SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

THE IMPACT OF ELECTION EXPENDITURE ON AGRICULTURAL SERVICE DELIVERY IN ZAMBIA, 2000-2021: A REGRESSIONAL ANALYSIS.

BY

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DECLARATION

This Thesis entitled 'The Impact of Election Expenditure on Agriculture Service Delivery in Zambia, 2000-2021', is a presentation of my original work. All effort was taken to acknowledge and credit contributions from others with due reference to the literature.

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Supervisors' Recommendations

I, Professor **Felix Kalaba** have read and checked the thesis written by Dora Siliya and do hereby confirm that it meets the University of Lusaka minimum standards. I, therefore, recommend that the document be submitted for verification and examination for the purpose of the award of Doctor of Philosophy in Development Studies:

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I ……………………………………………., of the University of Lusaka do hereby confirm that I have read and examined the Thesis by Dora Siliya and supervised by the above. I therefore approve this research work.

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Signature:

DEDICATION

This work was as a result of many discussions held with various friends and colleagues over the past twenty five years. The conclusion was always that Africa will not be economically transformed unless, the intelligentsia became more bold and ambitious about participating in the governance of their nations. This called for statistics to be at the centre of most decision making. I dedicate this to all public servants in Zambia, whom I saw challenged often with evidence based decision making on critical issues.

I dedicate this to all entrepreneurs in the education sector in Zambia. I am aware just how much the sector has developed and made it possible for many Zambians to gain skills they may never have been afforded without private sector participation in education. Local academic institutions must continue to be the corner stone for solutions to our social and economic problems

To the Women and Girls of Zambia. The sky is never the limit when you put your mind to achieving personal goals. It is never where you started but where you end.

To my family. While my father made me realise that my dreams and potential were limitless, it was my mother, Hannah, who did the daily work of studying with me especially during my primary school days. She taught me a love for books that I still cherish today. I dedicate this to my Siblings, nieces and nephew too. May you see your work clearly as you carve out your way to you future.

Kwenje my son, May you always be inspired by what is possible in life. I dedicate this to my grandchildren. It is my hope that this work will plant a seed of respect for academic curiosity and to know that their passions will always be possible.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ASD	Agriculture Service Delivery
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations Region.
ASTI	Agriculture Science and Technology Indicators Initiative
BVAR	Bayesian Vector Autoregressive
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CORE	Cost of Registration and Election
ECZ	Electoral Commission of Zambia
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EMBs	Election Management Bodies
EU	European Union
FAO	Food Reserve Organization
FISP	Farmer Input Support Program
FRA	Food Reserve Agency
FSP	Farmers Support Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IAPRI	Indaba Agriculture Policy Research Institute
ICTs	Information Communication Technologies

IFES	International Foundation for Election Systems
IFPRI	International Food Policy and Research Institute
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LDC	Least Developed Countries
LIC	Low Income Countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoFNDP	Ministry of Finance and National Development Planning
NAIP	National Agriculture Investment Plan
NDP	National Development Plan
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OLS	Ordinary Least Squares
PBC	Political Budget Cycle
R&D	Research and Development
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
VAR	Vector Auto-Regressive
WB	World Bank
ZARI	Zambia Agriculture Research Institute

ZMW	Zambian Kwacha

ABSTRACT

This study analysed the relationship between public expenditure at the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) and the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). The focus was on ECZ expenditure shifts in election and non-election years and their impact on service delivery components in agriculture. The question asked was whether election costs induced irreversible cyclical fiscal shocks that may have negatively impacted efficient service delivery in agriculture? Descriptive and Inferential statistics were applied to secondary time series data from 2000-2021.

Agriculture had an erratic trend with highest expenditure in 2015 at 8.8% of national spending. The Ordinary Least Squares regression results showed that the variables had a long run relationship with a speed of adjustment in the short run of 114%. They also showed that a 1% increase in expenditure by the ECZ increased agriculture service delivery expenditure by 1.064% and 1.038% in the short and long run respectively. The findings also revealed that the highest election year expenditure in real terms was 2016. However, 2012 had the highest expenditure as a percentage of national spending at 4% even though it was not an election year. The average expenditure in election years over the study period was 1.7% of national spending. Rapid increases in election expenditure were also observed in the year preceding the national election.

