and the power relationships of institutions. The literature further indicates the politicisation of the military, familiarity gap, blurred bureaucracies of the polity and the military, the military culture and participation overload, to be factors that affect CMR stability. Through the synthesis of the theoretical and empirical variables from the Institutional and Concordance Theories and the landmark studies, a modified IPO framework was created to govern this study. The next Chapter presents the methodology employed to generate and analyse data.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This Chapter provides a detailed methodology of the study. The Chapter elucidates the research design coherently and logically to address the problem statement. It covers the study area, population, sample frame, data collection methods, data analysis methods, ethical considerations, and study period. The Chapter concludes with a prologue to Chapter Four.

### **3.2 Study Design**

This was an exploratory research design and a mixed-methods design. Exploratory research design is an approach that investigates research questions that have not been previously studied in depth (Swedberg 2020). A mixed-method design combines both quantitative and qualitative methods to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of a research phenomenon (Creswell 2003; Davidson 2003; De Vaus 2001). A mixed-method research design was employed to coherently and logically integrate the factors that maintain civil-military relations in equilibrium, consequences of the interactions of key civil-military relations actors, effectiveness of the key civil-military relations actors and the framework for the management of civil-military relations in Malawi. The exploratory research design and the mixed-method design ensured an effective address of the systemic problems facing civil-military relations in Malawi. The mixed-method research design was applicable because the study had a specific objective one, which used an explanatory sequential mixed-method, and specific objectives two, three and four used qualitative methods (Kumar 2019).

### **3.3 Philosophical View**

The philosophical viewpoint that underpinned this research is a transformative worldview. The transformative worldview holds that research inquiry needs to be intertwined with politics and a political change agenda to confront oppression at whatever level it occurs (Creswell, 2018;

Freire 2000). A transformative worldview refers to a fundamental shift in how individuals and societies perceive and understand the world, themselves, and their place within the world. The shift leads to profound changes in values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours. Characteristics of the transformative worldview include new perspectives, shifts in value, changes in behaviour, increased awareness, and empowerment. A transformative worldview involves adopting new perspectives or challenging existing perspectives. The shift in value leads to changes in values and prioritising new principles and ethics. A transformative worldview also inspires changes in behaviour, and individuals or societies strive to align their actions with their new values and perspectives. The shift further involves an increased awareness of socio-political, environmental, or economic issues. A transformative worldview further empowers individuals or communities to take action and create positive change (Romm 2015).

This study employed the transformative worldview philosophy due to the political system change from autocracy to democracy in Malawi. The change from autocracy meant that the values and principles that support or justify autocratic systems of government where power is concentrated in the hands of one person or a small coterie, are challenged. A shift to democracy meant that democratic core principles such as popular sovereignty, free and fair elections, protection of individual rights, separation of powers, and the rule of law were embraced. The employment of a transformative worldview in civil-military relations in Malawi was beneficial for improved communication. The transformative view fosters open and honest communication among key CMR players, and by considering different perspectives, key CMR players gain a deeper understanding of each other's needs, concerns, and roles. This view is essential for problem-solving and building mutual trust between civilians and military personnel required for national security (Kjellén & Wong 2023).

### **3.4 Study Area**

The study was carried out in the administrative districts of Karonga, Mzimba, Kasungu, Lilongwe, Zomba, and Blantyre. The total population of the six administrative districts in 2023 was estimated at 4,364,599 (Malawi Government 2023). The six districts have military cantonments of the Malawi Defence Force, the judiciary, the district administrative headquarters, political constituencies, and the local population composed of farmers, traders, artisans, public and private sector employees, and community leaders who were critical in data provision. The areas were conveniently selected because the population frequently interacted with the military, hence, they might have a better understanding of CMR. Karonga district has Chilumba Barracks in Karonga-Nyungwe constituency. Mzimba district has Moyale Barracks in the Mzuzu City constituency. Kasungu district has an Engineers Battalion in the Kasungu South East constituency. Lilongwe has Kamuzu Barracks and Lilongwe Airbase in Lilongwe City South and Lilongwe Kumachenga constituencies, respectively. Zomba has Cobbe Barracks and Zomba Airbase in Zomba Central constituency, and Chungalume Barracks in Zomba Chingale and Zomba Chungalume constituencies. Blantyre has the Blantyre Army Camp in the Blantyre City East constituency. Figure 2 provides a map showing study areas.

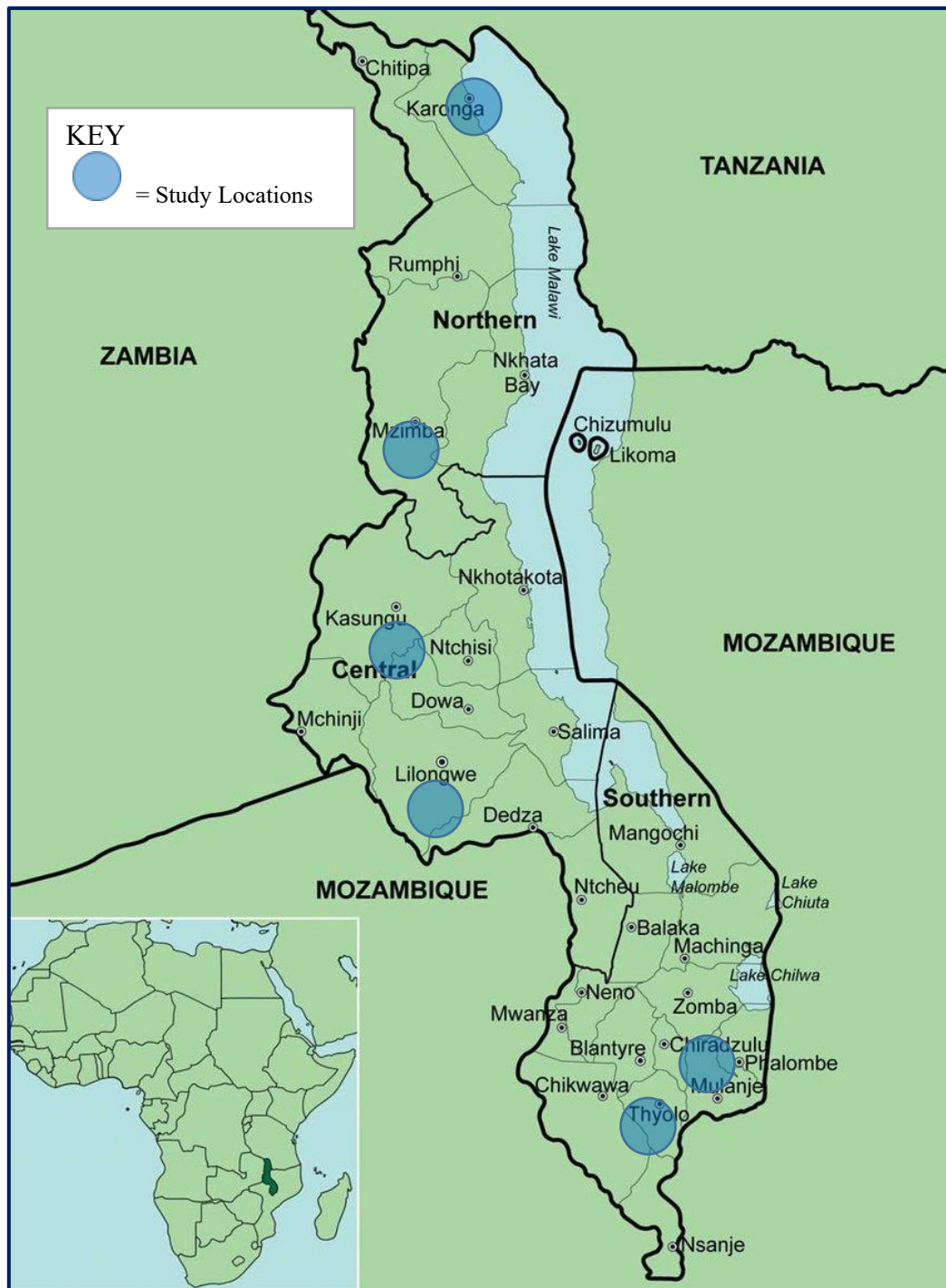


Figure 2: Map of Malawi Showing Study Areas

*Source: Modified from Malawi Department of Survey (2022)*

### 3.5 Study Population and Frame

The study drew population from the six purposively selected administrative districts of Karonga, Mzimba, Kasungu, Lilongwe, Zomba and Blantyre. The study involved the

incumbent Members of Parliament (MPs) and the Parliamentary Defence and Security Committee (DSC) as elected authorities. Elected authorities are critical in CMR as they play an oversight role. MPs provide political leadership at the constituency level as such, they interact with the military, judiciary, elected authorities, and civilians as their constituents.

Serving Judges drawn from Mzimba, Lilongwe, Zomba and Blantyre represented the judiciary. Karonga and Kasungu did not have judges during the period of this study. Judges were conveniently targeted for the study because they interact with the military, the elected authorities, civil authorities, and civilians in their role to deliver the rule of law and justice. Judges were chosen due to their role in validating military operations, hence capable of enforcing human rights required for democratisation.

The civilians' cluster sample covered CSOs that are involved in governance advocacy, media practitioners, and the local population. Media practitioners, civil society organisations (CSOs) and the local population represented by traders, artisans, private sector employees and community leaders as civilians formed part of the study population. The civilian component was critical as they offer alternative views to civil-military systems. The local population was purposively involved because they hire the elected authorities and hence can represent themselves if they deem their political leaders are failing to deliver the political goods and services.

Each administrative district has a DSTC composed of the District Commissioner (DC) as Chairperson, District Intelligence Officer (DIO) as Secretary, District Commander of MDF, District Police Officer-In-Charge (OC), District Immigration Officer, District Prisons Officer and any other co-opted member. As such, a DSTC from each administrative district, and MoD represented a civil authorities' cluster sample. The MoD and DSTC were chosen because they interact with the military and vice versa, from a national to a local level.

Military personnel from the study areas were represented because they interact with the citizenry in providing security. The condition of a particular CMR posture is primarily a result of how the military interacts with the citizenry. As such, the military was represented with platoon strength in the six selected administrative districts as the smallest unit that deploys independently.

### 3.6 Sample Size

The Slovin statistics formula and proportional probability sampling techniques were used since the target population was known. The Slovin formula is shown below (equation 1);

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e)^2}$$

Equation (1)

Where  $n$  is the sample size,  $N$  is the population size and  $e$  is the margin of error. From the sample, 386 questionnaires were completed successfully [for both the local population and the other population]. Consequently, the response rate exceeded the required 338 respondents after accounting for the 10% non-response rate. The sample increase provided more statistical power that helped to detect significant relationships in the data.

Table 1 presents the quantitative data sample size, detailing the distribution of participants across different clusters. A total of 587 individuals were identified as part of the population, from which a sample size of 238 respondents was selected. The Malawi Defence Force constitutes the largest cluster, making up 57.92% of the total population, with a sample size of 138 respondents. Members of Parliament represent 11.75% of the population, with 28 participants sampled. Media practitioners form 8.35% of the population, with 20 participants selected, while Judges make up 8.01%, with 19 respondents included in the sample.

Smaller clusters include the District Security Technical Committee, which accounts for 6.13% of the population with 15 participants sampled, and the Ministry of Defence, contributing 5.11% of the population with 12 respondents. The Civil Society Organisations represent the smallest group, comprising 2.73% of the population, with six participants included in the sample. In addition, the sample calculation for the local population was done separately at a 10% margin of error because the population size was large (4,364,012). The determined sample size for the local population was 100. This distribution ensures a representative sample across various stakeholders, allowing for comprehensive quantitative data analysis.

**Table 1: Quantitative Data Sample Size**

<b>NO</b>	<b>CLUSTER</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>PROPORTION (%)</b>	<b>n</b>
1	Members of Parliament	69	11.75	28
2	Media Practitioners	49	8.35	20
3	Civil Society Organisations	16	2.73	6
4	Ministry of Defence	30	5.11	12
5	District Security Technical Committee	36	6.13	15
6	Malawi Defence Force	340	57.92	138
7	Judges	47	8.01	19
	<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>238</b>
8	Local Population	4,364,012	100.00	100
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			<b>338</b>

### **3.7 Sampling Technique**

A cluster sampling technique was used where participants were selected from different clusters of the population. The population of interest was those who interacted with the military. The

population was then divided into clusters based on geographic location, occupation, institution, and the level of interaction with the military. A simple random technique was used to select participants after the population was proportioned.

### 3.8 Qualitative Sample Size

On the other hand, a sample for objectives two and three from the key informants was 65, which was realised after reaching a saturation point during data collection. The participants were randomly selected from the clusters and included the local population. The multiple data sources afforded triangulation of the data. Data became repetitive and no new information and codes emerged beyond 50 interviews. Fifteen more interviews to reach 65 were conducted to validate and ascertain the redundancy of information. Participants provided similar responses regardless of the cluster. Saturation was reached when data collection provided sufficient information to develop a comprehensive understanding of the consequences and effectiveness of civil-military relations (See Table 2 for the qualitative data sample size).

**Table 2: Qualitative Data Sample Size**

<b>SERIAL</b>	<b>KEY INFORMANT</b>	<b>KEY INFORMANTS SAMPLE</b>
1	Members of Parliament	9
2	Media Practitioners	7
3	Civil Society Organisations	9
4	Ministry of Defence	3
5	District Security Technical Committee	11
6	Malawi Defence Force	10
7	Judges	4
8	Local Population	12
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>65</b>

### **3.9 Data Collection Methods**

The methods to implement this exploratory research were a literature search, expert surveys, which are also called key informational conversations, and case analysis (Kumar 2019). A literature search afforded a systematic search to identify, evaluate, and synthesise theory and landmark studies on CMR. The expert surveys helped to gather information and opinions from the key CMR players' expertise in their respective domains. A case analysis helped to identify key issues, facts, and stakeholders in CMR. The chosen methods helped to quantitatively and qualitatively interrogate factors that maintain CMR in equilibrium, consequences of the interaction and the effectiveness of key CMR players in a democratic Malawi. The respective quantitative and qualitative data collection methods are further explained in the succeeding paragraphs.

#### **3.9.1 Quantitative Survey**

Data for the first objective was primarily collected through face-to-face and email surveys. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from respondents to assess the factors that can keep CMR in equilibrium in Malawi (see Appendix 1). Kobo Toolbox was used to collect and manage data for objective one. The Kobo Toolbox afforded offline data collection, where data was collected without internet connectivity, and online survey where a link to the survey through email was shared with the participants using a smartphone. The Kobo Toolbox provided a global positioning system (GPS) location tracking to verify the correctness of the study areas and offline data syncing that afforded real-time data collection and transmission (Nampa et al. 2020). The independent variables measured in the structured questionnaire were eight. These included merit-based promotions; merit-based appointments; representational recruitment; joint training; reforms of the military institution; specialisation on defence matters; professionalisation of the military; and delivery of goods and services. The 5-point Likert Scale

was used as the response tool to the questions, where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree.

### **3.9.2 Key Informants Interviews**

Data for objectives two and three were primarily collected using an interview guide to have extensive interaction with the people being studied, allowing the researcher to uncover unexpected and unanticipated information (Wong 2008). An interview guide was administered face-to-face, and phone calls were made to the potential respondents (see Appendix 2). The sample size was 65, which was reached after a saturation point in data collection. Fifty interviews were conducted face-to-face, and 15 interviews were conducted through phone calls. A recorder and interview checklist were used to aid data collection.

### **3.10 Data Analysis and Tools**

The first objective was analysed quantitatively. Descriptive and inferential statistics analyses were used. For descriptive statistics, means and standard deviation were calculated. Correlation and multiple linear regression were used to show the relationship between independent and dependent variables in SPSS Version 20.

#### **3.10.1 Quantitative Data Analysis Model Specification**

Quantitative data was analysed using a multiple regression model. A multiple regression model is a statistical technique that uses several explanatory variables to predict the outcome of a response variable (Keith 2015). A multiple linear regression model was adopted to model the linear relationship between the explanatory (independent) variables and the response (dependent) variable. The multiple regression model was employed to test the following hypotheses.

- i) Ha 1: Merit-based promotions significantly influence the military as a balancer in civil-military relations and precondition to democratisation

- ii) Ha 2: Merit-based appointments significantly influence the military as a balancer in civil-military relations and precondition to democratisation
- iii) Ha 3: Representation recruitment significantly influences the military as a balancer in civil-military relations and precondition to democratisation
- iv) Ha 4: Joint trainings significantly influence the military as a balancer in civil-military relations and precondition to democratisation
- v) Ha 5: Reforms of the military institutions significantly influence the military as a balancer in civil-military relations and precondition to democratisation
- vi) Ha 6: Specialisation in defence matters significantly influences the military as a balancer in civil-military relations and precondition to democratisation
- vii) Ha 7: Professionalisation of the military significantly influences the military as a balancer in civil-military relations and precondition to democratisation
- viii) Ha 8: Delivery of goods and services significantly influences the military as a balancer in civil-military relations and precondition to democratisation.

The following model (equation 1) was derived and applied for this study:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7 + \beta_8 X_8 + e$$

Equation (1)

Where: Y = the military is a balancer in civil-military relations and a precondition to democratisation

$x_1$  = merit-based promotions

$x_2$  = merit-based appointments

$x_3$  = representational recruitment

$x_4$  = joint training

$x_5$  = reforms of the military institution

$x_6$  = specialisation on defence matters

$x_7$  = professionalisation of the military

$x_8$  = delivery of goods and services

$Y$  = dependent variable

$e$  = Error term

$x_1, x_2, \dots, x_8$  = independent variables

$\beta_0$  = Intercept (Constant term)

$\beta_1, \dots, \beta_8$  = parameters of model

### **3.10.2 Reliability of the Instrument**

Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Table 3) was calculated to determine the reliability of the independent variables. Reliability tests assume that the unidimensional assumption holds. Therefore, these tests were conducted on each independent variable as opposed to across all variables. Cronbach's alpha coefficient test for measurement error: as reliability increases, measurement error decreases. A criterion of 0.7 and above is generally considered acceptable (Agresti 2012). Applying the criteria of Cronbach's alpha coefficient test for reliability, all variables (Table 3) were reliable.

**Table 3: Reliability Coefficient of Variables**

VARIABLES	CRONBACH'S ALPHA COEFFICIENT
Merit-based promotions of military personnel	.880
Merit-based appointments of military personnel	.879
Joint training between the citizenry, government officials and military personnel	.904
Representational recruitment of military personnel	.891
Reforms of the military institution	.879
The specialisation of key civil-military relations players on defence matters	.884
Professionalisation through professional military education	.874
Delivery of public goods and services by the military	.896

*Source: Own Survey Data SPSS Output (2023)*

### 3.10.3 Qualitative Data Analysis

Secondary data from the literature was analysed using content analysis as guided by Hunter (2014) and Creswell (2018). Content analysis as a systematic method of analysing and interpreting texts, images, and other forms of communication, was crucial in identifying patterns, themes and meanings within the data content. Primary data for objectives two and three, collected from in-depth interviews, was analysed qualitatively using NVivo version 14, analytical software as follows (Wong 2008):

Step 1            Data transcription. Responses from in-depth interviews were transcribed before distinguishing patterns for coding.