The study concluded that while the expenditure relationship between the ECZ and service delivery in agriculture was positive, the increases in agriculture service delivery were quite minimal and found to be reducing in the long run. This appeared to go against the signalling mechanism of democratic elections in a country where the majority earned from agriculture. We called this phenomenon, failure of the functionality 'burden on democracy'.

KEY WORDS: Democracy & Functionality, Public Expenditure, Elections, Agriculture, Service Delivery

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

In recent times, the performance of agriculture and its impact on rural poverty has returned as an active topic in the discourse on developing nations. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (2021) reported that during the COVID-19 Pandemic many more people in Sub-Sahara Africa were luckily to have gone hungry. This was in addition to the 250 million already undernourished before the Pandemic. FAO called for governments to step up agriculture spending at only 2.1% of total spending in 2021 compared to over 5% in Asia. On the other hand the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA, 2021) reported that Africa held over 600 presidential and parliamentary elections between 1990 and 2020. Further, the Centre for Civil Registration for Development (Straaten, 2019) claimed, over US$125 billion was spent on elections in Africa from 2000 to 2020. The IDEA (2017) claimed high election costs was the number one complaint by Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs).

To millions around the world, democracy conjures up feelings of hope and opportunities for a better life. Evidence is in the number of countries that turned to liberal democracy in the 1990s. In fact, elections have been described as the most visible event in liberal political economies, allowing eligible voters to elect leaders of their choice and thereby impacting public expenditure (Moyo, 2018; Clark, 2019; Mazzucato, 2020). Electoral processes were expected to weed out incompetent politicians and provide leaders, an incentive to put in effort, a suitable incentive for service delivery (Vergne, 2011). But while regular elections maybe a reliable barometer of the democratic experience of a country, by the dawn of the second millennium, academic interest had peaked,on why the wind of change had not been able to deliver better in new democracies (Moyo, 2018).

The problem does not appear to be that democracy and elections are not important. In fact, Balamatsias (2018) found that democracy increased public expenditure and service delivery. However, the same was not found to be true in non-OECD poor countries. Could macroeconomic costs incurred due to election administration and organisation be the cause of irreversible cycles of fiscal volatility in democratic countries with small economies?

In this introduction chapter, we gave a background to electoral cycle impacts on public expenditure and identified current themes in the debate. This provided clarity on the problem the research was addressing. The aim was to investigate the expenditure trend between that on elections and expenditure on service delivery in agriculture. This data was important for various audiences but especially the executive and parliament in formulating budget and expenditure evaluation tools that may be more responsive to policy priorities.

1.1 Background to the Study

After almost 20 years of a one political party state, an ailing economy and food shortages, Zambia returned to plural politics in 1991[1] and immediately implemented the IMF programme (Mbikusita-Lewanika, 1990). The new administration sold economic structural adjustment as the prerequisite for enhanced economic growth and improved service delivery, just as regular elections had been projected as key investment in electoral governance and a good basis for citizens' participation. The newly elected leadership promised free market economy, fiscal discipline and enhanced service delivery for a sustainable economy (Mbikusuta-Lewanika, 2003). Since 1991, there have been six other general elections in 1996, 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2021, thereby making Zambia an established democracy after having held more than four presidential elections consecutively (Brender & Drazen, 2013). The Local Government Act No. 22 of 1991 provided for decentralisation and introduced local authorities which were managed by locally elected leadership in each district (Chitembo et al. 2014). This Act was further strengthened in 1996 when the constitution amendment included that '*there shall be such a system of local government in Zambia as may be prescribed by an Act of Parliament and that such a system shall be based on the democratically elected councils on the basis of universal adult suffrage'* (Part VIII, Article 109 of the constitution of Zambia). In November 1992 the first local government elections were held in Zambia after the return to multiparty politics in 1991. Mukwena et al. (2014) observed that the elections were marred with voter apathy with the party in government gaining 402 (out of 1,190) council seats unopposed. Elected officials had a 3-year office period. The Central Statistics Office (GRZ/CSO, 1993) reported a voter turn-out of only 10% which was in contrast to the goal of strengthening grassroot democracy. In 1995, the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) also introduced the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) in an effort to take public expenditure closer to the people (Chitembo et al. 2014). The irony though, was that local elections were cancelled in the decade 1992 to 2001. 'Lack of funds' was the reason given by the government for not being able