- Step 2            Data coding. This step involved building nodes and child nodes that expanded as data was worked on.
- Step 3            Building themes. This step mapped the main themes, created more child nodes as appropriate, and mapped various interconnections. Literature was called during this step to ascertain the themes and categories. Themes were generated through an inductive method of content analysis. Patterns were identified and the following themes were drawn: defence policy, expertise, budget appropriation, alternative views, interpretation of laws, military interventions, voluntary restraint, joint training, military presence, reforms, professionalism, and civilian control.
- Step 4            Content analysis. This step involved building and verifying theories. Data was analysed over and over and interpreted for credibility.
- Step 5            Concluding. Given the expected magnitude of the findings that the researcher could share, the decision was made to the most significant conclusions that link the study's main objective, specific objectives, and research questions most compellingly and credibly.

In addition to the latter, objectives two, three and four used stakeholder analysis of the key CMR players. The stakeholder analysis was based on the needs, effects, and key performance indicators of the CMR players (Bourne 2012). Objective four was analysed using the synthesis of objectives one, two and three to create a framework for contextual civil-military relations management (Creswell 2018). Synthesis of objective four involved data integration from the three objectives to form a cohesive civil-military relations management framework in a democratic Malawi. The synthesis involved pattern identification where themes and relationships were identified, meaning of the data was made through interpretation of findings, consequently developing the framework by identifying underlying relationships and principles that explain contribution of civil-military relations phenomena in Malawi

### 3.11 Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations were taken into account to ensure the protection of rights, dignity and well-being of the participants; to ensure validity, and build trust of the researcher and participants; to prevent harm to participants and to promote responsible research practices and accountability (Creswell 2018). The following research ethics were considered:

- a. Ethical clearance of the research proposal with Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee (MZUNIREC) was done to ensure that the research was approved and aligned with MZUNI policies and guidelines. The MZUNIREC issued the research ethics and regulatory approval and permit for protocol Ref No: MZUNIREC/DOR/23/62 on 12 June 2023 (see Appendix 3).
- b. Participants were allowed to give informed consent before the interviews. Participants were informed about the purpose, objectives and methods of the study. Due to the positionality of the lead researcher during the time of this study, a Commanding Officer at Moyale Barracks in Mzuzu City, and research assistants were used to collect data. Data collection by the lead researcher could compromise the consent as participants could flock to participate in the interview to appease the lead researcher as their leader.
- c. Participants were free to withdraw from the study at any point. They were told that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. During the study, attrition was observed as one participant complained of the lengthy time of the interviews as he purportedly said he was losing money for giving such a lengthy interview and wished he had billed the interviewer. The participant eventually withdrew from the interview.

- d. Any data reported referring to individuals was anonymised. Participants were informed about how the data was collected using a recorder, stored and protected to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. Each one of the eight clusters was assigned an alphabetical letter code from ‘S’ to ‘Z’ for the principle of anonymity.

### 3.12 Study Limitations

The study encountered limitations that were mitigated as tabulated in Table 4 below:

**Table 4: Limitations and Mitigating Measures**

SERIAL	LIMITATION	MITIGATION
1	Gatekeepers in organisations of the CMR stakeholders.	Informed written consent from all involved parties was obtained (see Appendix 4). Focal point personnel in the organisations were identified and helped in data collection
2	Work programmes clashed with the research.	Conducted research activities outside work programmes. Research assistants were deployed for data collection.
3	Value-ridden by institutional, cognitive, cultural, emotional, and personal biases.	Asceticism through self-restraint and emotional intelligence awareness was practised. Self-imposed periodic peer reviews were conducted. Publications helped in accessing peer review from reputable journal editors. Periodic conferences were conducted, for example at Command and Staff College in Salima, Malawi and a virtual conference with Africa International Society for Military Ethics.
4.	Lack of interest from the respondents to respond to CMR issues that were deemed sensitive	Multiple data collection tools were employed such as face-to-face interviews, phone calls and emails.

### **3.13 Dissemination of the Results**

Results were disseminated to MZUNI and MDF HQ. Further, three publications were disseminated to key civil-military relations stakeholders and were made accessible to the public through social media platforms and journal outlets. Three conferences were conducted for both dissemination and validation of the results. One conference was conducted at Malawi Defence Force Command and Staff College in Salima. Second conference was conducted at Kamuzu Barracks in Lilongwe. The third conference was conducted at Moyale Barracks in Mzuzu where key informants were invited. The conferences offered a platform to share the research findings, receive feedback and learn from other experts in the field of civil-military relations.

### **3.14 Conclusion**

This cross-sectional study adopted a mixed-method research paradigm. The mixed-method research was ideal because the study had four objectives. Such a multi-layered investigation required using a mixed method. The first objective was quantitative and aimed to correlate the relationship of the variables that affect the CMR to be in equilibrium. Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) was used to test the levels of relationship between the variables. Regression model was used to analyse data. The instrument used was reliable as the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients of all independent variables were greater than 0.70.

The succeeding two objectives were analysed qualitatively using content analysis. NVivo version 14 analytical software was used. Data was processed through coding, evaluation, analysis, integration and interpretation. The last objective was analysed by synthesising the first three objectives through data integration, pattern identification, making meaning of the data and development of the framework for civil-military relations management. The next Chapter presents the results of the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents the results of the study. The results were guided by the following objectives; assessing the factors that can keep civil-military relations in equilibrium in Malawi; analysing the consequences of interaction of the elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities, the judiciary and the military in civil-military relations in Malawi; and examining the effectiveness of the elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities, the judiciary and the military towards democratisation in Malawi.

### 4.2 Factors Keeping Civil-Military Relations in Equilibrium in Malawi

Table 5 shows that the overall mean value of the military as a balancer in civil-military computed based on the Likert scale was 3.54 with a standard deviation of 1.062.

**Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation of Exploratory Variables**

Dependent Variable	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
The military is a balancer in civil-military relations and a precondition to democratisation (Mean of the exploratory variables)	386	3.54	1.062

*Source: Own Survey Data SPSS Output, (2023)*

#### 4.2.1 Correlation Analysis Findings

Correlation analysis was performed to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables. Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) was used to test the levels of relationship between the variables (Table 6). It can be seen in Table 6 that merit-based promotions of military personnel, merit-based appointments of military personnel, joint training between the citizenry, government officials and military personnel; representational recruitment of military personnel; reforms of the military institution; specialisation of key civil-military relations players on defence matters; professionalisation through professional military

education; and delivery of public goods and services by the military have a strong association with the military as a balancer, with significance at  $p=0.000$  with  $r=.817$ ,  $r=.831$ ,  $r=.591$ ,  $r=.712$ ,  $r=.822$ ,  $r=.786$ ,  $r=.863$  and  $r=.703$ , respectively.

**Table 6: Correlation Between Variables**

<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Merit-based promotions of military personnel	.817	.000
Merit-based appointments of military personnel	.831	.000
Joint training between the citizenry, government officials and military personnel	.591	.000
Representational recruitment of military personnel	.712	.000
Reforms of the military institution	.822	.000
The specialisation of key civil-military relations players on defence matters	.786	.000
Professionalisation through professional military education	.863	.000
Delivery of public goods and services by the military	.703	.000

*Source: Own Survey Data SPSS Output (2023)*

#### **4.2.2 Regression Analysis Findings**

As shown in Table 7, the model's adjusted R square ( $R^2$ ) is 1.000. This means that 100% of the variance of the dependent variable (military as a balancer in civil-military relations) is explained by the variation in the independent variables.

**Table 7: Regression Analysis Findings**

<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Sig. F Change</b>
1.000 <sup>a</sup>	1.000	1.000	.000

*Source: Own Survey Data SPSS Output (2023)*

Predictors: (Constant), Merit-based promotions of military personnel; merit-based appointments of military personnel, joint training between the citizenry, government officials and military personnel; representational recruitment of military personnel; reforms of the military institution; specialisation of key civil-military relations players on defence matters; professionalisation through professional military education; and delivery of public goods and services.

The beta value ( $\beta$ ) in Table 8 illustrates the degree to which each independent variable can explain the dependent variable. The significant level (0.000) indicates that the combination of these variables significantly ( $p < .000$ ) predicts the dependent variable.

**Table 8: Regression Analysis Results**

Variables	$\beta$	p-value
Merit-based promotions of military personnel	.174	.000
Merit-based appointments of military Personnel	.172	.000
Joint training between the citizenry, government officials and military personnel	.151	.000
Representational recruitment of military Personnel	.155	.000
Reforms of the military institution	.157	.000
The specialisation of key civil-military relations players on defence matters	.148	.000
Professionalisation through professional military education	.168	.000
Delivery of public goods and services by the military	.178	.000
Dependent Variable: Mean of exploratory variables. $R^2 = 1.000$ . Note: significant 5%		

*Source: Own Survey Data SPSS Output (2023)*

### **4.2.3 Hypotheses Testing**

Table 8 results revealed that all 8 independent variables were significant at  $p=0.000$  on keeping the CMR in equilibrium. Merit-based promotions of military personnel have a significant and positive impact on keeping CMR in equilibrium, with a beta value ( $\beta = .174$ ) and at a 1% significant level ( $p= 0.000$ ). Merit-based appointments of military personnel have a significant effect on keeping CMR in equilibrium with ( $\beta = .172$ ) and ( $p< .001$ ). Representational recruitment of military personnel has a significant positive impact on keeping CMR in equilibrium with ( $\beta = .155$ ) and ( $p< .001$ ). Delivery of public goods and services by the military has a significant effect on keeping CMR in equilibrium with ( $\beta =.178$ ) and ( $p< .001$ ). Joint training between the citizenry, government officials and military personnel has a significant impact on keeping CMR in equilibrium with ( $\beta =.151$ ) and ( $p< .001$ ). Reforms of military institutions have a significant effect on keeping CMR in equilibrium with ( $\beta =.157$ ) and ( $p< .001$ ). The specialisation of key CMR players on defence matters has a significant impact on keeping CMR in equilibrium with ( $\beta =.148$ ) and ( $p< .001$ ). Professionalisation through professional military education has a significant impact on keeping CMR in equilibrium with ( $\beta =.168$ ) and ( $p< .001$ ).

## **4.3 Consequences of Interaction of Elected Authorities: Members of Parliament, Defence and Security Committee**

### **4.3.1 Members of Parliament**

The study found that the roles of Members of Parliament (MPs) include working with impartiality by not allowing the political elites to politicise or manipulate the security sector in any way, as a means of achieving self-interests; upholding and protecting the provisions of the constitution to avoid disfranchising the citizenry from enjoying their rights; promoting and preserving democratic principles and institutions, including being subordinate to civilian

authority, practising professionalism and neutrality and supporting democratic processes. One key informant stated that,

*“Promoting and preserving democratic principles and institutions including; being subordinate to civilian authority, practising professionalism and neutrality and support for democratic processes that align with my duties”* (Participant ‘S’ on 10 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

On top of the latter, the roles of MPs were revealed to be providing accurate and unbiased information on different issues by educating and informing the public and constituents about the importance of CMR in promoting democracy and good governance. MPs also facilitate the provision of security, law enforcement and defending human rights for all Malawians without fear or favour, and advocate for policies that enhance CMR in parliament and create more inclusive programmes, thereby increasing knowledge among the CMR stakeholders.

*“We ensure that we perform our duties in line with the jurisdiction of our code of ethics and not allowing ourselves to intervene in domestic politics thereby, providing security, law enforcement and defending human rights to all Malawian citizens without fear or favour”* (Key informant ‘X’ on 6 May 2023 in Mzimba).

MPs also mentioned that they accommodate military personnel when they are embarking on different sets of operations in their areas, hence playing a vital role of liaison and that they make sure that their wards do not stay in conflict with the military personnel during times of national outcry (Participant ‘S’ on 11 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

#### **4.3.2 Defence and Security Committee**

The study found that the roles of the DSC were to make the military a tool for the state and allocate funds for the operationalisation of the military, make laws that govern the norms of the armed forces and propose legislation and policies related to defence and security. In addition, the study revealed that the DSC ensures that the military aligns with democratic

principles and national interests. The DSC provides oversight and accountability such as monitoring military operations, reviewing budget allocation, and ensuring that the military remains under the control of the civilian government.

*“The DSC makes the military a useful tool to the state by allocating funds and making treaties which boosts the financial status of the military. It also makes laws that govern the norms of the armed forces”* (Respondent ‘W’ on 8 May 2023 in Blantyre).

The study further revealed that the DSC oversees the country's defence and security matters and ensures that the military operates within the confines of the law and respects human rights, formulates and enacts the defence policy for the better functioning of the nation's military and other security agencies. The DSC educates the local population on the roles of the military.

*“Being able to civic educate those local populations on the roles of the military and advising the military on what should happen and the direction that it should take are the duties of the DSC”* (Key informant ‘U’ on 7 May 2023 in Karonga).

The roles of the DSC are articulate. However, through the DSC and the researcher's official interactions and observations during familiarisation tours, the DSC has shown to have superficial knowledge of security issues.

#### **4.4 Consequences of Interaction of Civilians, Media, Local Population and Civil Society Organisations**

##### **4.4.1 The Media**

The study found that the media plays a crucial role in Malawi by enhancing transparency and accountability through broadcasting news relating to military issues. The media also contributes to civil-military relations by monitoring and reporting the interactions between the military forces, society, and the government. Media practitioners further noted the importance

of remaining nonpartisan to be professional. The media revealed that they delineate themselves from involving in active politics so that they can be professional in their operations. The media also claimed that they can keep civil-military relations in a healthy state by publishing information that does not castigate any specific entity to not disturb the equilibrium status quo. However, this is an understatement as it precludes the objective and critical eye of the media necessary for transparency and accountability. Nevertheless, one of the respondents expressed that,

*“The media plays a crucial role in Malawi by enhancing transparency and accountability through broadcasting news relating to military issues. It further extends its responsibility to publishing information that does not criticise any specific entity to maintain the existing balance”* (Participant ‘T’ on 12 May 2023 in Kasungu).

#### **4.4.2 Local Population**

The CMR stakeholders agreed that the local population can contribute to CMR stability by providing information relating to criminals residing within the local population and assisting in policy making. Voicing out concerns when there is poor governance also emerged as an influential role of the local population in keeping civil-military relations stable. It is done to ensure that politicians provide robust support to the population's interests. The local population participates in public debates on how the military conducts its operations and the relationship that exists between the armed forces and the political elites. The local population also makes the Executive branch accountable for its actions, more especially on decisions relating to security forces.

*“My duty is to provide information and intelligence about criminals residing in my community and assisting in policy making where necessary”* (Participant ‘Z’ on 8 May in Zomba).

*“Voicing concerns about poor governance is the responsibility which the local population holds at large as it aids politicians provide robust support for the population's interests”* (Participant ‘U’ on 7 May 2023 in Zomba).

#### **4.4.3 Civil Society Organisations**

The study revealed that CSOs play an important role in maintaining a balance between civilians and the military. The roles include ensuring citizens are adequately informed about the ideal relationship among civil-military relations players; ensuring that citizens are disseminated with the required information about the vitality of the CMR to keep the nation secure; advocating for transparent and accountable civil-military relations; and conducting policy advocacy that increases knowledge among laymen.

*“Civil Society Organisations are supposed to make sure that citizens are disseminated with information of the vitality of the civil-military relationship for a healthy nation”* (Participant ‘V’ on 7 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

Furthermore, the study discovered that CSOs delineate themselves from participating in active politics to maintain professionalism in their operations. The CSOs further revealed that they professionally handle CMR key players' subordinates during national turbulences, so that they do not harass citizens when exercising their constitutional rights; and advocate for good governance and the rule of law. One key informant narrated that,

*“We understand that as CSOs we must distance ourselves from active involvement in politics to uphold the highest standards of professionalism in our operations”* (Participant ‘U’ on 8 May 2023 in Mzimba).

Key CMR players in Malawi understand beyond measure their roles. They understand that specialisation in security issues is important in promoting security literacy and transforming civil-military relations for democratisation (Hutchful 2008). However, CSOs in Malawi know their endogenous weaknesses, as some respondents lamented that:

*“We are involved in handling subordinates during national turbulences so that they should not harass population when exercising their constitutional rights”*  
(Participant ‘U’ on 8 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

This shows that subordinates can harass civilians if they are unprofessional in their field of expertise, hence compromising their work on advocacy in CMR. This feature calls for the transformation of CSOs if greater democratisation is to be achieved.

## **4.5 Consequences of Interaction of Civil Authorities: District Security Technical Committee and Ministry of Defence**

### **4.5.1 District Security Technical Committee**

The study revealed that the DSTC is involved in information sharing, resource allocation and crisis response and management. The DSTC ensures the effective coordination and collaboration of security agencies in addressing security challenges at the district level. The DSTC also collaborates closely with security institutions to enhance security in their respective areas of responsibility. The study also found that the DSTC conducts threat assessments and analyses, planning and coordination, and community engagement at the district level. The DSTC further engages in activities aimed at enhancing the capacity and professionalism of security forces at the district level.

*“The DSTC ensures that there is effective coordination and collaboration of security agencies in addressing security challenges at the district level and working hand in hand with security institutions to enhance security in their area”* (Key informant ‘W’ on 12 May 2023 in Blantyre).

However, the study found that the DSTC is still in its infancy and where security threats are minimal, the committee has lower visibility and is less known to the polity. A deliberate awareness approach by the DCs to make the committee known and serve the interests of the citizenry must be encouraged.

#### 4.5.2 Ministry of Defence

The study discovered that the MoD maximises the efficient use of resources in support of military operations. The MoD maximises the effectiveness of recruiting armed forces; defines and allocates responsibilities among civilians and military officers; and structures proper relationships between democratically elected civilians and armed forces.

*“The MoD aims at maximising the efficient use of resources, such as public funds, to enhance the effectiveness of armed forces recruitment. This involves defining and assigning responsibilities to both civilian and military personnel, as well as establishing a proper relationship between democratically elected civilians and the armed forces”* (Key informant ‘V’ on 8 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

The study further found that the MoD protects the law of the land; protects the citizenry from ill-treatments; and plays an interagency coordination role by ensuring a healthy relationship between the military, civil society, other ministries and government agencies. The study additionally discovered that the MoD ensures the military operates within the framework of the Constitution and the rule of law. Furthermore, the MoD ensures there is a peaceful working relationship between civil servants and the military, where necessary, and ensures that civil servants understand the nature of military work. Conversely, the study found that the military’s presence is increasing in the constabulary domain. The military is being overtasked.

*“The policy formulation and implementation guiding how operations are conducted in the military. The MoD prioritises which operations are to be conducted by the military and which ones are to be conducted by other security organisations. On the contrary, the military is being tasked to carry out other activities which are not suited to the military domain such as patrolling and guarding forests, security for Malawi national examinations, escort for fuel tankers and many more tasks that can be handled well by the police”* (Respondent ‘X’ on 13 May 2023 in Zomba).

The study further revealed that the MoD provides oversight and accountability and also acts as a mediator between the military and the civilian community. The MoD promotes human rights

and the rule of law. It is responsible for establishing a code of conduct, policies and training programmes that emphasise respect for human rights, and adherence to international humanitarian law in the military. The MoD's role was also found to be promoting the relationship between the democratically elected leaders and the armed forces. The MoD highlights and educates the local population about the roles of the military to distinguish the military roles from the roles of the other security agencies. However, the strength and the technical know-how of Malawi's MoD were found wanting and needed capacitation (Phiri 2008).

#### **4.6 Consequences of Interaction of the Judiciary**

The roles of the judiciary in CMR were; ensuring the administration of justice in the military sector, protecting the Constitution, investigating and providing resolutions on complaints lodged by citizens, providing judicial reviews on pertinent matters affecting the CMR, and ensuring peaceful judgment on misunderstandings regarding the citizenry and the military. One respondent said,

*“The judiciary ensures peaceful judgement on misunderstandings regarding the civil servants and the military; and broad interpretation of the laws guiding civil-military relations”* (Participant ‘Y’ in Lilongwe).

The study further discovered that the judiciary is involved in the broad interpretation of the laws guiding CMR; protecting constitutional rights; reviewing military actions and judicial oversight of military actions; and ensuring every person has equal, fair and impartial treatment before the law, by ensuring that the actions of both civilian authorities and the military comply with the Constitution, and resolving conflicts between civil and military institutions.

#### **4.7 Consequences of Interaction of the Military**

The study established that the military's responsibilities in the interaction process are to safeguard the country's territory, ensure that citizens are free from danger and threats, help maintain peace in other countries, uphold the constitutional order and respect the authority of the civilian government, and provide social services.

*“The military is involved in public services delivery such as rescuing flood victims as experienced in the past years, provision of social services like hospitals and also providing maximum security in protecting the territorial integrity thereby fostering the relationship between civilians and military”* (Respondent ‘V’ on 12 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

The study further established that the military’s roles in CMR are to ensure that the military does not intervene in domestic politics; observe objective civilian control; subordinate to civil authorities; and provide security to voters, political leaders, electoral officials and election materials during elections. Some respondents said,

*“The MDF has been playing its role very well in terms of handling issues of elections and the civil strife that emanates post-electoral periods”* (Participant ‘Z’ on 13 May 2023 in Blantyre).

The study further discovered that the military provides civic education to the masses on their roles as citizens and what is expected of them, which eventually translates to a good interface with the military; and ensures internal security by protecting citizens from enemies within and without; in so doing, promoting a healthy relationship between civilians and the military personnel.

#### **4.8 Civil-Military Relations Disparities and Areas of Improvement**

The study sought to assess the issues in CMR in democratic Malawi. The study revealed fault lines in Malawi’s CMR. Defence and security officers, despite having a code of conduct, were

found wanting in issues of human rights as provided in Chapter 4 of the Constitution (Bill of Rights) (Republic of Malawi 2002). Military personnel were found violating the freedom of free press by threatening or assaulting the journalists who tried to cover operations involving the armed forces. The study faulted the recruitment process that allows politicians to bring their party cadres into the security sector and quickly promote them to high-ranking positions. As such, personnel recruited in this way end up serving in favour of those politicians rather than the general society in which they are supposed to serve. Respondents revealed the abuse of human rights and politicisation as narrated below:

*“Other officers are found violating the freedom to free press by threatening or assaulting the journalists that try to cover operations involving the armed forces in general. The Malawi Media Institute of Southern Africa has criticized this conduct for a number of times, as it is tantamount to denying the citizenry information on how their armed forces work. Therefore, it is of the view that security officers need to be educated further on the topic of human rights as provided on chapter 4 of the Constitution (Bill of rights) as this is not the only right violated”* (Key informant ‘T’ on 14 May 2023 in Zomba).

*“The recruitment process allows politicians to bring their party supporters into the security sector as well as quickly promoting them to high-ranking positions. Hence, they end up serving in favour of those politicians rather than the general society which they are supposed to serve. Therefore, politicians must play no any form of influence on recruitment process, rather the process should be based on bureaucratic principle of formal selection”* (Key informant ‘X’ on 15 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

Key informants noted that it is in the interest of national security that politicians must influence the recruitment process; rather the process should be based on the bureaucratic principle of formal selection, representational recruitment to align with the societal makeup of the country, and that promotions must be based on meritocracy. Additionally, the study found that

politicians disenfranchise public servants from executing their tasks freely, as one respondent lamented:

*“Politicians meddle in the public servants and military personnel work environment by influencing the work environment. Politicians give tasks to the military without comprehending to the tasks and equipment available to the military as a result tasking the military improperly”* (Key informant ‘X’ on 11 May 2023 in Mzuzu City).

Key informants also noted the role overload on the MDF, as one respondent recounted that:

*“We are involved in many operations which needs many soldiers and a refocus on the roles of the MDF. MDF as a last line in defence must not be easily deployed to conduct tasks fit for the police. If MDF lose credibility due to frequent interface with civilians, no security entity would come forward to rescue MDF, so preserve MDF for protection against external threat, disaster management, entrepreneurial and development activities. Also deploy MDF when the police are overwhelmed rather than deploying MDF willy-nilly”* (Key informant ‘X’ on 9 May in Lilongwe).

The study revealed the under resourcing of the military, despite the participation overload. The study further found that resources are also being abused in the military, citing misprocurements and entrepreneurship. Under resourcing of the military and misprocurement are exemplified by the two respondents respectively as they said:

*“The military is not well equipped if we draw from the just ended cyclone Freddy where the army was not able to fully help the affected civilian population because of lack of relevant resource”* (Key informant ‘S’ on 9 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

*“The military is embroiled in abuse of resources if we go by reports in the public domain such as mismatching the procurement where the military bought water cannons for crowd control and where the Financial Intelligence Unit froze an account of a supplier of parachutes for overpricing. The military is also being used to drain resources through overpricing of military equipment for example cases involving Sattar USD 19 million arms deal which Anti-Corruption Bureau suspended owing to procurement management flaws”* (Key informant ‘X’ on 6 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

The study found that there is no distinct line between the military and the civilian world. One key informant cited that:

*“There is no distinct line to separate the civilian control and the military chain of command as many times politicians have tried to control the military as professionals as a result tasking or deploying the military wrongly. I recall one time when the military was tasked to disperse a political rally in Mulanje. This is how civilians who do not know the roles of the military can misuse the instruments of national power”* (Key informant ‘T’ on 10 May 2023 in Blantyre).

## **4.9 Effectiveness of Elected Authorities: Members of Parliament and Defence and Security Committee to Maintain Stable Civil-Military Relations**

### **4.9.1 Members of Parliament**

The results on the indicators of the effectiveness of the elected authorities show that MPs are involved in oversight and accountability as they play a crucial role in overseeing the actions of the military and security forces. One respondent recounted:

*“MPs are involved in active participation in the formulation and oversight of defence and security policies; holding the military accountable through parliamentary debates and inquiries; promoting transparency in defence spending and procurement; and ensuring civilian control over the military and promoting democratic principles within the armed forces”* (Key informant ‘T’ on 8 May 2023 in Karonga).

The MPs' effectiveness can be measured by their active participation in parliamentary committees responsible for defence, security, and human rights. Additionally, their ability to hold the military accountable for its actions and ensure transparency in defence spending can be indicative of their effectiveness. Further, other respondents revealed active participation in the formulation and oversight of defence and security policies; holding the military accountable through parliamentary debates and inquiries; promoting and advocating transparency in defence spending and procurement; ensuring civilian control over the military, and promoting

democratic principles within the armed forces; assenting bills on civil-military relations as indicators and a measure of effectiveness of the MPs in CMR as two respondents recounted;

*“The military should operate under the direction and control of elected civilian leaders and respect their decisions. The military's adherence to the principle of civilian control is an essential indicator of its effectiveness in civil-military relations”* (Key informant ‘Y’ on 15 May 2023 in Mzimba).

*“Members of Parliament make sure their respective wards are not in conflict with state security entities when executing their duties”* (Key informant ‘X’ on 13 May 2023 in Kasungu).

Furthermore, the study discovered that MPs represent their people in such a way as not to spark conflicts at the constituency level; advocating for policies and reforms that benefit both parties to avoid breaking the equilibrium state of affairs; making sure their respective wards are not in conflict with state security entities when executing their duties; and their ability to deliver public services to their constituents.

#### **4.9.2 Defence and Security Committee**

The Defence and Security Committee's (DSC) effectiveness towards democratisation was found in that the DSC promotes cooperation and dialogue between civilians and the military; strengthens the military by providing an adequate budget and educating its officers to be familiar with modern technology; provides resources for the running the security sector and ensures non-intervention in affairs that require security professionalism; respects human rights, and engages in conflict resolution and prevention. Respondents indicated that:

*“The DSC ensures strengthening of the military by providing adequate budget and educate its officers to be familiar with modern technology”* (Key informant ‘U’ on 7 May 2023 in Zomba).

*“The DST is involved in providing adequate resources to the running of security sectors and non-intervention in affairs that require security professionalism”* (Key Informant ‘V’ on 12 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

In addition, the study discovered that the DSC shapes policies that facilitate positive civil-military relationships. For example, the DSC's contribution to deliberations on the establishment of a quad-service in Malawi. Respondents narrated the measure of the effectiveness of the DSC, highlighting its involvement in establishing the Malawi National Service (MNS), when the country needed the initiative most for entrepreneurship and food security. Respondents recounted that:

*“Now we have got the fourth service of the force, which is now being implemented. That’s topping up on the army, the maritime, and the air force. So, the DSC has been able to deliberate about the military, how the military should be structured, deployed, and sustained for the military to be well suited to serve the nation, with minimal support from the national budget”* (Respondents ‘S’ and ‘W’ on 12 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

Furthermore, the DSC played a crucial role in deliberating and reviewing the new Malawi Defence Force Act. The new Defence Force Act introduced the MNS as the fourth arm of the MDF, focusing on development and food security, which was a much-needed addition.

#### **4.10 Effectiveness of Civilians: The Media, Local Population, and Civil Society Organisations to Maintain Stable Civil-Military Relations**

##### **4.10.1 The Media**

The study sought to investigate the effectiveness of the media in CMR. Respondent stated that:

*“The effectiveness of the media in civil-military relations in a democratic Malawi can be assessed through various indicators. These indicators can provide insights into the media's effectiveness in promoting transparency, accountability, and public awareness including; Investigative Journalism as effective media outlets engage in investigative journalism, delving deeper into issues related to civil-military relations. They uncover*

*and expose cases of corruption, human rights violations or any misconduct within the military; Public Interest Coverage as the media's focus on public interest issues related to civil-military relations is an indicator of its effectiveness” (Key informant ‘S’ on 6 May 2023 in Lilongwe).*

*“Effective media outlets prioritize stories that directly impact citizens' lives, such as the military's involvement in public projects, defence budget allocation, or the protection of human rights; Promotion of Transparency and Accountability as the media's role in promoting transparency and accountability is essential for civil-military relations. Effective media outlets actively seek and disseminate information about military activities, budget allocations, and decision-making processes; and Public Awareness and Education as the media's effectiveness can be measured by its ability to raise public awareness and educate the public about civil-military relations and democratization” (Key informant ‘W’ on 10 May 2023 in Blantyre).*

The themes that emerged from the media are non-biased reporting of stories, publicising information that does not catalyse conflicts in the nation, and public interest coverage as the media focuses on public interest issues related to civil-military relations. Effective media outlets actively seek and disseminate information about military activities, budget allocations, and decision-making processes. Public awareness and education are also vital, as the media's effectiveness can be measured by its ability to raise public awareness and educate the public about civil-military relations in a democracy.

On top of that, the study noted that accurate and unbiased reporting on defence and security matters, promoting and advocating for transparency and accountability in military affairs, publishing materials that do not compromise the integrity of the local population as well as the military, and capturing what the military has been doing while creating a social construct of the importance of the military to the people, are standards of the effectiveness.

#### **4.10.2 Local Population**

The study sought to investigate the effectiveness of the local population in CMR in a democratic Malawi. Respondents indicated that:

*“There is a cordial relationship between the military and the local populace, whereby the local populace has been able to give information to the military to do the security organs to say that there is this thing happening here, and this year the case of the refugees who are pretending to be the asylum seekers so they have been able to give the military the information that the people who are doing this particular activity are the like”* (Key informant ‘X’ on 7 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

The study found that the local population can take to task any military actions that infringe on their rights and support efforts to strengthen civilian control over the military, where they act as sources giving intelligence to the military on areas where they see or detect that something is fishy. Additionally, the local population contributes to good governance by electing the best leaders to meet their needs, which in turn fosters peace and development. Effective citizen participation is an indicator of the local population’s effectiveness, as engaged citizens actively participate in civic activities such as attending public meetings, voicing their concerns, and providing feedback on civil-military relations issues. One respondent narrated that:

*“local population contribute to civil-military relations by paying taxes and electing best members of parliament and the President who represent us formally in the civil-military interactions to that we have the best military capable of fulfilling the given tasks and defending the nation”* (Key informant ‘Y’ on 10 May 2023 in Blantyre).

#### **4.10.3 Civil Society Organisations**

The study sought to investigate the effectiveness of the CSOs in CMR in democratic Malawi. Three respondents narrated that:

*“CSOs can question the military whenever there is abuse of power by military and sensitizing the civilians of their rights which may be infringed by military”* (Key informant ‘W’ on 5 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

*“The effectiveness of CSOs in civil-military relations and their contribution to democratization in Malawi can be assessed through various indicators, Advocacy and awareness, CSOs can be evaluated based on their ability to advocate for transparent and accountable civil-military relations. Indicators in this area include their efforts to raise awareness about the importance of democratic control over the military, human rights issues and role of the military in a democratic society”* (Key informant ‘Y’ on 7 May 2023 in Zomba).

*“The role of the civil society is protection of human rights. The CSOs often work towards protecting the human rights within the civil-military relations. They can as well address violations by the military to the civilians as well as promoting public awareness”* (Key informant 'T' on 6 May in Zomba).

The study discovered that the CSOs' effectiveness towards democratisation in Malawi included being able to question the military whenever there is an abuse of power by the military and sensitising the civilians of their rights that may be infringed by the military, as well as advocacy and awareness. The study further established that CSOs can be evaluated based on their ability to advocate for transparent and accountable CMR. Indicators of effectiveness in this area included the CSOs' efforts to raise awareness about the importance of democratic control over the military. One respondent highlighted that:

*“CSOs keep the military accountable for their actions for example when the military evicted encroachers at Viphya Field Firing Range, the military was questioned on the ways they used by beating up encroachers and also the issue of encroachment was taken to the courts meaning that the military is also answerable to the citizenry. (Key informant ‘S’ on 15 May 2023 in Mzimba).*

## **4.11 Effectiveness of Civil Authorities: District Security Technical Committee and Ministry of Defence to Maintain Stable Civil-Military Relations**

### **4.11.1 District Security Technical Committee**

The study discovered that the DSTC is engaged in transparency and accountability; enhanced communication, collaboration, and coordination of security issues; conflict resolution and mediation; and providing the required resources to enhance peace and security in the district, as a result, reducing wastage of resources, as respondents recounted that:

*“DSTC ensure community involvement in security decision-making processes and they help in easing congestions in the security sector as some of the decisions made are of the citizenry friendly hence reducing the work overload in the security sector. The DSTC also helps in prioritisation of security tasks, which is key in addressing high impact security issues to safeguard the nation at large”* (Key informant 'U' on 10 May 2023 in Zomba).

*“Civilian Oversight as effective DSTCs ensure civilian oversight over security forces operating within their districts. They establish mechanisms to monitor the conduct of the military, police, and other security agencies, ensuring that they operate within legal frameworks and respect human rights; and Community Engagement and Participation as effective DSTCs actively engage with local communities, seeking their input and involving them in decision-making processes related to security issues”* (Key informant 'X' on 6 May in Lilongwe).

*“Whenever they have functions and programs, they should be able to gather all the relevant stakeholders to one position within the district and then share the ideas. So, that's the indicator that they appreciate that there is not only one organization, there are different organizations. But for those different organizations to work together they need the assistance or the technical advice at a district level on how issues should be handled”* (Key informant 'V' on 13 May in Mzimba).

The study further found that the DSTC provides expertise and represents the interests of elected authorities by implementing policies made by elected authorities. DSTC is a virgin committee

that needs full implementation at the district level, if healthy civil-military relations are to be enhanced; as one member indicated ignorance of the committee.

*“I do not know of this committee; however, it is important that this committee be activated as it can help resolve security issues at district level. We have many security issues which need to be resolved such as encroachment in Kasungu National Park, issues to do with chieftaincy which I feel can be resolved if we involve all stakeholders in the district”* (Key informant ‘W’ on 15 May 2023 in Kasungu).

#### **4.11.2 Ministry of Defence**

The Ministry of Defence's measure of effectiveness towards democratisation was revealed by the study to be the engagement in transparency and accountability in defence spending and procurement; presenting people’s grievances to the military and vice versa; demonstrating a commitment to democratic oversight by establishing mechanisms for civilian scrutiny of the military by convening independent audits, and public reporting on defence policies, expenditures, and military activities.

Participants said:

*“The MoD's ability to foster effective CMR is an indicator of its effectiveness. This includes collaboration with other government agencies, civil society organizations, and local communities in addressing security challenges, disaster response, and development initiatives”* (Participant ‘Y’ on 15 May 2023 in Mzimba).

*“The MoD demonstrates effectiveness through clear communication between the MoD, the military and civilians and by developing policies that balance military needs with civilian concerns. This effectiveness was shown through the ongoing formulation of the defence policy when MoD is engaging the military and civilians to develop the defence policy. The other example is where the military was in confrontation with civilians on the use of Viphya Field Firing Range where MoD was instrumental in settling the conflict for the good of both parties”* (Participant ‘S’ in Lilongwe on 13 May 2023).

#### 4.12 Effectiveness of the Judiciary to Maintain Stable Civil-Military Relations

The study sought to examine the effectiveness of the judiciary in CMR in a democratic Malawi.

Three key informants narrated that:

*“Judges actively engage in judicial review of military actions to ensure their compliance with legal frameworks and democratic principles. They assess the legality and proportionality of military operations, policies, and decisions. The judiciary resolve disputes between the military personnel and civilians for example when civilians encroached the military training area in Nkhatabay, the courts resolved that the area was for the military and that civilians should evacuate from the area to allow unhindered military training required to safeguard the nation”* (Key informant ‘V’ on 11 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

*“Judges have a commitment to protecting human rights within the military and security forces. They play a crucial role in adjudicating cases involving human rights violations and ensuring accountability for such violations”* (Key informant ‘X’ on 10 May 2023 in Zomba).

*“Fairness in investigating security institutions and pronouncing judgements of security cases and timeliness in handling and concluding security related cases”* (Key informant ‘Y’ on 11 May 2023 in Lilongwe).

The study discovered that the judiciary is effective as it fulfils the elements of democratisation such as independence and impartiality in their decisions related to CMR; the judge’s ability to make fair and unbiased judgments even during political pressures is an indicator and a measure of effectiveness. The respondents mentioned the constitutional court ruling that nullified the 2019 presidential elections as an example of judicial independence:

*“The judges are very independent they nullified elections that ushered Peter Mutharika for his second term. If the judiciary was not independent, they would have ruled in favour of the ruling party at that particular time, so yes, our judiciary is very independent”* (Key informant ‘S’ on 15 May 2023 in Kasungu).