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[1] Zambia adopted a one party state on 13th December 1972 after independence in 1964

to hold local government elections in 1995 and in 1998 (Chitembo et al., 2014). There was speculation that the low voter turn-out in the 1992 local elections may be the reason the politicians did not attach much importance to holding the elections, despite the constitution amendment of 1996. The local elections were finally conducted together with the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2001. Some observers saw the failure to carry out active local democratic activities in the first decade after the return to multiparty politics in 1991 as the reason for sustained low delivery of services and the absence of democratic pressure to date, for fiscal decentralisation to local levels (Chitembo et al. 2014).

In the aftermath of the 2011 general elections in Zambia, stakeholders including Parliamentarians began to question the cost of the unprecedented number of unscheduled elections due to nullification of petitioned results through the courts of law (Hansard, National Assembly of Zambia, 2013-2015; National Constitution Conference, 2013-2015). It was argued by numerous stakeholders that too many elections and rising election costs were diverting resources from other equally important public goods and services. In fact, it was these debates which led to the Constitutional amendments in 2016 that provided for a running mate as vice president. This amendment consequentially eliminated presidential by-elections in Zambia in any case in which the President could not perform his or her duties.

The Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ Annual Report, 2011) reported 74 parliamentary and local government election result petitions, post the 2011 general election and both held on the same day. There were also two presidential by-elections in 2008 and 2015 following the death of incumbent presidents[2]. The ECZ further reported that 358 local government by-elections occurred between 2006 and 2016 (ECZ, 2020). Forty-nine by elections were held at parliamentary level during the same period with 33 between 2011 and 2016 alone. The ECZ described a general election as presidential, parliamentary, mayoral and local government elections, held on the same day, after every 5 years[3]. All other elections in between general or national elections are termed as by-elections and occur as a result of annulment of election results, death, resignation, expulsion and conviction.

[2] The Constitution of Zambia was amended on 5th January, 2016 to include the position of running mate, thereby abolishing presidential by-elections.

[3]Before 2001, local government elections were held after every three years with council chairpersons and mayors elected by peers. In 2016, council chairperson and mayors began to be elected by universal suffrage.

In 2006, Zambia returned to national planning with priority sectors agreed in five year National Development Plans[4] (NDPs). A National Indaba (consultative meeting) was also called in 2009 to provide for a National 2030 Vision which became a point of reference for policy formulation in each sector (GRZ, Finance, 2009). This strategy was supported by academics who stated that nationally shared objectives, especially in competitive democracies ensured good policy survival beyond a change of administration (Moyo, 2018; Mazzucato, 2020). While there have been a number of public expenditure policy pronouncements on education, health and agriculture sectors, there was none found on the expenditure policy for election management in Zambia in the period of study. In fact this is not unique to Zambia and is a global problem. Many researchers on cost of elections have been calling for further collection of global data on cost of elections and the drivers of those costs (James, 2020; Clark, 2019; Mohr et al. 2018; Foltz, 2014). They argue that without this data, it is impossible to estimate and appreciate costs of election delivery across countries and different economic sizes as well as the benefit of that cost on electoral governance for the wellbeing of the majority in society. Lucas (2015) discussed the importance of understanding the sacrifices, citizens' experienced, whenever elections occurred and what was lost, whenever expenditure on one program occurred, over another program. Further, Ebeke and Olcer (2013) described large macro shifts whenever elections occurred in low income countries which could have stressed the fiscal policy including possible shifts in rising election costs.