Furthermore, the study established that the judges commit to protecting human rights within the military and security forces; adjudicate cases involving human rights violations and ensure accountability for such violations; actively engage in judicial review of military actions to ensure their compliance with legal frameworks and democratic principles; and assess the legality and proportionality of military operations, policies, and decisions. One respondent recounted that:

*“The courts have been critical in maintaining sanity in this country for example, when people encroached the Viphya Field Firing Range, the courts ruled that the encroachers be evicted from the land so that MDF could continue using the land for training. The other example is when one soldier from Moyale Barracks was convicted for wounding a civilian at Jombo trading centre”* (Respondent ‘X’ in Mzuzu City on 12 May 2023).

#### **4.13 Effectiveness of the Military to Maintain Stable Civil-Military Relations**

The military’s measure of effectiveness in the democratisation process is seen in the cooperation with civilian institutions in maintaining national security; being able to protect and defend the country and assisting public service provision; operating under the direction and control of elected civilian leaders; adhering to the principle of civilian oversight; and respecting human rights, since effective military institutions prioritise the protection and respect for human rights. Respondents mentioned that:

*“MDF cooperates with civilian institutions in the maintenance of national security interest such as general elections, national examinations and disaster management. since the MDF took over security of examinations in 2021, cases of examinations leakage have reduced to zero. Leakage of examinations were costly and made authorities to re-administer examinations hence wasting tax payers’ money”* (Key informant ‘U’ on 7 May 2023 in Kasungu).

*“The absence of internal and external threats to the citizens is an indicator that MDF is effective in protecting the nation. The other effectiveness example portrayed by the*

*military is when they go out to control demonstrating crowd which they do using minimum force without casing much collateral damage than their police counterparts”* (Key informant ‘T’ on 7 May 2023 in Blantyre).

Further to that, the study discovered that the military has policies, procedures, and training that ensure the human rights of all individuals. It was further established that the military brings to justice those who violate and threaten national security; delivers public services during disasters, crises, and complex emergencies; and upholds the Constitution in the interest of national security. One respondent narrated that:

*The military punishes soldiers who contravene the work ethic. The military dismissed those soldiers who were found selling confiscated timber at Chikangawa Forest thereby instilling discipline within the military. The military also helps a lot in rescuing people during floods in Nsanje, Karonga and Lilongwe* (Key informant ‘S’ on 13 May 2023 in Kasungu).

#### **4.14 Framework for the Civil-Military Relations Management in Malawi**

The framework for the management of civil-military relations was developed using the civil-military relations stakeholders’ analysis and matrix, which identified the civilians, elected authorities, civil authorities, the military and the judiciary as playing critical roles in the Malawi environment. The study synthesised that the elected authorities and the military have high influence and high interest in CMR. This means that the elected authorities and the military have the power to significantly impact the decision-making and that the two have strong interest in decision-making driven by personal, financial and professional reasons. Civilians had low influence and high interest as civil-military relations affected their wellbeing. Civilians have limited ability to impact CMR but have strong interest which is driven by personal, financial and professional factors. The judiciary had high influence and low interest as they viewed human rights and security as dichotomous. The judiciary have the significant power and limited engagement to impact the CMR. Civilian authorities had low influence and low

interest in CMR as they viewed CMR as a business for the military alone. Civilian authorities have limited ability and minimal interest in CMR decision-making (see Figure 3).

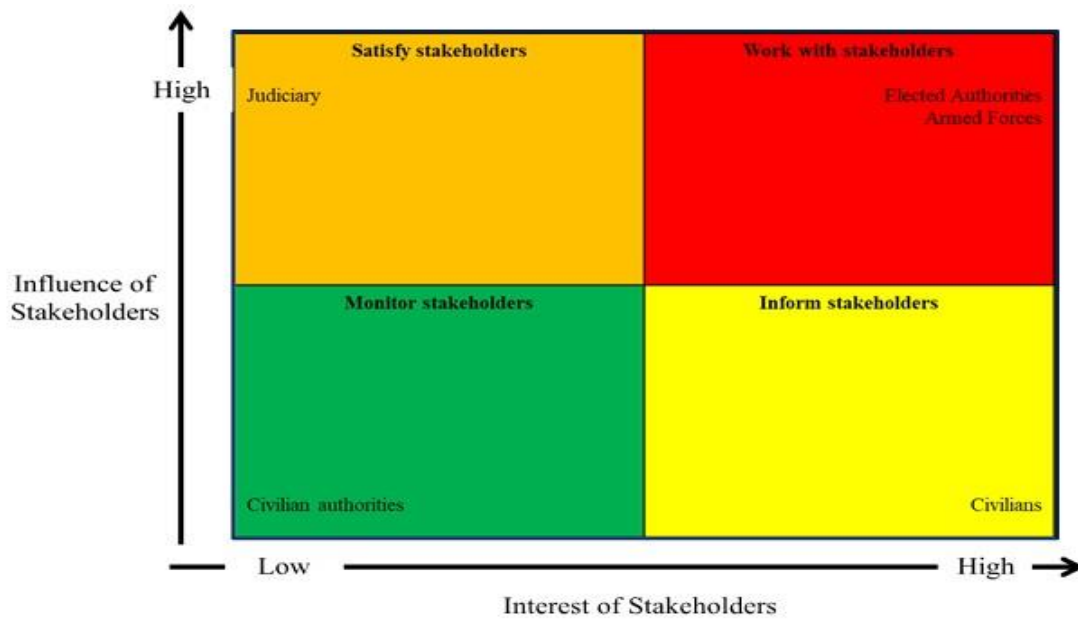


Figure 3: Civil-Military Relations Stakeholder Analysis

*Source: Created by the author, adapted from Bourne (2012).*

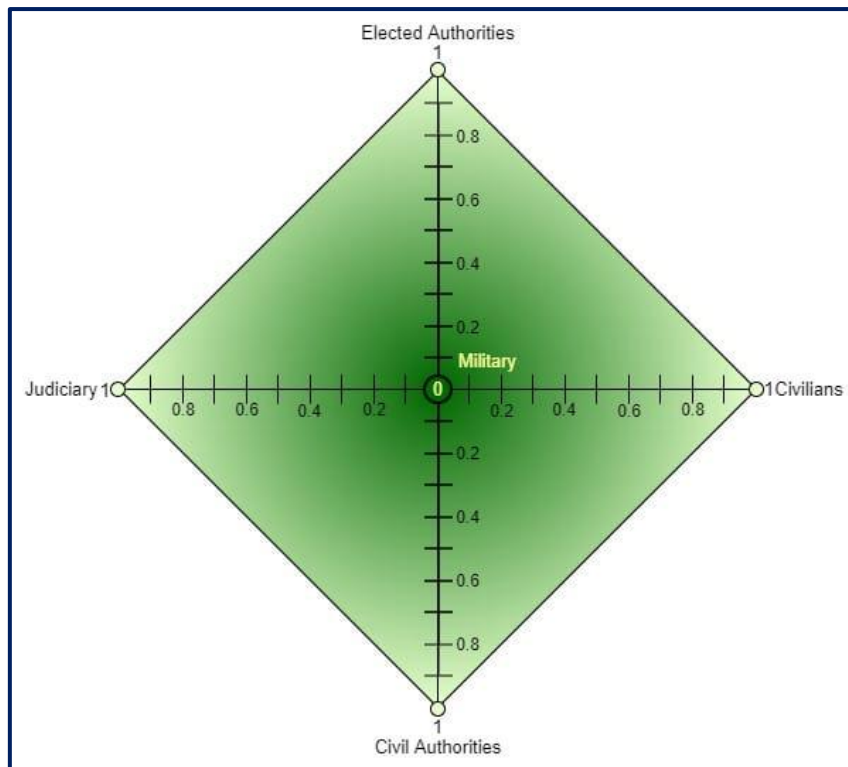
The study, further in line with Bourne (2012), identified the expectations, perceived attitudes, stakeholder management strategies of the CMR community and the responsible people as drivers towards a healthy CMR and democratisation. The stakeholder analysis matrix was valuable for this study as it helped to identify, analyse, and prioritise stakeholders based on their interests, influence, and impact on decisions affecting CMR in Malawi. The analysis further identified risks and drew participatory management strategies and responsibilities for a viable CMR in a democratic Malawi (See Table 9).

**Table 9: Civil-Military Relations Stakeholder Analysis Matrix**

STAKEHOLDER	STAKE	POTENTIAL IMPACT	EXPECTATIONS OF THE STAKEHOLDER	PERCEIVED ATTITUDES AND/OR RISKS	STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY
Elected Authorities	Policy and process owner of defence and security policy	High	Commitment to implement change	Views other implementers as too technical Lack of clarity about the preferred approach	Interface meetings Executive seminars Familiarisation tours Increased tenure in office	Commander in Chief MoD DSC
Military	Operationalise defence and security policy	High	Sacrosanctity Commitment to implement change	Lack of interest Other stakeholders must not be involved in military issues	PME at all levels	Defence Force Commander
Judiciary	Interpretation of policy Justice for all	Medium	Commitment to implement change	Views human rights and security as dichotomous	Interface meetings Executive seminars	Chief Justice
Civil Authorities	Provides specific expertise	Low	Resistance to implement change	Lack of interest	Interface meetings Executive seminars PME	Chief Secretary
Civilians	Peace and security	Medium	Commitment to implement change	Views other implementers as too technical Views human rights and security as dichotomous	Awareness campaigns Executive seminars	MISA Chair Traditional Leaders CSOs Chair

*Source:* Own Survey (2023)

The study employed the stakeholder analysis and matrix to identify key CMR actors and their potential problem areas and suggested strategies to overcome the problems. The study further combined three objectives in the broad areas of factors that keep civil-military relations in equilibrium, the consequences of interaction of the key civil-military relations players and the effectiveness of civil-military relations in a democratic Malawi. The integration of the three objectives was meant to achieve a unified outcome to inform a framework for management of civil-military relations in Malawi. The issues that emerged from the results of the study are that if the factors and the consequences of the interaction are in moderate range, then the military will be a fulcrum bringing all key CMR players together with an outcome of a stable nation and an effective CMR. The interactions enhance public trust of the military with its key CMR players. A military built on meritocracy, professionalism, cohesion, specialisation and achieves its legitimate missions and tasks enhances democratic values. The key CMR actors that emerged from this study are the traditional political elites and the military. Additionally, the study found other critical actors in Malawi that are directly involved in CMR. These other actors are the civil authorities represented by the MoD and DSTC personnel, civilians represented by the local population, CSOs and the media. The military plays a critical role in the CMR and democratic dispensation, providing security and checks and balances to the other four key CMR players, it is placed at the centre of the rhombus diamond shape with the other actors occupying the apexes (see figure 4).



**Figure 4: Rhombus Diamond Framework**

*Source: Created by the author, adapted from Huntington's (1957), Schiff's (1995), and Bruneau and Tollefson's (2006) works*

Secondly, the issues that developed from the study surrounding consequences of the interaction of key civil-military relations players in Malawi included the participation overload where the military is tasked for missions not suited for the military institution. The other issues that developed are violation of human rights during operations, questionable recruitment processes, mismatch and profiteering in defence equipment procurement and the blurred bureaucracy between the military chain of command and civilian control.

Thirdly the effectiveness of the key civil-military relations players and the civil-military problematic issues that keep civil-military relations off-balance in a democratic Malawi, were laid bare. The concerns that emerged are infringement of human rights, lack of expertise, role conflict and familiarisation gap among the players and underutilisation of vehicles for

healthy civil-military relations, such as the DSTC which was unknown by some players. A more pronounced problem was the oversight role in civil-military relations which was shrouded in national security caveats. For the Civil-military relations to be effective, the policymakers should be accountable to the key players and the citizenry they protect. The civil-military relations players capable of influencing defence policy, who are professional, operate at a high level of merit, and know their roles in civil-military relations system are capable of maintaining a stable and secure nation.

#### **4.15 Conclusion**

This Chapter presented the results of the study. The Chapter presents the results of the factors that can keep civil-military relations in equilibrium in Malawi. The consequences of the interaction of the elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities, the judiciary and the military in civil-military relations in Malawi were also presented in this Chapter. The results of the effectiveness of the elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities, the judiciary and the military towards democratisation in Malawi were also presented in this Chapter. The results show that the drivers of CMR; merit-based promotions, merit-based appointments, joint training, representational recruitment, reforms, specialisation, professionalisation, and delivery of public goods and services, have a strong association with the military as a balancer with significance at  $p=0.000$  with  $r=.817$ ,  $r=.831$ ,  $r=.591$ ,  $r=.712$ ,  $r=.822$ ,  $r=.786$ ,  $r=.863$  and  $r=.703$ , respectively.

The consequences of interactions among key CMR players were found to be in upholding constitutionalism, CMR advocacy, oversight, provision of vital information of national interest, policy direction and reporting of issues of CMR nature. Furthermore, the results of the study faulted the recruitment processes, lack of expertise in the dispensation of CMR, politicisation, participation overload and infringements of human rights.

The measures of the effectiveness of key CMR players emerged in the study. These included providing resources, policy direction, reporting CMR issues, conflict resolution, human rights awareness campaigns, and participating in elections to elect leaders at various levels of government. However, distractors of the effectiveness such as infringement in human rights, weak oversight, lack of expertise, and roles conflict remained. The Chapter further presented a synthesis of results of the three objectives with a view of developing a civil-military relations management framework in the context of Malawi. The next Chapter discusses the results of the study.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Chapter five discusses the results of the study. The areas under discussion are the factors of civil-military relations equilibrium in Malawi; the consequences of interaction of the elected authorities, civil authorities, civilians, the judiciary and the military; the effectiveness of civil-military relations of the elected authorities, civil authorities, civilians, the judiciary and the military towards democratisation in Malawi. The study further develops and discusses a civil-military relations management framework in the context of Malawi.

### **5.2 Factors that keep Civil-Military Relations in Equilibrium in Malawi**

The study sought to assess the factors that keep civil-military relations in equilibrium. The results in Table 5 indicate that 386 of the respondents agreed that the military is a balancer (fulcrum) of civil-military relationships in Malawi. This implies a widespread perception that the military plays a vital stabilising role, maintaining equilibrium between civilian authorities and military institutions. This suggests that the military is trusted to prevent excessive political interference, ensure national security, and provide neutral arbitration in times of crisis. Furthermore, it indicates that the military is seen as a unifying force, transcending partisan interests and prioritising the nation's well-being. This positive perception underscores the military's effectiveness in promoting democratic governance, protecting citizens' rights, and fostering a stable environment conducive to economic growth and development. Ultimately, the military's balancing role reinforces the principles of civilian-military cooperation, fostering mutual respect and cooperation between the two sectors. These results support the argument of Janowitz (1960), Forman and Welch (1998), and Owens (2013). The finding is significant because a trusted MDF inspires public confidence as key CMR players and the citizens feel secure and protected from internal and external threats. A trusted MDF is necessary for

democratic governance as it provides a stable and secure environment for democratic institutions to function.

Results in Table 5 show that all factors have a strong association with the military as a balancer, with significance at  $p=0.000$ . Specifically, merit-based promotions and appointments, joint training, representational recruitment, institutional reforms, specialisation in defence matters, professionalisation through education, and delivery of public goods and services all demonstrate strong correlations. This implies that when the military adopts these practices, it effectively maintains balance and stability in its relationships with civilian authorities, ensuring democratic governance and national security

Essentially, these findings highlight the importance of a professional and impartial military in fostering healthy civil-military relations. By prioritising merit-based promotions and appointments, the military ensures competence and accountability. Joint training and representational recruitment promote mutual understanding and cooperation between military personnel and civilians. Institutional reforms and specialisation in defence matters enhance the military's effectiveness and credibility. Professionalisation through education and delivery of public goods and services demonstrate the military's commitment to serving the nation, rather than personal or partisan interests. These factors collectively contribute to the military's ability to act as a reliable balancer, mitigating potential conflicts and promoting democratic development. By embracing these practices, the military can maintain its position as a trusted and neutral institution, safeguarding national security and upholding democratic principles. The results are in line with Huntington (2000), Shah (2014), Kuwali (2022) and Agyekum (2022), who highlight the importance of merit-based promotions and appointments, joint training, representational recruitment, institutional reforms, specialisation in defence matters, professionalisation through education, and delivery of public goods and services for sustainable

civil-military relations. These results are significant as they enhance national pride as the population feels proud of the MDF and its accomplishments, hence balancing the state of CMR in Malawi.

The regression model reveals a perfect fit ( $R^2=1.000$ ), indicating that 100% of the variance in the military's role as a balancer in civil-military relations is explained by the combined predictors. The significant beta values and p-value (0.000) confirm that merit-based promotions, joint training, representational recruitment, institutional reforms, specialisation, professionalisation, and public goods delivery collectively predict the military's balancing role. This implies a robust relationship between these factors and civil-military relations. The model's accuracy suggests that manipulating these predictors can effectively enhance the military's balancing role. Agyekum (2022) found the same in Ghana, and Huntington (1957) and Schiff (1995), with their respective Institutional and Concordance Theories, support that merit-based promotions, joint training, representational recruitment, institutional reforms, specialisation, professionalisation, and public goods delivery by the military are critical to sustaining balanced civil-military relations. Healthy civil-military relations lead to improved governance and increased stability as the population feels secure and protected, a condition that allows growth and human security.

Furthermore, assumption testing revealed that merit-based promotions of military personnel have a significant and positive impact on keeping Civil-Military Relations (CMR) in equilibrium ( $p = 0.000$ ). This implies that implementing merit-based promotions enhances CMR balance by ensuring competent leadership, which in turn fosters trust and stability between civilian authorities and the military. Merit-based promotions recognise and reward military personnel for their excellent performance, hard work and sacrificial contributions. This finding is consistent with the Institutional Theory and studies conducted by Agyekum (2022),

Hutchful (2008) and Kuwali (2022), which emphasise the importance of merit-based promotions in promoting military professionalism. Merit-based promotions encourage competition among officers and rank and file, driving them to perform better and strive for military excellence, thereby uplifting the work ethics of a military institution.

Merit-based appointments of military personnel were also found to significantly affect CMR equilibrium ( $p < 0.001$ ). This suggests that fair and competitive appointment processes foster trust and stability in CMR, as they ensure that the most qualified personnel hold key positions. This result aligns with the Institutional Theory and findings of Agyekum (2022), Hutchful (2008) and Kuwali, (2022), which highlight the significance of merit-based appointments in promoting military effectiveness. Institutional Theory and studies of Perez and Strizhko (2018) underscore the importance of meritocracy, ensuring that the most competent and qualified military personnel are selected for command and administrative positions. The meritocracy on appointment fairness increases efficiency, enhances credibility and supports diversity in the military organisation, which are critical for balanced civil-military relations.

Representational recruitment of military personnel was found to have a positive impact on CMR equilibrium ( $p < 0.001$ ). The diverse recruitment promotes inclusive representation, enhancing CMR balance by ensuring that the military reflects the society it serves. This finding is supported by the Institutional and Concordance Theories and studies conducted by Agyekum (2022), Hutchful (2008), Kuwali (2022), Brewer (1991), and Perez and Strizhko (2018), which emphasise the importance of representational recruitment in promoting military legitimacy and a diverse workforce that creates an inclusive military environment where personnel feel valued and respected, resulting in stable civil-military relations.

The delivery of public goods and services by the military was found to significantly affect CMR equilibrium ( $p < 0.001$ ). This suggests that military involvement in public services

enhances its legitimacy and CMR stability, as it demonstrates the military's commitment to serving the nation. This result is consistent with Concordance Theory and the findings of Janowitz (1960), Forman and Welch (1998) and Owens (2013), which highlight the importance of military involvement in public services such as disaster management, which is crucial in building trust and preserving national interests.

Joint training between citizens, officials, and military personnel was found to impact CMR equilibrium ( $p < 0.001$ ). This signifies that collaborative training fosters mutual understanding, enhancing CMR cooperation by promoting a shared understanding of national security challenges. This finding aligns with Concordance Theory and the studies conducted by Forman and Welch (1998), Bruneau and Tollefson (2006), and Bryden and Olonisakin (2010), which emphasise the importance of joint training in promoting civil-military relations. Joint training builds trust and cooperation among key CMR players and leads to stronger ties and more effective relationships. The findings further align with Brewer (1991) on the importance of joint training, as it streamlines the roles and processes of key partners by reducing duplication of effort and improving the overall CMR effort of a stable nation.

Reforms of military institutions were found to significantly affect CMR equilibrium ( $p < 0.001$ ). This suggests that institutional reforms promote military effectiveness and CMR balance by ensuring that the military is accountable to civilian authorities. This result is consistent with Concordance Theory and the findings of Bruneau and Matei (2013), Chirwa (2015), and Cleary and McConville (2006), which highlight the importance of institutional reforms that transform or restructure government agencies and social systems to improve their performance, efficiency and effectiveness. The findings further agree with Mallik and Saha (2016), who assert that reforms are essential in promoting transparency and accountability,

hence reducing corruption and abuse of power in the military and its wider partners in the civil-military relations milieu.

The specialisation of key CMR players in defence matters was found to impact CMR equilibrium ( $p < 0.001$ ). The expertise in defence enhances informed decision-making, stabilising CMR by ensuring that policymakers have a deep understanding of national security challenges. This finding supports Institutional Theory and the studies of Bryden and Olonisakin (2010), Bruneau and Matei (2013), and Cleary and McConville (2006), which emphasise the importance of specialisation in defence matters. The importance of specialisation in defence matters is the increased efficiency, improved decision-making, and better management of civil-military relations. Specialisation leads to increased expertise and knowledge within a specific area in defence matters, which binds the partners in civil-military relations.

Professional military education was found to significantly impact CMR equilibrium ( $p < 0.001$ ). This suggests that professional education enhances military professionalism, ensuring effective CMR management by promoting a culture of accountability and transparency within the military. This result is consistent with Institutional Theory and the findings of Agyekum (2022), Hutchful (2008) and Shah (2014), which highlight the importance of professional military education in promoting military effectiveness. The importance of professional military education is that it helps officers develop strategic thinking, critical thinking and problem-solving skills required to plan and execute complex military operations, providing officers with the necessary intellectual overmatch to outwit contemporary adversaries.

### **5.3 Consequences of Interaction of Elected Authorities: Members of Parliament and Defence and Security Committee**

The study sought to analyse the consequences of the interaction of Members of Parliament (MPs) in civil-military relations. The study found that the responsibilities of the MPs in CMR

include working with impartiality by not allowing the political elites to politicise or manipulate the security sector in any way, as a means of achieving self-interests; upholding and protecting the provisions of the Constitution to avoid disfranchising the citizenry from enjoying their rights; promoting and preserving democratic principles and institutions, including being subordinate to civilian authority, practising professionalism and neutrality, and supporting democratic processes. The finding supports Concordance Theory and Cleary and McConville's (2006) study, that MPs are guardians who ensure that the military and associates operate within democratic principles and that the military must be professional by not intervening in internal politics. The professional military and the CMR stakeholders are crucial because they ensure the safety and security of a nation protecting its citizens and national interests from internal, external and extraterritorial threats.

Additionally, the roles of MPs were revealed to be the provision of accurate and unbiased information on different issues by educating and informing the public and constituents about the importance of CMR in promoting democracy and good governance. MPs also facilitate the provision of security, law enforcement and defending human rights for all Malawians without fear or favour and advocate for policies that enhance CMR in parliament and create more inclusive programmes thereby increasing knowledge among the CMR stakeholders. These findings are consistent with Concordance Theory and Bruneau and Matei (2013), who argue that MPs have to inform their constituents of defence policy matters and that defence policy should not infringe on the human rights of their constituents.

MPs also mentioned that they accommodate military personnel when they are embarking on different operations in their areas, hence playing a vital role of liaison and that they ensure that their wards do not stay in conflict with the military personnel during times of national outcry. These study findings complement the thoughts of Pantev (2005), that MPs must interact with

the military and constituents so that military operations are conducted when the need arises without infringing on the CMR stakeholders.

The roles that emerged for the MPs are quite intriguing. The roles of the MPs are in line with the studies of Pantev (2005), Cleary and McConville (2006), Bruneau and Matei (2013), Campbell and Auerswald (2015), Greentree (2021), Rawal (2022), and the Concordance Theory, which generalise the roles of the Legislature and the Executive in the arm bits of oversight of the armed forces, appropriation of the armed forces' budgets, and the shaping of national defence policy. This finding is important because oversight reduces risks and helps to identify and address potential security issues before they become major security concerns.

However, the study found that respondents' responses were more human-centric, as they touched the core of the local population. Respondents mentioned that elected authorities provide accurate and unbiased information on different issues by educating and informing the public and constituents about the importance of civil-military relations in promoting democracy and good governance. This is a departure from the autocratic tendencies that concentrated on regime security at the expense of the sovereigns. The fusion of the civilian and military worlds and information sharing contradicts Huntington (1957), who portends that the civilian and military worlds must be separate if the military is to be professional. This study is for cooperation between key CMR players so that resources are synergised in the national interest. To address Huntington's (1957) separation thoughts between the military and the civilian world, the study suggested balancing civilian control with professionalism, where the military is involved in decision-making in an advisory role as technocrats of defence and security. Involving the military in decision-making builds national cohesion and pride, critical for national morale and security.

The study sought to analyse the consequences of the interaction of the DSC. DCAF (2005) stipulates the responsibilities of the DSC in areas of budget appropriation, making laws and recommending policies that govern the armed forces, the polity and the citizenry. This is in line with the study findings which revealed that the role of the DSC is to make the military a tool for the state and allocate funds for operationalising military activities. The study found that the DSC advises the military on defence matters and gives direction on issues of national interest. This aligns with Concordance Theory and studies conducted by Bruneau and Tollefson (2006), Bryden and Olonisakin (2010), Bruneau and Matei (2006), Pantev (2005), Houngnikpo (2010), DCAF (2005), Barany (2012), Feaver (2012) and Rawal (2022), which ascertain the DSC as the provider of oversight on issues of transparency and accountability, advice on policy direction, budget appropriation and creating conditions for healthy civil-military relations among stakeholders.

The armed forces should have oversight to encourage accountability to civilian authorities and the public. Oversight helps the military implement defence policies that do not infringe on human rights and ensure that military personnel are held accountable for their operational and administrative actions. The direction DSC gave to MDF through the new Defence Force Act aligned the MDF to be a dual-purpose force capable of defending the country and contributing to the national development through MNS as an entrepreneurial entity for the nation. Consequent to the inception of the MNS, the country has a tool for maintaining food security as MNS engages in mega farm programmes.

#### **5.4 Consequences of Interaction of Civilians: Media, Local Population and Civil Society Organisations**

The study sought to analyse the consequences of the interaction of the media with its key CMR partners. Empirical evidence demonstrated that media plays a crucial role in shaping civil-

military relations as described in the study findings, often reflecting and reinforcing existing societal attitudes and divisions (Bruneau & Matei 2013; Pantev 2005; Peri 2007; Sarvaš 2000). This study, however, found that the media plays a crucial role in Malawi by enhancing transparency and accountability through broadcasting news about military issues. The media also contributes to civil-military relations by monitoring and reporting the interactions between the military forces, society, and the government. These findings echo the viewpoints of the Concordance Theory, Sarvaš (2000), Pantev (2005), Peri (2007), and Bruneau & Matei (2013), which hold that the media provides checks and balances in CMR.

Media practitioners further noted the importance for them to remain nonpartisan and professional in line with the Concordance Theory. The media revealed that they delineate themselves from active politics so that they can be professional in their operations. The media also claimed that they can keep civil-military relations in a healthy state by publishing information that does not castigate any specific entity to not disturb the equilibrium status quo. However, this is an understatement as it precludes the objective and critical eye of the media necessary for transparency and accountability.

The findings on the media entail that the key CMR players are aware of the media's role in Malawi. The media has become indispensable in implementing democratic civilian control over the military process in both emerging and established democracies. Civilian democratic control has arisen in emerging democracies from the need to increase society's democratisation and deal with the rising complexity of military issues, requiring additional competence and professional assessments. The public demands and expects that the funds, provided to the state, would be spent most effectively; this is a fundamental reason for the media to have a say on national security policy issues (Bruneau & Matei 2013; Pantev 2005). Thus, the media, which

is human-centric, would report issues professionally and avoid jeopardising national security with sensational reporting.

Conversely, the media functions that the study found surrounded on reporting of CMR issues. However, media is more than just reporting issues but also offers critical and alternative views. The media should inform and educate the key CMR players. The media should be a medium of socialisation for CMR players. The media can occasionally bring key CMR players together through interviews to check the level of endogenous interactions. In so doing, the media can bring about CMR awareness, transmit the ideal CMR culture and be a catalyst for democratisation. This argument resonates well with the propositions of Concordance Theory and the works of Peri (2007) and Rappert et al. (2012), who argue that the media reinforces military ethos and constructs operating environments necessary for maintaining national security. A positive media and military relationship improve public understanding of the military operations and activities and the military benefits from media feedback and criticism.

The study sought to analyse the consequences of the local population's interaction with its key CMR players. The study included the local population owing to the thoughts of classical philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes (1588 – 1679) and John Locke (1632 - 1704), who portend that authority to govern is given by the people and that people and the state relationships centre on a social contract that can be withdrawn if contractual obligations are not met (Boucher & Kelly 2004). The study incorporated the power of the local population, drawing from the 2019 and 2020 persistent demonstrations that resulted in the nullification and conducting of fresh presidential elections in Malawi. The power of the people brought into civil-military relations discourse a circumstantial democratisation feature. Healthy CMR requires a balanced contribution of civilians. Civilians, thus the local population, CSOs and the media monitor national security activities and, policy formulation and implementation. The

study's findings are in line with the empirical evidence of previous studies, which assert that the local population offers alternative views on national security issues directly affecting their well-being (Boucher & Kelly 2004; Bruneau and Matei 2013; Houngnikpo 2010; Pantev 2005). As such, the local population offers public oversight through public hearings, thereby ensuring that military personnel and institutions are held accountable for their actions and decisions.

The study underscores that collaborative efforts between the military and civilians are effective in reducing conflict risks and empowering locals. Similarly, during disaster relief operations, the military works alongside civilian actors and international partners to provide critical assistance. This study emphasises the significance of balancing power between the local population and the military to achieve national security objectives. The contemporary national security objectives are meant for human security, where a human being is a referent object that needs care for the wider betterment of a nation.

The study endeavoured to analyse the consequences of the interaction of the CSOs with its key CMR partners. The study revealed that CSOs play an important role in maintaining a balance between civilians and the military. The roles include ensuring citizens are adequately informed about the ideal relationship among civil-military relations players; ensuring that citizens are disseminated with the required information about the vitality of the CMR to keep the nation secure; advocating for transparent and accountable civil-military relations; and conducting policy advocacy that increases knowledge among laymen. These findings on CSOs resonate well with Concordance Theory and the works of Bryden and Olonisakin (2010), Habasonda (2010), Rappert, et al. (2012), Bruneau and Matei (2013), and Aslam and Neads (2010), which promote human security and coexistence of the civil-military relations players. This is a significant contribution to Malawi, as the public is kept informed of the importance of civil-military relations, which is a tool for maintaining peace and security in Malawi.

Furthermore, the study discovered that CSOs delineate themselves from active politics to maintain professionalism in their operations. The CSOs further revealed that they professionally handle CMR key players' subordinates during national turbulences so that they do not harass citizens when exercising their constitutional rights; and advocating for good governance and the rule of law. This is in line with Concordance Theory and the thoughts of Bruneau and Tollefson (2006) and Houngnikpo, (2010), which entangled the dichotomy of who guards the guardians. The CSOs guard the key CMR players who in turn guard the CSOs by holding them accountable in the CMR domain and beyond.

Key CMR players in Malawi understand beyond measure their roles. They understand that specialisation in security issues is important in promoting security literacy and transforming civil-military relations for democratisation (Huntington 1957; Hutchful 2008). However, CSOs in Malawi know their endogenous weaknesses as respondents lamented that, “*we are involved in handling subordinates during national turbulences so that they should not harass population when exercising their constitutional rights*”. This shows that subordinates can harass civilians if they are unprofessional in their field of expertise, hence compromising their work on advocacy in CMR. This feature calls for the transformation of CSOs, if greater democratisation is to be achieved. Unprofessional CSOs lack credibility and lose public trust, which undermines their ability to influence policy and advocate for change.

## **5.5 Consequences of Interaction of Civil Authorities: District Security Technical Committee and Ministry of Defence**

The study endeavoured to analyse the consequences of the interaction of DSTC with its key CMR partners. The study revealed that the DSTC is involved in information sharing, resource allocation, crisis response and management. The DSTC ensures the effective coordination and collaboration of security agencies in addressing security challenges at the district level. The

DSTC also collaborates closely with security institutions to enhance security in their respective areas of responsibility. The findings align with the Malawi National Security Policy (Republic of Malawi 2018), which stipulates the roles of the DSTC, which coordinates resource allocation and crisis response. The DSTC findings are also in line with the propositions of Concordance Theory and the studies of Obi (2008) and Phinos and Ogbu (2019), which asserted that the committee is responsible for coordinating security initiatives among various stakeholders, thereby underscoring the importance of a collaborative approach to security matters to enhance trust and ensure that security efforts are aligned with local needs. The findings further agree with the latter's studies which confirm that the committee is important in managing security crises through effective communication and resource allocation and facilitating rapid responses and mobilise resources to support civil authorities, thereby ensuring public safety, as such building positive civil-military relations. This result is important as the DSTC contributes to national cohesion from the grassroots, providing a vehicle for national security and development.

The study further discovered that the DSTC conducts threat assessment and analysis, planning, and coordination, and community engagement at the district level. The DSTC further engages in activities aimed at enhancing the capacity and professionalism of security forces at the district level. This is in line with the decentralisation of the security apparatus to quickly respond to threats at the grassroots level in consonance with the Malawi National Security Policy (Obi 2008; Phinos & Ogbu 2019; Republic of Malawi 2018). However, the study found that the DSTC is still in its infancy and where security threats are minimal, the committee has lower visibility and is less known to the polity. A deliberate awareness approach by the DCs to make the committee known and to build the capacity so that DSTCs serve the interests of the citizenry is required.

The study sought to analyse the consequences of the interaction of the MoD and other key CMR stakeholders. The MoD utilisation of resources in the military and the division of responsibilities between the military and civilian experts agree with the study of Bruneau and Matei (2013), which purports that the MoD bridges the gap between the civil authorities and the armed forces by acting as a central organisation for strategic management of the armed forces. The results further showed that the MoD makes sure there is a peaceful working relationship between the civil servants and the military, where necessary and makes the civil servants understand the nature of the military work. These findings align with the Institutional and Concordance Theories and a study by Phiri (2008), who argues that the MoD was created to act as a bridge between civil authorities and the armed forces and act as a central control for the armed forces' strategic management. As such, the MoD controls the operations of the military and confines the military in its limited space of operations as per the constitutional mandate. The MoD lacks expertise in defence and security matters. It needs experts in defence and security matters to fully comprehend and contribute to the issues of national interest in a democratic world. This finding is important as it has exposed the limitation of the MoD. Capacity building through specialisation to allow individuals to focus on defence and security areas can lead to MoD efficiency and productivity in giving strategic direction to the military.

## **5.6 Consequences of Interaction of the Judiciary**

The study analysed the consequences of the interaction of the judiciary with its key partners. The study found that the judiciary plays a crucial role in civil-military relations, acting as a mediator and enforcing civilian control over the military. This finding corroborates with a study by Rios-Figueroa (2016) and the Institutional Theory, which purport that constitutional courts reduce uncertainty in conflicts by providing information to the parties involved. In addition, judge advocates foster appropriate civil-military relations by ensuring civilian leadership preferences are understood and followed by the military. However, courts have historically

shown indifference to military institutions, potentially reducing their effectiveness in overseeing the military within the constitutional framework (Cawthra et al. 2007; Collins 2018). The judiciary provides checks and balances ensuring that the military does not overstep its authority of safeguarding the nation. However, when matters of human rights and security are a dilemma, the best option could be that which protects the national security to safeguard the nation.

The evolution of constitutional law and its interpretation is essential in creating a balance of power between civil and military institutions (Khan & Jaffari 2023; Rios-Figueroa 2016). As democratic norms and human rights concerns increasingly influence military discipline, the judiciary's role in civil-military relations must evolve and strive to maintain civilian control while addressing legitimate military needs (Chuter 2011; Collins 2018; Ibu 2023; Idrees & Khan 2018; Khan & Jaffari 2023). The study, however, underscored the importance of the judiciary to mediate and adjudicate on issues affecting the polity and the military, where national security must prevail to safeguard the territorial integrity and the people.

### **5.7 Consequences of Interaction of the Military**

The study analysed the consequences of interaction of the MDF with its key partners in CMR. The military's roles in civil-military relations have evolved to encompass a wide range of functions beyond traditional war-fighting. These roles can be categorised into three core areas: collective defence, collective security, and aid to the nation (Republic of Malawi 2002; Wilén & Strömbom 2021). The study discovered that the military provides social services such as hospitals, education, sports and culture to the military personnel and the citizenry. This is in line with Concordance Theory and the thoughts of Biddle (1986), Finer (2002) and Schiff (2012), who argue that the military, the political elites, and the citizenry should aim for a cooperative and integrative relationship to stimulate a healthy CMR required in a participative

democracy. The integration and fusion of the military and the citizenry through social services brings out ownership and security of both entities. This line of thinking cements the reality that military personnel come from the very population they serve and that the population creates the military. As such, the military must be viewed as an agent of the government, citizenry and the polity.

The study findings also highlighted that the human-centric military in a democracy must put the protection of its people first, if they deem the regime and some centres of political power are infringing the sovereigns' human rights. These findings align with the works of Huntington (2000), Desch (2001), Eshiet (2022) and Nundwe et al. (2023), who argue that professional militaries are subordinate to the democratically elected civilians and that where necessary, protection of civilians must reign supreme on the spectrum of national security. The expanding scope of military tasks has implications for civil-military relations, necessitating a re-evaluation of traditional models like Huntington's separation of spheres (Rapp 2015). Military leaders are now expected to actively participate in strategy-making and policy discussions, given their expertise and public trust (Rapp 2015). The military's operational experiences and role conceptions significantly influence civil-military relations, shaping the institution's place within the state and society (Harig et al. 2021). This evolving landscape requires a comprehensive understanding of the military's diverse roles and their impact on democratic civilian control, operational effectiveness, and institutional efficiency (Bruneau & Matei 2021). This result is significant because the contemporary militaries are modelled in a duality system where it is postured for national security and development, being a force of good that protects democratic principles and encourage national development.