World leaders met at the United Nations in September of 2015 to craft the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which placed halving poverty and hunger by 2030 as a top priority. African leaders also met at the African Union (AU) and committed 10% of the national expenditure to agriculture. This strategy was launched in 2003 as the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program (CAADP). In the same year, they met again in Mozambique to sign the Maputo Protocol, which targeted agriculture growth in Africa at not less than 6% annually. Additionally in 2006, the AU under the Khartoum Agreement, compelled African governments to spend at least 1% of GDP on agricultural Research and Development (R&D). In the Malabo Declaration, African leaders in Equatorial Guinea in 2014, re-committed to end hunger and to halve poverty by 2025.

An observation by FAO (2021) stated that in order to appreciate the impact of public expenditure in agriculture, analysis needed to go beyond quantity and regularity but to examine the quality in terms

[4] National planning was suspended after the 4th plan (1981-85)

of what in agriculture were funds spent on, how efficiently and what the outcome of that expenditure was. Mandl, Dierx and Lizkovtz (2008) also determined that public expenditure had a direct impact on the quality of life of citizens. They suggested a function by function analysis of public expenditure, as opposed to aggregate budget performance at national level in order to determine impact against policy goals. A more recent addition to this argument was a proposition that there should be an investigation into aggregate and compositional evaluation of the agriculture budget against other sectors to determine budget performance against national objectives in Sub-Sahara Africa where the majority live off the agriculture sector (Mogues, 2012). The African Parliamentary Centre (2010) also revealed that budgeting had become more and more complex which made executive accountability difficult and risked unrealistic promises being made to the citizenry. In that case, the only way to appreciate the variance between promise and delivery was a comparison of functional expenditure of the budget against policy objectives.

Since independence, all the seven national development plans (1966-2017) in Zambia referred to agriculture, as the engine for development especially in rural areas. The Seventh National Development Plan identified agriculture as key to diversification away from dependency on copper revenues (7NDP, 2017). The National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP, 2014-2018) required US$273 million to actualise the transformation program. The focus of the investment was to raise farmers' productivity through research and development of new technologies, rural extension systems, credit systems, agriculture education and investment in road and irrigation infrastructure among others. Some of the main impact indicators included the following: rural poverty reduction from 77% to 50%; chronic malnutrition in children from 45% to 30%; and increased cereal production from 3.26 million tonnes to 6 million tonnes. These targets went unmet (World Bank, 2021).

Additionally, from 1964 to date, Zambia has had 4 political party administrations in government with the seventh president in office. Consistent presidential and parliamentary elections were also held since 1991 and local government elections since 2001. The question is why has agriculture not transformed? And how have regular elections failed to influence that transformation if the majority of citizens, the voters, earn from agriculture? The Government of Zambia (GRZ) says the majority of citizens depend on agriculture for their livelihoods (Second National Agriculture Policy, 2016)). The GRZ initiated an input production subsidy, the Fertiliser Input Support Programme (FISP) in 2002. Earlier, an output subsidy, crop procurement through the Food Reserve Agency (FRA) was enacted in 1998 and became fully operational in 2000. Since 2009, over a million farmers have been supported with farming inputs under the FISP (GRZ, various agriculture reports). The GRZ has also been the largest buyer guaranteeing a minimum price for ten FISP registered products such as maize, rice, soya, cassava, beans and even cotton. Procurement of maize alone in election years was found to increase by 1.5 times (Champita, 2015). Investment in R&D had also propelled a thriving seed industry for maize. Since 2000, over 600 maize seed varieties were approved on the market by the Seed Control and Certification Institute (SCCI) under the Zambia Agriculture Research Institute (ZARI) with rice as a far second with only 12 varieties. In 2014 and 2018, over 600 research and extension officers were recruited, the highest recruitment in decades (Ministry of Agriculture, 2020).

But despite these interventions in the agriculture sector the World Bank (2021) ranked Zambia as one of the countries with the highest levels of poverty and inequality globally at almost 80% in rural areas. The questions we were asking were based on the World Bank observation about poverty in Zambia and whether CAADP targets would be met by 2025. Did elections not adequately signal the preferences of the majority of citizens? Or could it be that the very holding of elections was what caused cyclical fiscal shocks not easy to recover from as a small economy?