## **5.8 Consequences of Disparities in Civil-Military Relations**

The study analysed the disparities and areas of improvement in Malawi's CMR. The study faulted the recruitment process that allows politicians to bring their party cadres into the security sector and quickly promote them to high-ranking positions. Such recruitment processes are a catalyst for military personnel to practise patronage systems and intervene in domestic politics to serve their political masters who facilitated their employment (Agyekum 2022; Eshiet 2022; Kuwali 2022). In addition, it was found that politicians disenfranchise public servants from executing their tasks freely which the Institutional Theory, Decalo (1976) and Eshiet (2022) condemned, by stating that the politicisation of the armed forces has to be avoided as it divides the officers' corps and the rank and file, resulting in a polarised military capable of intervening in politics.

The role theory portends that the differentiation of roles in civil-military relations is meant to improve the effectiveness of the civil-military relations system. The apparent variation of roles between the centres of political power represents a precondition for successful democratisation (Huntington 1957; Pantev 2005). While the study revealed the need for government officials to have the requisite knowledge of CMR, just as it was found in Phiri (2008), and Bruneau and Matei (2013), the need for such knowledge seems farfetched. Such knowledge would be offered by schools that offer executive courses in statecraft or from the professional military education (PME) institutions mandated to offer joint training and education of the key CMR players, institutions that are currently at an infant level in Malawi. The PME is one of the stabilising factors among the military, the polity and the citizenry in that it provides leaders with the knowledge necessary to achieve an intellectual overmatch when faced with adversarial environments.

Feaver (1995) noted that military professionals and political elites need to balance the amount of civilian control required to avoid politicising the military, civilianising the military and militarising the civilians. That balance can be found in the scale of meritocracy in the appointments of both military personnel, bureaucrats and political elites entrusted to oversee the military. Improving collaboration between the DSTC and the military would ensure that bureaucrats, the local population and military personnel have the requisite knowledge of the benefits of having healthy civil-military relations in their responsibilities (Schiff 2012). Multiple centres of power in the CMR operating environment ensures counterbalancing among stakeholders and demystifies the civilian control question. In this case, if the military acts questionably, the various centres of oversight power can control and shape its behaviour to conform to the democratic values.

### **5.9 Effectiveness of Elected Authorities: Members of Parliament, Defence and Security Committee to Maintain Stable Civil-Military Relations**

The study endeavoured to examine the effectiveness of MPs in CMR. Based on the results of the study, it can be established that respondents discerned that MPs are crucial in the oversight of the CMR critical for democratisation. The importance of oversight is seen in many ways. The effectiveness of oversight is felt in many areas of government. Oversight is an indicator of how well the democratic process is working, because it demonstrates how the government can respond to failures or gaps in policy-making and implementation (Campbell & Auerswald 2015; Greentree 2021; Griner 2016; Pantev 2005; Schiff 1995).

However, the respondents were inward-looking in their approach to oversight as they failed to mention the checks and balances of the executive powers. Oversight is critical because it is an opportunity for the legislative branch to check the enormous powers wielded by executive leaders (Griner 2016; Huntington 1957; Phiri 2008). The lapse of the inward-looking oversight

by MPs can be detrimental to CMR, consequently leading to failure to control the Executive arm of the government, hence an erosion of the separation of powers. The inward-looking oversight is the effectiveness' familiarity gap in the roles of MPs, which can slow down the democratisation process in Malawi. The absence of counterbalancing the executive powers can lead to impunity and mistrust among key CMR players, fostering a negative civil-military relationship. This result is important because it has exposed the oversight familiarity gap among the elected authorities. This gap leads to inefficiency of the elected authorities and difficulty in holding them accountable for their actions and performance.

The study undertook to examine the effectiveness of the DSC in CMR. The effectiveness of the DSC in shaping policies that foster positive civil-military relations, such as the establishment of the Malawi National Service, illustrates the committee's vital role in driving reforms that address national needs like entrepreneurship and food security. The establishment of the MNS as the fourth arm of the military aligns with the growing recognition of human security as a crucial element in democratisation processes. The human-centric nature of these reforms and the role of the MNS resonate with the Concordance Theory and the scholarly works of Buzan et al. (1997), Collins (2013), Chirwa (2015), and Rawal (2022).

Additionally, the review of the Malawi Defence Force Act by the DSC highlights its pivotal role in aligning security policies with democratic principles and human security. Such reviews and reforms help resolve policy gaps and ensure that the country's security framework remains focused on human development and national interests, further strengthening Malawi's democratisation efforts. These benchmarks align with the propositions of the Concordance Theory, DCAF (2005), and Cleary and McConville (2006). These reforms streamlined processes and have reduced bureaucracies and increased productivity in that MNS is now engaged in food security and infrastructure development, a thing which could not happen

without reforms from autocracy to democracy. The duality of the MDF has positioned the force to be both defence and development-oriented, a contribution much sought after in democratic states.

### **5.10 Effectiveness of the Civilians: Media Local Population and Civil Society Organisations to Maintain Stable Civil-Military Relations**

The study examined the effectiveness of the media in its interactions in CMR. A well-established media requires personnel trained in the defence and security field. Respondents to this study focused their responses on reporting security issues for transparency and accountability as well as averting confrontations between the military, citizenry, and the polity. It is worth noting that reporting is not the only measure of effectiveness of the media in CMR and democratisation, but also participating in bringing alternative security policies of national interest (Hutchful 2008; Pantev 2005). Part of the reason for the media inadequacy may be found in the absence of research institutions, think tanks, and media journalists trained on security issues in Malawi. These themes match with the scholarly works of Pantev (2005), Bruneau and Matei (2013), and the Concordance Theory. Hence, there is an endogenous familiarity gap in the roles of the media.

Media in Malawi must work beyond reporting and provide alternatives to CMR actors on defence policies as a requisite in advancing democracy. Joint training with the military in programmes of the whole of the government approach would help the media acquire the requisite knowledge to protect the nation. Media personnel should have critical defence analysis capability to analyse defence policies, strategies and decisions to hold those in power accountable. The knowledgeable media have a contextual and complex understanding of defence issues, and can help the public understand the implications of defence policies and decisions.

The study sought to examine the effectiveness of the local population in discharging its CMR duties. The study found that the local population can take to task any military actions that infringe on their rights; and support efforts to strengthen civilian control over the military where they act as sources giving intelligence to the military on areas where they see or detect that something is fishy; offering good governance as local people elect best leaders of their choice to meet their needs, hence peace and development. Effective citizen participation is an indicator of the local population's effectiveness as engaged citizens actively participate in civic activities, such as attending public meetings, voicing their concerns, and providing feedback on civil-military relations. These findings resonate well with the principles of participative democracy enshrined in the scholarly works of Cleary and McConville (2006) and the Concordance Theory.

Additionally, the study revealed that the local population demands transparency and accountability, since effective citizens are concerned with the interactions of human security, development, and CMR. The citizenry seeks information on defence policies, military expenditures, and decision-making processes, and participates in peaceful protests and demonstrations in opposition to defective civil-military relations. This response reinforces the earlier scholarly work of Boucher and Kelly (2004) on the social contract, which postulates that the population is obliged to take action if contractual obligations are not met by their representatives.

Further to this, respondents mentioned that the local population is involved in accomplishing a series of tasks without corrupt practices, which leads to quality output. They are also actively engaged in community security initiatives, participate in public debates and discussions on defence and security issues, and support efforts to strengthen civilian control over the military by alerting security agencies as informants on probable threats. The local population

contributes to the defence budget by paying taxes and providing quality manpower to the military through recruitment. These discoveries align with the Concordance Theory and the works of Williams (2017) and Newport (2017), which emphasise the importance of a participative local population as a base for CMR and democracy. They argue that while citizens may not be directly involved in creating the CMR bargain, CMR cannot be sustained without their acquiescence. Williams (2017) and Concordance theory further contend that for democracy to thrive, the public must be engaged, ensuring a healthy balance in CMR.

It is evident from this study that the local population is the base for all key civil-military relations players. They form a base for recruitment for each CMR actor within the territorial bounds. The power relations of the local population as an informal institution and that of the formal institutions such as the CSOs, the judiciary, the military, the legislature and the executive, have a significant effect on CMR. The power of the people in their informal setting or opinion leaders as individuals, have brokering powers to influence national bargains (Dulani 2011; Lembani 2013). The informal and formal institutions' bargaining powers are exemplified by the threat assessments on the local population's lives and property, post-2019 tripartite elections that drove security organisations to protect the local population against the then-regime (Nundwe et al. 2023). Hence, this study recognises the power of informal institutions on CMR decision-making processes and the importance of a human-centric approach to security issues that serve the interests of a nation.

The study endeavoured to examine the effectiveness of the CSOs in CMR. CSOs that are involved in governance issues are important in democratisation processes. It is evident in Malawi that CSOs play an important role in defence and security issues. CSOs guard against the securitisation of non-security issues that benefit the selected few. Respondents additionally pointed out that CSOs were instrumental in luring the military to provide security for the

demonstrators. CSOs' involvement in CMR issues is a practical realisation of the principle of transparency of the security sector in a democratic society, a standard that conforms to the earlier scholarly works of Barany (2012) and the Concordance Theory.

In addition, the study discovered that the Malawi governance civil society institutions produce analytical information on various national security issues, educate the public, inform the international community about the country's military security policy, raise essential security issues for public and expert discussion, add to the parliament's capacity to oversee the processes in the military sector, and provide the government with different views on defence policy. These principles correspond with the previous pedagogical works of Pantev (2005) and the Concordance Theory, which portend that CSOs are the bedrock of democratisation.

### **5.11 Effectiveness of the Civil Authorities: District Security Technical Committee and Ministry of Defence to Maintain Stable Civil-Military Relations**

The study examined the effectiveness of the DSTC in discharging its duties with its key partners in CMR. The study discovered that the DSTC is engaged in transparency and accountability; enhanced communication, collaboration, and coordination of security issues; conflict resolution and mediation; and providing the required resources to enhance peace and security in the district. These effectiveness yardsticks correspond with the previous scholarly works of Biddle (1986), Finer (2002) and Schiff (2012), who argue that fusion and cooperation of centres of power are standards for a healthy CMR.

The DSTC provides expertise and represents the interests of elected authorities by implementing policies made by elected authorities. DSTC is a virgin committee that needs full implementation at the district level, if healthy civil-military relations are to be enhanced. Some respondents were ignorant of the committee, which is stipulated in the Malawi National

Security Policy (Republic of Malawi, 2018). As such, the effectiveness of the DSTC can be partial, mainly in districts that are ignorant of the existence of such a committee. The DCs need to know their role as Chairpersons of such committees, which are a vehicle for a healthy CMR and a catalyst of democratisation from the grassroots level.

The study examined the effectiveness of the MoD in civil-military relations. The MoD's effectiveness towards democratisation, as revealed by the study, lies in its engagement in transparency and accountability in defence spending and procurement, as well as in its commitment to democratic oversight through mechanisms for civilian scrutiny of military activities. The Ministry plays a central role in fostering effective Civil-Military Relations (CMR) by collaborating with various stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organisations, and local communities, in addressing security challenges and facilitating disaster response. This aligns with the Concordance Theory and the scholarly works of Cleary and McConville (2006), and Bruneau and Matei (2013), who highlight the importance of transparency and democratic oversight in military governance.

However, the study's findings also raise important critiques regarding the structural and organisational arrangements of the MoD. Critics argue that the Ministry is heavily staffed with bureaucrats who lack adequate knowledge of defence and security matters. This staffing gap is said to erode the integrity of the MoD, limiting its effectiveness in key areas such as defence spending, procurement, and military oversight. The Institutional Theory, Phiri (2008), Charman (2015) and Chirwa (2015) suggest that such organisational weaknesses compromise the MoD's ability to fulfil its mandate effectively, despite its central role in promoting democratic principles in the military. A structural reform, including a more balanced staffing of functional specialists with expertise in defence matters, is proposed as a necessary step to addressing these shortcomings and enhancing the MoD's role in democratisation efforts.

In addition, the Ministry has demonstrated its capacity to support the military with finances, recruitment, and training, while also playing a significant role in disaster mitigation efforts, such as during Cyclone Freddy and the COVID-19 pandemic. These contributions are indicative of the Ministry's broader role in coordinating military aid to civil authorities and ensuring security during national crises. The benchmarks of partnership, coordination, oversight and ensuring military aid to civil authorities match the previous scholarly works of Schiff (2005), and Cleary and McConville (2006) and the stipulations of the Constitution of Malawi (2008) on the mandate of the MDF. Despite these successes, critics highlight a need for reforms within the MoD's structure to bridge the familiarity gap and improve its effectiveness in managing civil-military relations.

### **5.12 Effectiveness of the Judiciary to Maintain Stable Civil-Military Relations**

The study examined the effectiveness of the Judiciary in discharging its CMR duties. On one hand, the judges in Malawi have contributed tremendously to CMR and democratisation. A case in point is the constitutional judges' defence of democracy in their historic February 2020 ruling that annulled the disputed May 2019 presidential elections. The ruling reviewed and suggested that the majority of the suffrage should mean 50+1, not a mere first-past-the-post (FPTP) rule. Fifty plus 1 ensures the president gets a majority and is accepted country-wide as none of Malawi's political regions could suffice a 50+1 vote alone. As such, a 50+1 majority curbs voting patterns of regionalism and ethnocentrism and democratises the nation (Kuwali 2022; Nkhata et al. 2019). This result is significant because it unifies the nation and provides a condition where a presidential candidate would be accepted by a wider majority. The 50+1 would lead to the demise of several political parties that align with a region or ethnic group, setting grounds for the population to support a party on an ideological basis. This situation would lead to intergroup support required for national cohesion.

On the other hand, the courts have shown insensitivities to security issues. There have been cases where human trafficking has been misinterpreted as asylum-seeking and human traffickers have gone scot-free in the name of human rights. The interface between CMR players is required to bridge the paradox of the security-human rights connectivity gap. Ibu (2022) counsels that in the paradox of the security-human rights dilemma, national interests and the safety of the citizens should take precedence. The finding is consistent with Institutional and Concordance Theories that promote the protection of national interests and citizens. When the nation is protected, it entails collective rights, which are essential for development at the national rather than individual level. This situation benefits the nation, a people rather than an individual.

### **5.13 Effectiveness of the Military to Maintain Stable Civil-Military Relations**

The study sought to examine the effectiveness of the MDF in CMR. The study shows that respondents encompassed the mandates of the military as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi (2002) such as upholding the constitutional order, protecting the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country, and military aid to civil authorities. These military effectiveness benchmarks correspond with the propositions of scholarly works of Buzan et al. (1997), Huntington (2000), Desch (2001), Schiff (2012), Collins (2013) and Shah (2014). However, respondents fell short of mentioning that the military carries out operations through multilateral and bilateral treaties entered. Democratisation entails cooperation among nations to ensure collective security. Malawi is involved in peace support operations (PSO) for international cooperation to ensure a democratic and safer world. The MDF participates in international cooperation and peacekeeping missions promoting global peace and security required for human development.

The roles of the military were assessed to be inadequately known by key players in CMR. This role familiarity gap leads to duplication of effort and waste of resources. The problem of the MDF participation overload at the expense of line security organisations has to be addressed. Reforming and restructuring other security organisations are necessary so that they are capable of executing their tasks and freeing the MDF for the core functions of protecting the nation from external aggression and managing disasters. Capacity-building efforts to streamline the other security organisations to focus on their core duties would increase their efficiency and effectiveness and improve their public trust.

#### **5.14 Civil-Military Relations Effectiveness Impediments in Malawi**

The study further sought to examine the problems emanating from key CMR partners in a democratic Malawi. The study revealed that there are some impediments in the implementation of the roles of key CMR actors. Respondents indicated that juniors fear reprisal. Respondents indicated that senior officers do not listen to their juniors due to political affiliations and personal interests. As such, political pressure mounts when exercising duties. Eshiet (2022) elucidates that such endogenous practices by officers' corps lure the military to intervene in internal politics to correct the anomaly. However, the military ends up indulging in autocratic tendencies and clinging to power.

In addition, the study revealed the other contending political issue as mistrust among the CMR players. Elected and civil authorities may not trust the security institutions, and vice versa, due to competing political and military interests. Kohn (1997) coined this phenomenon as a blurred bureaucracy, which is a catalyst for unhealthy CMR. This milieu causes a breakdown in communication and leads to unrealistic political and military expectations (Huntington 1957).

Such situations have led to the continuous firing of defence force chiefs and put the nation on a precarious path to democratisation (Nundwe et al. 2023).

The effects of multiple players with multiple interests in CMR are detractors of democratisation processes. Eshiet (2022) opines that the idiosyncrasies of military leaders have a greater motivational effect for military individuals to carry out their ambitions in fragmented and unstructured political systems. Eshiet (2022) mentions that fear of removal from the coveted position of the defence force commander can be a motivation for a personal power grab. As such, appointing authorities must respect the military profession by not firing the defence force commanders haphazardly, as that might be a catalyst for some generals to intervene in internal politics.

The study noted that politicians use the military as a tool of the state through unrealistic tasking hence the military experiences participation overload in internal issues. Respondents mentioned soldiers being involved in more constabulary tasks than necessary when befitting security organisations are available. Pulling security during national examinations, protecting forests, escorting fuel tankers and quelling riots were some of the mentioned constabulary tasks. Buzan et al. (1997), Forman and Welch (1998), Collins (2013), Owens (2013), and the Concordance Theory advocate necessary military involvement in constabulary tasks, given the shrinking space of international wars and the emergence of non-traditional threats such as pandemics, transnational crimes and others. However, such tasks must be justified and meet a threshold measure for deploying militaries to maintain law and order. The threshold is when the police are overwhelmed in situations of emergency, civil unrest, insurgency or terrorism, border security and support to civil authorities to help maintain law and order.

In contrast, the study revealed that unnecessary constabulary tasks were given to the military against the backdrop of the inefficiency of the befitting security organisations. While this is the

case, nothing seemed to be done to correct the anomaly by restructuring and reforming the nonperforming security agencies. Military presence increased in public spaces during the period of this study. The increased presence of the military is against the democratisation process that requires a reduction of the military presence in the public domain, particularly when substituting the police with the military (Forman & Welch 1998; Huntington 1995). The military, being the last line of defence, should be used sparingly and with distinct timelines for the completion of the internal security task at hand. The other security organisations must be reformed and restructured to make them efficient. Otherwise, the tasks given to the military seem infinite in the absence of measures to empower other security organisations. The military's participation overload underscores the growing disconnect between the military's operational capacity and the government's broader socio-political aspirations, a gap which needs bridging with familiarisation of the stakeholders' roles to stabilise civil-military relations in a democratic Malawi.