De Haan & Klomp (2013) and Poulton (2014) observed that if the majority of voters in a democracy were rural dwellers, theoretically, it would be expected that public expenditure would favour agriculture service delivery. Earlier writes on elections determined that they acted a s a signalling mechanism for preferential public expenditure. Dalton (1970) noted that voter determined priorities which was reflected in the outcome of those elected to office. However, this does not seem to be the case in many African agrarian countries where the agriculture expenditure trends are still below the CAADP targets (Mogues, 2012; Mogues, Benin & Fan, 2015; Mogues & Rosario, 2016; Mogues & Olofinbiyi 2021).

Democracy, defined as a system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives (Clark, 2019; Leeman & Stadelmann-Steffen, 2021) has been at the centre of many questions surrounding public expenditure. In ancient Athens, it was assumed the people had full control over public spending. Once a year, they signalled to their assembly representatives their spending preferences through amounts approved on their major priorities: religious festivals, conducting of politics, and waging of war (Pritchard, 2015).

The *first generation* explanation for development failure was that developing countries were government ‘heavy’ to allow for the ‘free market’ to efficiently allocate resources. Economic reforms through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) structural adjustment programs were implemented across many new democracies in the 1990s to enhance economic management, reduce inflation and debt, ignite foreign direct investment and improve service delivery. However, a World Bank (2000/1) report on *Attacking Poverty* and the UNDP Development Report (2004) revealed continued high poverty levels in poor democratic countries in spite of tough economic structural changes the preceding decade. These publications prompted many academics and development organisations to point out that the IMF reforms had not resulted in a trickle down while the World Bank loans were found to have too many conditions to impact economic restructuring (Stiglitz, 2002; Fritzbein, 2005; Moyo, 2018; Sadoulet & Ligon, 2018, and Mazzucato, 2020). They called for new strategies to address the development challenges in poor democratic countries. IMF reform critics such as Stiglitz (2002) and Chang (2010) observed that the interventions had always wrongly assumed imperfect governments and perfect markets. Moyo (2008) further argued that, '*Dead Aid'* had resulted in dependency and an absence of home grown solutions.

Social contracts involving politicians, citizens and public service delivery providers were the basis of the *second generation* discussion on enhanced service delivery in low income countries (Friss-Hansen, 2014). These social contracts were focused on sector reforms away from the usual macro level changes. Retooling of public institutions was prioritised so that they could be able to deliver basic functions and in so doing promote the wellbeing of the majority in society. A more transparent society with independent media and a vibrant civil society (Kosec & Wantchekon, 2018) was advanced as key in ensuring that narrow, group and private interests, did not interfere with the state, often diverting it from serving interests of the general public. In most African countries, these reforms included enhanced Public Financial Management (PFM) systems, autonomous electoral bodies and a very public fight against corruption. But despite these efforts, the World Bank (2020) report on Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA) Poverty Data showed that 40% of the population still lived in extreme poverty. Between 1990 and 2020, poverty levels had only reduced from 57% to 41% with many living below the World Bank poverty line of US$2/per day and with no access to basics such as adequate food, clean water, decent sanitation, education and health.

In a democracy, political freedom is key allowing citizens to freely choose their leaders and signal preferences for public expenditure (Sen, 2000). While regular elections may enhance the democratic experience of a country, the delivery of services is dependent on more than elections but on the overall political, social and economic interactions in a country (World Bank, 2020, Quaicoe, 2021; Ofori &

Asongu, 2021). At the centre of these interactions are the budget and public expenditure viewed as the most important tools for economic growth and service delivery in developing countries (Mogues, 2012; Mogues, Benin & Fan, 2016). The institutional, cultural and political environment in which fiscal decisions are made has the potential to enhance or hinder the realisation of the citizens' aspirations. In 2017, the United Nations human rights office conducted a research and argued that the budget was an important economic policy and planning document by which to assess governments' efforts for the realisation of human rights. The findings indicated that governments had an obligation under international human rights law to make resources available for the realisation of these rights. The rights, among others, included access to adequate food, shelter, health facilities, clean water, decent sanitation and the right to vote for a government of their choice.