The study further revealed that resistance to change from autocratic tendencies to democratic principles presents hurdles in implementing the roles of key CMR players. The finding bodes with the scholarly evidence of Eshiet (2022), who posits that the vestiges of autocracy present bottlenecks to democratisation. Some civil-military relations players stick to what they believe and do not want to be transformed; hence, it is difficult to implement roles in CMR to democratise the country. Resistance to change in Malawi is owed to the vestiges of the colonial system and the authoritarianism era that indoctrinated politicians who are still around in Malawi's political space. This result is important because it helps to focus resources on reforms to improve the efficiency of key CMR players in Malawi. Such gaps like abuse of power and human rights can be focused on reforms to improve the civil-military relations among the partners.

The study revealed that inadequate resources such as human capital, knowledge and equipment contribute to defects in CMR. A viable CMR is a function of adequate and proficient resources (Cleary & McConville 2006; Huntington 1995). Respondents mentioned incompetent human resources recruited into the force, knowledge and a lack of material resources as obstacles in implementing a viable CMR. Recruitment of the military force to strengthen democracy must be representational of the societal fabric of a nation to avoid internal divisions between the officers' corps and the rank-and-file (Agyekum 2022; Huntington 1957; Hutchful 2008; Kuwali 2022; Schiff 1995). On the part of the military as a key CMR player, the entity is quite limited in terms of logistics. The military requires non-kinetic equipment and expertise during military operations other than war (MOOTWA). In these operations, the military lacks expertise and the necessary equipment, but becomes the only handy tool in times of disasters, complex emergencies and crises. The oversight bodies must equate such military objectives to the military means and ways and appropriately equip them.

The military also requires professionals and experts in procurement management. The military's inadequacy of resources might be a result of tenderpreneurship and misprocurement. Bid rigging, political arm-twisting, fraud, corruption, fronting and insider deals catalyse the erosion of value in the public procurement system, hence denying the military from acquiring state-of-the-art equipment. These negatives are in line with Mallik and Saha's (2016), and Ouma, and Shilungu's (2020) studies, which place the CMR in an unhealthy status and a cause for insecurity. This result is important as it directs to areas of reform to curb corruption and improve civil-military relations.

The study found that there is inadequate knowledge about the roles of CMR players in the country. The knowledge gap emanates from the lack of coordination among security organisations, resulting in partial knowledge about the roles of the military. These standards

augur well with the Concordance Theory and the previous scholarly evidence from Chirwa (2015) and Williams (2017). The situation has built animosity among security organisations. There is a lingering concern from the security organisations that the military is being favoured, while the military feels overtasked. The negative feeling of the security organisations threatens the stability of the nation. The military feels overloaded with constabulary tasks, while the other security organisations feel sidelined from their core functions. Such a situation reduces the overall effectiveness of security organisations, making it more challenging to address security threats. The status quo in Malawi also leads to increased costs as security organisations duplicate efforts or respond to security threats that could have been prevented. Furthermore, such a situation leads to decreased morale among personnel that affects motivation and performance, and it also brings a situation where it is challenging to hold security organisations accountable for their actions in the event that their roles and responsibilities are unclear.

Given the role conflict, radical reforms to orient key CMR players towards their mandate are required. This agrees with Williams (2017), who argues that when the roles of the CMR players are inadequately known, the effectiveness of the military is cosmetically and superficially measured. As such, the roles of the military should be well understood by CMR actors for effective and efficient tasking. CMR role education at individual, societal and national levels should be conducted, because it is only the knowledgeable population that would contribute towards a healthy CMR. Establishment of clear roles and responsibilities among key CMR players can also help mitigate the role familiarity problem with the CMR system. Regular reviews and evaluation of the roles and responsibilities can also help to identify and address the role conflict present in Malawi CMR system.

## **5.15 Civil-Military Relations Rhombus Diamond Framework**

The study built an analytical framework to help communicate the findings and enable the identification of patterns and relationships among key civil-military relations players, which can lead to new insights and discoveries when used in further studies. The framework merged the Institutional and Concordance Theories and evidence from literature analysis and created a hybrid model that combines elements of both theories. The framework fused the stakeholders' analysis and the synthesis of the three objectives to inform the framework for the management of civil-military relations in the context of Malawi. The framework is coined as a CMR Rhombus Diamond Framework, because it has the four key CMR players in the apex and the military in the middle to keep the shape of the Rhombus Diamond, hence a healthy state of CMR.

The Rhombus Diamond Framework presents the human-centric approach to governance in a democratic state where the military plays a pivotal role in securing the nation. The theory shifts from the classical political-military complex paradigm, where the military and political instruments dominated the security sector (Buzan et al. 1997; Collins 2013; Harig et al. 2022; Huntington 1957; Wilén and Strömbom 2021). It aims to keep the governance structure in equilibrium. The CMR Rhombus Diamond Framework is the nexus and contains elected authorities, civil authorities, civilians and the judiciary that interact with the military and shape CMR outcomes. Any governance tip on the scale towards one element of power brings about disequilibrium, resulting in security threats to a country. Hence, CMR depends on the relationships among four independent instruments of power and the military in a democracy.

In this thesis, the relationship between the military (dependent variable) and key CMR players (independent variables) shall shape the outcome of democratic governance. It is argued that for the military to be a fulcrum, there are determinant factors that shape and hold the fulcrum claim.

It is further propositioned that each power: elected authorities; civilians; civil authorities; the judiciary and the military, has a bearing on the CMR path to democratisation. The study argues that for the military to keep the elected authorities, the judiciary, civilians and the civil authorities in balance, all need to have equal power of one (1). The military must always have a value of zero (0) to remain a fulcrum to keep the elected authorities, the civil authorities, civilians and the judiciary in equilibrium, to remain a secure and stable nation.

The Rhombus Diamond Framework, derived from the centres of power in the CMR system, could help generate a CMR outcome essential for national security and stability. The framework could achieve such a healthy CMR condition in that the military is a centrifugal force, keeping in check the other four key CMR players as it has a monopoly of coercive power. Such a military is a precondition to democratisation and a function of merit-based promotions, merit-based appointments, joint training and education between the military, citizenry and government officials, representational recruitment, reforms of the military institution, specialisation of the key civil-military relations players on defence matters, professionalisation through professional military education and delivery of public goods and services. This assertion agrees with the theories and studies of stability (Bruneau & Matei 2013; Hounnikpo 2010; Huntington 1996; Schiff 1995), which encourage democratic civilian control, professionalism and cooperation among key players of CMR. Such an approach is essential because it improves decision-making by bringing together diverse perspectives and expertise in CMR.

On the other apex, the Judiciary plays a crucial role that involves legal interpretation of the military's roles and the other key players in managing domestic and international affairs. The Judiciary enforces the rule of law, fulfils its role in protecting human rights and curbs abuses of military powers as well as validating military interventions. In exchange for security, the

Judiciary resolves disputes between civilians and the military, ensuring that conflicts are resolved fairly and impartially in line with the theory of Schiff (1995) and studies of Rios-Figueroa (2016). The Judiciary is crucial in keeping the CMR in balance, ensuring that the military operates within the bounds of the law and respects the rights of civilians.

On the other apex, civil authorities such as the Ministry of Defence and the District Technical Security Committee present the nation with expertise and represent the interests of elected authorities, whereas the elected authorities such as the Executive and the Legislature with the Defence and Security Committee of Parliament have oversight powers through democratic control and shaping defence policy. The oversight and coordination roles are in line with Schiff (1995) and Obi (2008). It is important to align military actions with civilian priorities and values to maintain national security and stable civil-military relations. Oversight and coordination promote better resource allocation, ensuring that resources are used effectively and efficiently. Aligning priorities to resources would address the under-resourcing and task overload for the MDF, as pulse keepers would match capabilities, intentions and the prevailing threats.

The other apex of civilians, thus the local population, CSOs and the media monitor the activities of other civil-military relations key players. Civilians offer alternative views on national security policy and provide a medium as a knowledge market centre to inform partners of their roles and others' roles to build cohesion and participatory culture requisite to a democratic country. The monitoring and reporting of the activities of CMR players are in line with the studies of Hutchful (2008), Habasonda (2010) and the Concordance Theory of Schiff (1995). It is important that the local population, CSOs and the media are involved in CMR, because civilians have a right to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives, including defence and security issues. Civilians bring diverse perspectives and expertise to

defence and security issues, which can inform more inclusive and effective decision-making on issues affecting their well-being.

The framework assumes that the military itself can only be a fulcrum if it is professional, and performs its tasks in line with democratic values of accountability and responsibility and is subject to civilian democratic control, efficiency and effectiveness. This assertion agrees with the Institutional Theory of Huntington (1957), which encourages civilian control and professionalism of the military in exchange for not intervening in domestic politics. It is important for the military to be professional, as it is an enduring profession and the last line of power in terms of internal and external conflict. A professional military helps build nationalism and public trust, which are essential for national security and stability.

The maintenance of the equilibrium of the Rhombus Diamond Framework can further be achieved in the Malawi environment through robust and continuous engagement among the identified key CMR actors in the stakeholder analysis and matrix table. The synthesis of the factors that maintain the balance of civil-military relations, the consequences of the interaction and the effectiveness of the key civil-military relations actors in Malawi revealed that the elected authorities are the owners and have a high impact on defence and security policy and processes. The elected authorities in this interaction are committed to implementing change, and they view other stakeholders as too technical and lacking in clarity about the preferred approach to implement change. To manage the elected authorities, interface meetings, executive seminars, familiarisation tours to the deployment areas and increased tenure of office for the Parliamentary Defence and Security Committee are proposed. The responsibility to manage the elected authorities should rest with the Commander in Chief, the Ministry of Defence and the Defence and Security Committee of the Parliament.

Civil authorities stake in the realm of civil-military relations were assessed as low in that they are only required to provide specific expertise on a need basis. Civil authorities might resist change as it was shown that joint training between the military personnel, government officials and the civil-society to implement the whole of the government approach to national threat scored low. Meaning that stakeholders were sceptical in having joint training. This risk of low interest in civil-military relations by the civil authorities can be mitigated through interface meetings, executive seminars and participation in professional military education by civil authorities so that they understand security issues to be too important to be managed by the military personnel only but by all the instruments of national power. Chief secretary should be responsible for the civil authorities to understand their role in civil-military relations to keep the nation stable and secure.

Civilians' stake in defence and security policies is the need for peace and security in Malawi. All stakeholder agree that civilians must be committed to change in the interest of maintenance of peace and security. However, civilians view other defence and security policy implementers as too technical and view many security measures and infringing in human rights. Executive seminars and civil-military relations awareness campaigns are critical to mitigate the risks. The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Malawi chairperson, Traditional Leaders and Civil Society Organisations Chairpersons should take lead to ensure their constituents understand the risks and mitigation measures of civil-military relations to avoid the country stride into violence.

The judiciary stake in civil-military relations is by ensuring justice for all and interpretation of the defence and security policy. The potential impact is medium as the judiciary views human rights and security as dichotomous. In this regard, the judiciary is committed to implement change in defence and security matters. The balancing act is required for security concerns and

human rights protection. However, contextual considerations such as threat level, the effectiveness of security measures and impact on vulnerable groups should be considered in achieving the collective national security goals. Interface meetings, executive seminars with the Chief Justice as lead may improve the state of civil-military relations in Malawi.

The military stakes in the civil-military relations are high in that it is responsible for operationalisation of the defence and security policy. The military's expectation in the interaction is when the military is sacrosanct; the thinking that the military is untouchable and demanding absolute respect and reverence. In this regard the military might resist change and guard against involvement of other stakeholders in military issues. The strategy to reverse the sacrosanct motives is to provide professional military educations to the military personnel at all levels which is essential in reforms in line with democratic principles. The defence force commander is designated to champion inclusiveness in defence and security policy interactions.

Common factors to all five key civil-military relations players are that they need to remain in a moderate range and avoid politicisation, role conflicts, participate in defence policies, be professional and base career advancements on meritocracy and representation. If these factors are not put in check, the diamond loses shape and results in a disequilibrium and increased security threats to the Malawi nation. As such, the Rhombus Diamond Framework serves to examine the relationship between civil and military actors in areas of interaction, roles and responsibilities. The framework also identifies challenges and potential areas of civil-military conflict and further develops strategies to improve civil-military relations, enhance cooperation and promote effective governance through the distribution of centres of power to different players for checks and balances. The Rhombus Diamond Framework takes the whole-of-the – society approach and in so doing provides a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of

civil-military relations by highlighting the complex interactions between elected authorities, civil authorities, civilians, judiciary and the military and promote effective governance and stability in the security sector in Malawi.

## **5.16 Conclusion**

Chapter Five has shown that there are endogenous and exogenous factors that determine the status of CMR. The study revealed that a healthy CMR is a function of meritocracy in the areas of appointments, promotions and representational recruitment so that those recruited into the military represent the societal fabric of the nation to provide self-regulation of the military. In addition to the latter, factors such as delivery of public goods and services, joint training between citizenry, government officials and the military personnel, reforms, specialisation in defence and security matters and professional military education, are at the core of keeping CMR in equilibrium to maintain peace and security in a nation.

The study showed that the roles of the key CMR players vary for a purpose. The purpose of each one guard the other. The consequences of interaction among key CMR players were revealed as MPs were found to be involved in oversight of budget appropriation and defence policy direction. The media's role was monitoring and reporting issues of defence and security, whereas the local population provides opinion leaders and participates in mass demonstrations to voice issues of national interest when the elected authorities are polarised. CSOs' roles were to provide checks and balances on the dichotomous issues of security and human rights.

The responsibilities of the DSTC provide decentralisation and grassroots-level involvement in matters of national security interests, whereas the MoD bridges the gap between the armed forces and the civil authorities to provide civilian control of the armed forces. The Judiciary roles revolved around the administration of justice among the CMR players, and the military

roles were discovered to be the defence and security of the nation from external aggression and conducting constabulary tasks, when the civil police are overwhelmed.

The study further revealed that the key CMR players had made tremendous strides in improving the effectiveness of their roles. The measures of effectiveness revealed were timely progress on issues of defending human rights, balancing risks and distinguishing political and military objectives, particularly during the 2019 post-election demonstrations that stifled national security. Through stakeholder analysis, the study unveiled a Rhombus Diamond Framework as a contextual analytical tool that helps understand the nature of CMR, with its key players and security. Nonetheless, the study noted bottlenecks in achieving a viable CMR such as politicisation, resistance to change, overtasking of armed forces, inadequate resources and a familiarisation gap of the roles among the CMR fraternity.

The study has developed a Rhombus Diamond Framework for the management of civil-military relations in Malawi. The Rhombus Diamond framework aims at keeping healthy relations among the identified key civil-military relations players. The Rhombus diamond framework assumes that if all stakeholders are in a moderate range during their interactions, the result is a stable and secure nation capable of supporting human development, a departure from regime security, where the political elites and the military mattered most in the security domain.

## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The study aimed to explore the contribution of civil-military relations (CMR) in a democratic Malawi and raises important questions for further investigation. This Chapter presents the conclusions drawn after reflecting on the study's findings, as well as its implications for practice and policy. The conclusions are organised into four key areas that align with the study's objectives: the causes of the equilibrium in Malawi's CMR, the consequences of interaction of key players in Malawi's CMR, the effectiveness of the key CMR players in advancing democracy in Malawi and the framework for managing CMR in Malawi.

### **6.2 Factors that keep Civil-Military Relations in Equilibrium in Malawi**

Firstly, the study sought to assess the factors that stabilise civil-military relations. The study concluded that merit-based promotions, merit-based appointments, joint training between the citizenry, government officials and military personnel, representational recruitment of military personnel, reforms of the military institution, the specialisation of key civil-military relations players on defence matters, professionalisation through professional military education and delivery of public goods and services have a significant positive relationship with the military as a fulcrum of CMR and a determinant for democratisation in Malawi.

The study further found that merit-based promotions, merit-based appointments, joint training, representational recruitment, reforms, specialisation on defence matters, professional military education and delivery of public goods and services have a significant contribution to the military as a fulcrum of civil-military relations, and a precondition for democratisation in Malawi, with beta value of .174, .172, .151, .155, .157, .148, .168 and .178 respectively. However, the contribution of these factors varied in influence. Delivery of public goods and

services has the most significant effect, seconded by merit-based promotions and specialisation of defence matters being the least influential factor.

### **6.3 Consequences of the Interactions of the Elected Authorities, Civilians, Civil Authorities, Judiciary and Military**

Secondly, the study sought to analyse the roles of the main actors in civil-military relations in Malawi. The study concluded that the elected authorities' category represented by members of parliament (MPs) and the Parliamentary Defence and Security Committee (DSC) is involved in the oversight and policy direction roles. The roles include budget appropriation, investigation of major policy issues, handling complaints from military personnel and other civil-military relations actors, visiting and inspecting military installations as well as deployed troops.

The roles of the MPs and the DSC are aimed at creating conditions for healthy civil-military relations and ensuring democratic values in a political-military complex. However, due to the political tenure turnaround time of the elected authorities and inadequate statecraft institutions, education and programmes, the MPs and DSC were found wanting regarding expertise on defence and security matters to fully implement their roles in a democratic Malawi.

The study concludes that civilians such as the media, the local population and civil society organisations (CSOs) have a role in CMR. The media's roles among which are monitoring and reporting interactive issues between the military, society, government institutions and the political elites. In addition, the study conversely concludes that there are deficiencies in the media as they concentrate on monitoring and reporting only, rather than being agents of change by promoting and transmitting CMR awareness and culture respectively, and being a catalyst of democracy.

The study concluded that the local population provides informants during their interactions with other key CMR actors. Additionally, the local population provides informal opinion leaders and engages in public debates. In this regard, the local population offers alternative policy views of national interest. The importance of the local population is typified in the involvement of the 2019 post-electoral demonstrations that brought a major policy shift in defining a majority in the political arena from a mere past-the-post to a fifty-plus-one.

The results of the interaction of the CSOs were concluded to be informing the citizenry about the CMR, advocating and promoting transparency and accountability through scrutiny of budgets and procurements of defence material, defence policy advocacy and offering alternative views on matters of national interest. Nonetheless, the study found that there are moral hazards in some CSOs. The study concluded that there are internal weaknesses and threats as some CSOs are politicised and have inadequate expertise in the tenets of organisational ethics.

The study further determined the consequential interaction of the civil authorities in CMR. The District Technical Security Committee (DSTC) and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) roles were determined. On one hand, the DSTC roles included threat assessments and dissemination, resource allocation, crisis management and community engagement at the district level. On the other hand, the study determined that the DSTC is still in its infancy and has inadequate expertise and experience to handle issues of interest at the district level. Where issues are handled, mostly it is because of the scale of the national impact.

The MoD roles included oversight of the military operations, allocation of responsibilities of the military and civilians working at MoD, bridging the gap between civilian authorities and the armed forces, interagency coordination and policy direction to achieve national strategic

objectives. However, the study found that the MoD core personnel strength was minimal and had inadequate knowledge of defence and security matters.

The study determined that the Judiciary administers justice among CMR players. The Judiciary also protects constitutional rights and conducts judicial reviews on defence and security matters. Furthermore, the study determined that the Judiciary is involved in conflict resolution maintenance of national security and enhancement of democratisation processes. Where necessary, the Judiciary validates military operations in the interest of national security and protection of the citizenry (POC). As such, POC takes precedence on the spectrum of military operations tasks due to the inalienability of the right to life.