The current debate on democracy has mostly been focussed on the perceived leadership and market failure in many new and even established democracies, to reduce inequality, end hunger and reduce poverty (Tsaurai, 2014; Moyo, 2018; Ligon & Sadoulet, 2018; Anderson & Esposito, 2018). Since the 1997 recession caused by the debt crisis in Latin America, economists such as Chang (2010) began to question the traditional view of non-interventionist government in the economy, an argument compounded by how China had managed to pull millions of its people out of poverty within 60 years. In the first decade of the second millennium, many new democracies found that the election enthusiasm initially experienced had given way to challenges of reducing the cost of living for the people and job creation at a pace that would match the youth population growth. Crozier et al (1975) in a land mark paper '*The Crisis of Democracy*' stated back then that there was too much democracy in the USA for government to be able to get things done. It was further argued that government needed to be protected from democratic pressures and squash expectations that government was there to 'meet the needs and correct the evils' afflicting citizens. This paper concluded that the never ending expectations led to increased public spending and large budget deficits.

Writers on cost of elections point out that Election Management Bodies (EMBs) must compete for government funds like any other equally important sector such as defence, health, education, among others (Hounkpe & Madia-fall, 2009: Foltz, 2014: Lucas, 2015). In fact, in his study in the USA, Foltz (2014) observed that one of the principle concerns among election administrators was how to pay for ever rising costs in an already fiscally stressed environment. In West Africa, Hounkpe & Madia-Falls (2009) noted diversion of funds from development to elections, due to rising election costs, as a major concern among electoral body leaders. Election administration costs alone can add up to millions of dollars per election in many countries around the world. These costs are compounded by other expenditure such as voter education, election adverts and audits. The International Institute for Democratic Electoral Assistance (IDEA, 2017) gave rising costs as the number one reason for many developing countries to argue that holding elections could not be sustained when other public spending were not being met. The IDEA (2017) argued though, that election costs must not be viewed as an expense but as an investment in political and social stability. However, some academics and other stakeholders challenge that democracy cannot be sustained if inequality and poverty continues to affect the majority of citizens (Chang, 2010; Moyo, 2018; Moreno-Monroy et al. 2020; Mazzucato, 2020). More recently, the Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean (ECLAC, 2021) nations called for a care economy and society with broad social dialogue to redistribute and increase public resources invested in the common good. These observations raised questions about the contribution of electoral systems to the overall wellbeing of society.

Hill & Wallis (2011) have written extensively about the costs of voter registration and the fiscal impact on electoral bodies especially when there is low voter turn-out. This is because the vote literary costs money. Their study confirmed high average costs per voter in counties with smaller populations as they could not absorb all the fixed costs. Moyo (2018) further observed that low voter turn-out could influence who gets elected and ultimately impact public expenditure priorities. Withdrawal by voters was also identified as a mechanism in some cases to express voter displeasure with the economic performance of the country (Lynge & Martinez. 2022), in the process harming electoral governance.

Literature on actual global election expenditure was limited to the years 2005 and 2020 when data was collected on a number of EMBs to determine costs per voter. (Lopez-Pintor & Fischer, 2005; James, 2020). Some researchers have called for more research to be done before decisions are made on cutting budgets for electoral bodies (Clark, 2019; James, 2020; IDEA, 2020). There was a strong argument that election costs increased at each election and that electoral bodies did not justify why they were prioritised over other equally important expenditures by the government (Montjoy, 2010; Clark, 2017, 2019; James & Jervier, 2017; Mohr et al. 2018). In Africa many stakeholders expressed concern at the increasing cost of election administration which was perceived to be replacing development funds especially in rural areas (IDEA, 2017). Lynch, Gadjanova and Saibu (2021) noted that social media was currently also adding to cost of elections. Additionally, Clark (2019) argued that most of the arguments put forward on cost of elections lacked evidence. The Scholar further called for more information on how much elections cost per voter to enable cross-country comparisons.

Electoral impact studies in the 1990s became popular in explaining development challenges in newly established democracies. The studies found expansionary seeking behaviour by those seeking re-election which resulted in electoral cycle induced fiscal volatility (Shi & Svensson, 2002; Brenda & Drazen, 2005; Vergne, 2011). Initial thoughts were that electoral impacts on public expenditure were a phenomenon of young democracies. In other studies, electoral cycles were also confirmed in developed nations (Efthyvoulou, 2012; Moyo, 2018).

Other studies determined that fiscal volatility due to election timing was mitigated by fiscal rules in newly democratised countries working with the IMF (Olcer & Ebeke, 2013; Gootjes et al. 2019). The majority of the studies indicated that while there was fiscal volatility during election years, budget manipulation was more opportunistic and targeted at visible expenditure in sectors such as agriculture. They were also targeted at interest groups such as labour unions and business associations in instances in which they were perceived to hold valuable electoral capital for the incumbents (Drazen & Eslava, 2006; Eleches & Eleches, 2012; Ebeke & Olcer, 2013; De Haan & Klomp, 2013). The evidence showed that these manipulations were not reversed after elections and usually began the year before the election year. In the long run, electoral impacts led to unhealthy economies.

Another thread in the electoral impact literature were studies which investigated the role information played in the decision making between elected officials and voters. Vergne (2011) put forward that this information imbalance pushed politicians to exert more effort during re-election years and the strength of this manipulation was also influenced by the share of voters who were well informed. However, Kosec and Wantchekon (2018) argued that access to information was not enough unless that access occurred in an enabling environment with power to act on it by both elected officials and voters. Access to Information Bill has also been a constant topic during every election in Zambia (National Assembly Hansard, 2021). Electoral impacts were also blamed on the length of time in between elections. Moyo (2018) stated that by their very nature, regular elections with short cycles of 4-5 years, encouraged short termism with politicians always focused on campaigns. In this case, civil servants always expected change of leaders and new instructions while voters made short-term demands to which politicians respond through immediate gratification.

The back ground of all the public expenditure and service delivery challenges were anchored in the national budget process. This was perceived as the meeting point between the elected leaders and citizens. In a democracy, budget allocation was expected to be guided by voter signalling of national priorities and expected outcomes. This is why writers on the budget performance are calling for budget evaluations away from aggregate performance to functional expenditure analysis in relation to the expected outcomes against national priority policies (Mandle et al., 2008; Mogues, 2012; Downs et al., OECD, 2017; Rubin, 2019; Cole, 2021). These budget process though is not purely a technical process with various players and influences at play. The premium placed on elections in fragile democracies could have tilted favour towards expenditure on elections even when there was opportunity cost neglect for other equally critical services such as poverty reducing expenditures.

The Parliamentary Centre (PC, 2010) established that the majority of new democracies in Africa had crafted constitutional support for the budget process supported by acts of parliament through the ministry responsible for finance. The budget estimates only become law once approved by Parliament. In the majority of these nations, the budget process began with media adverts by the finance ministry on stakeholder participation on revenue and expenditure forecasts. The PC observed that this was followed by a 'call circular' from the minister responsible for finance which called for submission by other ministries and spending agencies of their budgets as guided by the ceilings. Parliaments provided continuous oversight with the audit office evaluating accountability in public expenditures. The question is even when the budget process has been well laid out, how does that guarantee allocations and expenditures to set out priorities?

The main issues raised in the groups of studies related to calls for increased spending on agriculture and in particular on investment. The studies also identified cost drivers along the electoral cycle in election and non-election years. These costs included technology costs, staff costs, legislative reforms and transparency in budget allocations (Montjoy, 2010; IDEA, 2017; James & Jervier, 2017). Clark (2019) further recommended international standards for accounting and recording of spending on elections to allow for ease of comparison across countries and regions. Transparency and citizen engagement in budget process could not be over emphasised.