The study, through the empirical evidence that theorised the civil-military relations Rhombus Diamond, determined that the military is a centrifugal force keeping in check the civilians, civil authorities, elected authorities and the judiciary because it has a monopoly of coercive force. The coercive force and the structure of the military afford the protection of sovereignty and territorial integrity, the constitutional order, and provide military assistance to civil authorities (MACA), provide technical assistance and resources for MACA, and support to bilateral and multilateral agreements requiring coercive persuasion. Nonetheless, the study noted the importance of raising a professional army devoid of participating in domestic politics.

#### **6.4 Effectiveness of the Elected Authorities, Civilians, Civil Authorities, Judiciary; and Military**

The study aimed to examine the effectiveness of the roles of key civil-military relations players in a democratic Malawi. The study determined that the elected authorities were effective in executing their roles, albeit some defects. The measure of the effectiveness of MPs was seen in the active deliberations of the MPs representing their constituents and the lively participation in the parliamentary committee of DSC in defence and security matters as evidenced during

the review of the Malawi Defence Force Act in 2023. On the other hand, the study determined that the parliamentarians had an inward look on the role of oversight as they overlooked the outward-looking oversight of the Executive branch of government; an oversight that could be recipe for the Executive's abuse of power. Furthermore, the study concluded that policy reviews are necessary to deal with policy cases.

In the civilian category, it is concluded that the determinants of effectiveness for the media, CSOs and the local population were oversight of the key CMR players. The media MoE was its ability to monitor and report CMR issues. The CSO MoE hinged on the checks and balances of the military abuse of its coercive power. The local population MoE is riveted in its ability to represent itself if it deems their representatives are not meeting their contractual obligations and participating in public debates through opinion leaders. Conversely, the media, CSOs and the local population showed knowledge deficiencies in comprehending and implementing issues of CMR in a democracy.

The study further concludes that civil authorities were effective albeit with deficiencies. The DSTC MoE was the ability to ensure oversight at the district level. MoD MoE was able to oversee the CMR at national and systemic levels. However, the study determined the ineffectiveness in some districts because some of its members were not aware of the existence of such a committee. MoD had staffing problems compounded with inadequate knowledge of CMR in a democracy.

The Judiciary determinant of its effectiveness in a democracy was its ability to administer justice. The Judiciary validates military operations if they align with democratic values and national interests. The judiciary has contributed to a healthy CMR by interpreting that the majority during elections is not first-past-the-post but fifty-plus-one. The interpretation and determination have made presidential elections to be national rather than sectarian.

The military MoE was able to exert a centrifugal force among the key CMR players and keep them in equilibrium. The military has provided MACA when necessary, protected the territory and upheld the constitutional order during precarious times. However, the military is ill-equipped to handle MACA operations due to logistical problems. The logistical problem can be overcome by appropriate allocation of resources by the parliamentarians and the MoD for the procurement of military equipment. The study underscores that limited resources with the availability of skilled military personnel leads to frustration and a threat to national security.

### **6.5 Civil-Military Relations Rhombus Diamond Framework**

The study has contributed to the field of CMR a Rhombus Diamond Framework which assumes that the military is a centrifugal force that keeps the other key CMR players in equilibrium, hence a stable nation. The study has argued that for the military to keep the elected authorities, the judiciary, civilians and the civil authorities in balance, all need to have equal power of one (1). The military must always have a value of zero (0) to remain a fulcrum to keep the other four partners in equilibrium. Democratic civilian control, efficiency and effectiveness of the military, factors induced and provided to the military by the other civil-military relations players, are preconditions for a democracy.

### **6.6 Framework for the Management of Civil-Military Relations in Malawi**

The Rhombus Diamond framework promotes collaboration and communication between the military and civil actors. The framework is also a tool for fostering mutual understanding and respect between civil and military actors as it demystifies the blurred bureaucracy by clarifying the chain of command of the military and civil control. As such the Rhombus Diamond Framework encourages whole-of-society approach to sustainable security and its use can make stakeholders navigate the complexities of civil-military relations and work towards more

effective and sustainable security solutions. The Rhombus Diamond Framework further supports sustainable security by encouraging long term planning and sustainability in defence and security policies and addressing the root causes of insecurity and instability. The framework is also a tool for improved governance of the security sector in that it highlights the importance of interaction among civilians, civil authorities, elected authorities, the military and the judiciary. different actors.

## **6.7 Recommendations**

The study recommends that:

- a. CMR in Malawi can be kept in equilibrium if key stakeholders give considerable attention to the influential factors of a healthy CMR. Merit-based promotions and appointments, joint training, representational recruitment, reforms, specialisation on defence matters, professional military education and delivery of public goods and services are determinants of a health CMR, and should be employed by the key CMR stakeholders in carrying out their roles. The military, as a centrifugal force must balance security concerns and increase transparency surrounding its operations to drive greater awareness of its roles and missions. The increased awareness and transparency could arguably create a more knowledgeable public, reduce the shock threshold of breaking military news and lessen sacrosanctity as a measure of effectiveness of the military operations
- b. To avoid overtasking the military, other security organisations should be reformed and restructured. The issues to be addressed are those that made them lose trust of the public. Such issues include the deterioration of professionalism and corruption. The reforms and restructuring should be seen happening to win back the confidence of the citizenry and the polity.

- c. The roles of the military should be matched with the equipment. The military should be well-resourced to counter the current hybrid threats. A well-resourced military can tailor its force to the prevailing threats of emergencies and crises. All key players in civil-military relations should be well-resourced to specialise in defence and security matters to safeguard democracy. The roles familiarity gap can be plugged with the progressive professional military education, joint training and awareness and joint coordination meetings as well as joint operations centre whenever there is an operation of national interest. In so doing, the roles of the key civil-military players will be well understood for effective tasking in line with democracy. The establishment of clear and seamless communication channels among the key players can also help in reducing civil-military tensions.

## **6.8 Implications for Further Study**

The study did not examine the endogenous factors affecting the elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities and the judiciary in the dispensation of their duties in a democracy. In this view, a cross-sectional study on the effects of endogenous and exogenous factors of the elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities and the judiciary is warranted. This interdisciplinary approach to the study, perhaps, will lead to a richer understanding of the idiosyncratic behaviour and group dynamics of the elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities and the judiciary as key CMR players. The research could investigate the intersection of the Rhombus Diamond Framework with the security sector reform, exploring how the framework can inform and improve reform efforts.

A future study could contribute to methodological innovations. Mixed-method research combining qualitative and quantitative methods of all the objectives in this study could provide

a more comprehensive understanding of the Rhombus Diamond Framework's implementation and impact. As such, participatory research involving military personnel, government officials, civilians and civil society representatives in the research process could enhance the framework's relevance and applicability. This study was limited in that it did not quantify the effectiveness of the roles of key partners of CMR. In this regard, a quantitative study to measure the effectiveness of key CMR players in Malawi is necessary. The quantitative approach will possibly make these key players understand and rank the roles in order of significance in the existing operating environment.

Furthermore, the futurist analytical approach to validate the novel academic knowledge of the Rhombus Diamond Framework that this study contributed to academia is recommended. Further research is needed to conduct a quantitative analysis investigating the correlation between the Rhombus Diamond Framework implementation and various outcomes such as democratic consolidation, human rights protection or economic development. As the Rhombus Diamond Framework was developed in the context of Malawi, further research could also focus on its implementation and impact in Malawi.

The Rhombus Diamond Framework can further be theoretically developed. Further research could refine and expand the framework, exploring its applicability in different contexts and regions. A comparative analysis in different contexts to explore the applicability of the framework in various African countries considering their unique historical, cultural and political contexts is necessary to add to the academia.

These areas for further study could help deepen our understanding of the Rhombus Diamond Framework. Its potential to promote democratic governance, human rights and development in various contexts could be realised through the implementation of knowledge markets and the subsequent internalisation by key CMR players in the African region and beyond.

## **6.7 Implications for Practice**

The impact of the study's results is that stakeholders in CMR can complement each other in maintaining a balance in CMR, if they enhance their understanding of their roles and each other's roles. The differentiation of the responsibilities is to ensure that each key player guards another. As such, CMR is pertinent for democracy as stakeholders tend to understand the importance of a participative approach to CMR required for democratisation.

Policymakers can use the Rhombus Diamond Framework to inform reforms aimed at promoting democratic governance, human rights and development. The framework can guide military institution reform efforts, ensuring that the military is professional, accountable and subordinate to civilian authority. CSOs can use the Rhombus Diamond Framework to advocate for democratic governance, human rights and development programmes and initiatives that promote constructive engagement between the military and the wider civilian population. As such, the framework informs capacity-building programmes for CSOs, enabling them to engage more effectively with the military and government institutions.

The study also informs development partners in development programming. Development partners can utilise the Rhombus Diamond Framework to inform development programming, ensuring that initiatives promote democratic governance, human rights and development. Development partners can engage more robustly with the military, government institutions and civil society organisations, hence building a cohesive force for security and development.

Academic think tanks and research institutions can use this study to inform research agenda, exploiting its application in various contexts. The study also informs the development of curricula for academic programmes, ensuring that students are equipped with knowledge and skills relevant to promoting democratic governance, human rights and development. Through practical application of the Rhombus Diamond Framework, key CMR stakeholders can

contribute to promoting democratic governance, human rights and development in varying contexts.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 – Structured Questionnaire

#### ROLE OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN DEMOCRATISATION PROCESS IN MALAWI: 1994 - 2024

I am Lieutenant Colonel Thokozani Andrew Chazema of the Malawi Defence Force. I am currently studying for a Doctor of Philosophy Degree at Mzuzu University in Malawi.

I would like to take a few minutes of your time to ask you some questions about my research titled “Role of Civil-Military Relations in Democratisation Process in Malawi: 1994 - 2024”. Civil-military relations are the interactions or bargains between the civilian government, citizenry and the military. In my research, therefore, civil-military relations consist of the military, elected authorities such as Members of Parliament, civilians such as Civil Society Organisations, the local population and the media, civil authorities such as Ministry of Defence embedded with Defence and Security Committee, and District Commissioners, and the Judiciary represented by the judges.

**Voluntary Participation:** Participation in this study is voluntary, and this consent can be withdrawn anytime the participant feels so.

**Confidentiality and Ethics:** All your contributions to this study will be confidential and used for this study only. No individual information may be revealed without the consent of that particular participant.

Please feel free to answer all or some of the questions as you may see appropriate. I appreciate your willingness to respond to the questions I will ask.

Interview No.:.....

Place of Interview.....

Time of Interview.....

**DATE:** [Click here to enter a date.](#)

**Filling personal particulars part is *optional*.**(tick as appropriate)

1.	Sex:	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Age:	Choose an item.	

3. Kindly tick against your academic qualifications as provided below **(optional)**

Post Graduate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Are you employed? Yes.  No  **(optional)**

5. How long have you been employed? Please indicate your answer in the selected box**(Optional)**

10 years and above	<input type="checkbox"/>
6-9 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
4-6 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
1-4 years	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Objective 1: To assess the factors that can keep civil-military relations in equilibrium**

1. In a rating of 1-5, what is your opinion on the frequency of factors that can keep civil-military relations in equilibrium below?

SN	VARIABLE	1	2	3	4	5
1.1	Merit-based promotions of military personnel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2	Merit-based appointments of military personnel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3	Joint training between the citizenry, government officials and military personnel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4	Representational recruitment of military personnel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.5	Reforms of the military institution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.6	The specialisation of key civil-military relations players on defence matters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.7	Professionalisation through professional military education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.8	Delivery of public goods and services by the key civil-military relations players	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix 2 – Interview Guide

### ROLE OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN DEMOCRATISATION PROCESS IN MALAWI

I am Lieutenant Colonel Thokozani Andrew Chazema of the Malawi Defence Force. I am currently studying for a Doctor of Philosophy Degree at Mzuzu University in Malawi. I would like to take a few minutes of your time to ask you some questions about my research titled “Role of Civil-Military Relations in Democratisation Process in Malawi: 1994-2024”. Civil-military relations are the interactions or bargains between the civilian government, citizenry and the military. In my research, therefore, civil-military relations consist of the military, elected authorities such as Members of Parliament, civilians such as Civil Society Organisations, local population and the media, civil authorities such as the Ministry of Defence embedded with the Defence and Security Committee, and District Commissioners, and the Judiciary represented by the judges.

**Voluntary Participation:** Participation in this study is voluntary, and this consent can be withdrawn anytime the participant feels so.

**Confidentiality and Ethics:** All your contributions to this study will be confidential and used for this study only. No individual information may be revealed without the consent of that particular participant.

Please feel free to answer all or some of the questions as you may see appropriate. I appreciate your willingness to respond to the questions I will ask.

Interview No.:.....

Place of Interview.....

Time of Interview.....

**DATE:** [Click here to enter a date.](#)

**Filling personal particulars part is *optional*.**(tick as appropriate)

1.	Sex:	Male: <input type="checkbox"/>	Female: <input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Age:	Choose an item.	

3. Kindly tick against your academic qualifications as provided below (**optional**)

Post Graduate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Are you employed? Yes.  No  (**optional**)

5. How long have you been employed? Please indicate your answer in the selected box(**Optional**)

10 years and above	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6-9 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
4-6 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
1-4 years	<input type="checkbox"/>

**2: To analyse consequences of the interaction of the elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities, the judiciary and the military in civil-military relations in Malawi.**

Question 1: What have been the consequences of interaction of the Members of Parliament in civil-military relations in Malawi since 1994?

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Question 2: What have been the consequences of interaction of the Parliamentary Defence and Security Committee Members in civil-military relations in Malawi since 1994?

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Question 3: What have been the consequences of interaction of the media in civil-military relations in Malawi since 1994?

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Question 4: What have been the consequences of interaction of the local population in civil-military relations in Malawi since 1994?

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Question 5: What have been the consequences of interaction of the civil society organisations in civil-military relations in Malawi since 1994?

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Question 6: What have been the consequences of interaction of the District Security Technical Committee in civil-military relations in Malawi since 1994?

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Question 7: What have been the consequences of interaction of the Ministry of Defence in civil-military relations in Malawi since 1994?

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Question 8: What have been the consequences of interaction of the judiciary in civil-military relations in Malawi since 1994?

---

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Question 9: What have been the consequences of interaction of the military in civil-military relations towards democratisation in Malawi since 1994?

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**Objective 3: To examine the effectiveness of the elected authorities, civilians, civil authorities, the judiciary and the military towards democratisation in Malawi.**

Question 1: What are the indicators of the effectiveness of Members of Parliament in civil-military relations towards democratisation in Malawi?

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Question 2: What are the indicators of the effectiveness of the Parliamentary Defence and Security Committee in civil-military relations towards democratisation in Malawi?

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Question 3: What are the indicators of the effectiveness of the media in civil-military relations towards democratisation in Malawi?

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---

Question 4: What are the indicators of the effectiveness of the local population in civil-military relations towards the democratisation of Malawi?

---

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Question 5: What are the indicators of the effectiveness of civil society organisations in civil-military relations towards democratisation in Malawi?

---

---

Question 6: What are the indicators of the effectiveness of the District Security Technical Committee in civil-military relations towards democratisation in Malawi?

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Question 7: What are the indicators of the effectiveness of the Ministry of Defence in civil-military relations towards democratisation in Malawi?

---

---

Question 8: What are the indicators of the effectiveness of the judiciary in civil-military relations towards democratisation in Malawi?

---

---

Question 9: What are the indicators of the effectiveness of the military in civil-military relations towards democratisation in Malawi?

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Question 10: Have there been problems in implementing your roles in civil-military relations?

Yes  No

Question 11: If there are any problems, what are they?

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Question 12: How can these problems be solved?

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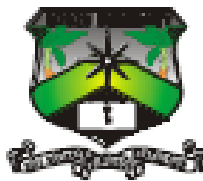
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Question 12: How can fully implementing your roles help maintain a healthy civil-military relationship and consolidate democracy in Malawi?

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## Appendix 3 - Ethical Clearance Approval



**MZUZU UNIVERSITY**

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH

Mzuzu University  
Private Bag 201  
Luwinga  
Mzuzu 2  
MALAWI  
TEL: 01 320 722  
FAX: 01 320 648

---

### MZUZU UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (MZUNIREC)

Ref No: MZUNIREC/DOR/23/62

12/06/2023.

Mr. Thokozani Chazema,  
Mzuzu University,  
P/Bag 201,  
Luwinga,  
Mzuzu 2.

[thokozanichazema@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:thokozanichazema@yahoo.co.uk)

Dear Thokozani,

**RESEARCH ETHICS AND REGULATORY APPROVAL AND PERMIT FOR  
PROTOCOL REF NO: MZUNIREC/DOR/23/62: ROLE OF CIVIL-MILITARY  
RELATIONS TOWARDS DEMOCRATISATION IN MALAWI.**

Having satisfied all the relevant ethical and regulatory requirements, I am pleased to inform you that the above referred research protocol has officially been approved. You are now permitted to proceed with its implementation. Should there be any amendments to the approved protocol in the course of implementing it, you shall be required to seek approval of such amendments before implementation of the same.

This approval is valid for one year from the date of issuance of this approval. If the study goes beyond one year, an annual approval for continuation shall be required to be sought from the Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee (MZUNIREC) in a format that is available at the Secretariat. Once the study is finalised, you are required to furnish the Committee with a final report of the study. The Committee reserves the right to carry out compliance inspection of this approved protocol at any time as may be deemed by it. As such, you are expected to properly maintain all study documents including consent forms.

Wishing you a successful implementation of your study.

**Committee Address:**

*Secretariat, Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee, P/Bag 201, Luwinga, Mzuzu 2; E-mail address: [mzunirec@mzuni.ac.mw](mailto:mzunirec@mzuni.ac.mw)*

Yours Sincerely,



**Gift Mbwele**

**SENIOR RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATOR**

**For: CHAIRMAN OF MZUNIREC**

**Committee Address:**

***Secretariat, Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee, P/Bag 201, Luwingu, Mzuzu 2; E-mail address: [mzunirec@mzun.ac.mw](mailto:mzunirec@mzun.ac.mw)***

## Appendix 4 - Request to Administer a Questionnaire



**MZUZU UNIVERSITY**

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M A L A W I  
TEL: 01 320 722  
FAX: 01 320 648

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### **TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

Sir/Madam,

#### **SEEKING PERMISSION TO ADMINISTER QUESTIONNAIRES FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES**

My name is Thokozani Andrew Chazema, a PhD Candidate at Mzuzu University, a Lieutenant Colonel in the Malawi Defence Force (MDF), appointed as Deputy Chief of Staff, MDF Headquarters. The study is about the Role of Civil-Military Relations in the Democratisation Process in Malawi: 1994 - 2024.

Civil-Military Relations is about the interface of the military, the state and the people in that state. The study intends to analyse the factors that keep civil-military relations in equilibrium to ensure a safe nation. The effectiveness of the roles of civil-military relations players towards democratisation in Malawi. The study is purely for academic purposes, hence no incentives to the respondents.

For further clarification, you can contact me on +265999583177 or email: thokozanichazema@yahoo.co.uk

Your assistance will be of great help towards the study. Thank you



Thokozani Andrew Chazema

Researcher