1.2 Statement Problem

The problem was that there was no empirical evidence to explain the impact of cost of election administration and organisation by the ECZ on spending on agriculture service delivery components during the study period.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study was to analyse public expenditure at the ECZ and MoA to determine how shifts in election expenditure and the electoral cycle impacted agriculture service delivery spending. The focus was to determine the direction and magnitude of the ECZ expenditure impact on service delivery components expenditure in both election and non-election years.

1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective was to investigate the impact of the relationship between expenditure at the ECZ and expenditure on agriculture service delivery in Zambia from 2000 to 2021.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives were as below:

i. To examine allocation and expenditure at the Ministry of Agriculture from 2000 to 2021.

ii. To examine changes in ECZ budget allocation and expenditure from 2000 to 2021.

iii. To examine the relationship between ECZ expenditure and agriculture service delivery expenditure in Zambia from 2000 to 2021, in election and non-election years.

iv. To determine how ECZ and agriculture expenditure impacted agriculture growth in Zambia from 2000 to 2021.

1.5 Research Questions

1.5.1 Based on the above objectives, the following were the research questions:

i. How did allocation and expenditure at the Ministry of Agriculture change and how were service delivery components affected from 2000 to 2021?

ii. What was the trend between allocation and expenditure at the ECZ from 2000 to 2021?

iii. What was the relationship between ECZ expenditure and agriculture service delivery expenditure in Zambia from 2000 to 2021 in election and non-election years?

iv. How did ECZ and agriculture expenditure trend impact agriculture growth from 2000 to 2021?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The budget process does not happen in a vacuum. As Mogues and Caceres (2018) observed the formulation of fiscal policy is a result of both technical, political and interest groups, interacting at different points of both the budget and electoral cycle. This research had in mind various audiences below as consumers of this research. The study will be shared through publication, targeted distribution, conferencing and media opportunities:

Election Management Bodies (EMBs): The findings may be important for all election managers at all levels including presiding officers at district levels involved in registration and monitoring. Every level of election management is a cost centre that has potential to implement cost saving measures, orient voters on the cost and provide useful responses to the research findings. Perhaps even more important is that the evidence may encourage the ECZ to review drivers of costs especially in election years and how technology, training and other innovations may assist to reduce costs.

Politicians, Budget Officials and Parliamentary Public Accounts and Economic Committees: The findings may provide a starting point for further discussions within the executive and at Parliament on process reforms and legislation for budgeting in response to policy objectives especially in poverty reducing sectors such as agriculture.

Academics, Researchers and Students: Election expenditure is a current topic and there is still much investigation to be done at local, regional and global levels. The same applies to expenditure trends in agriculture. These research findings may prompt more interest in academics, researchers and students therefore adding to the body of knowledge on this subject.

Donors and NGOs Supporting Election Management: Donors have been known to eagerly support agriculture and elections. The information from the study may enhance Donor/NGO and government engagement on agriculture and election expenditure and the need to wholesomely view political economy beyond just regular elections but through renewed emphasis on meeting policy objectives in the agriculture sector.

Regional and Global Governance and Financial Institutions: When shared with these institutions, the findings may prompt these organisations which are also actors in the development process of developing countries like Zambia to be aware of the sectors that need more financial assistance such as the agriculture sector as it is the main livelihood of most rural dwellers and employs a number of people in urban areas too.

Voters: The research findings may provide a basis for the importance of access to relevant economic information among voters. Studies did show that when voters had sufficient economic information they were more luckily to vote rationally and in the process demand better management of the economy (Lucas, 2015; Moyo, 2018; & Dorn, 2021). This may be the first step in measuring the burden on democracy, sufficient fiscal responce in service delivery to the needs of the majority.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Table 1: Definition of Key terms

Democracy	Democracy is a system of government that bases its legitimacy on the participation of the people. While democratic governments come in many varieties, they are uniformly characterized by (1) competitive elections, (2) the principle of political and legal equality and (3) a high degree of individual freedom or civil liberties (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2022)
Development	Sustainable Development recognises that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimension, combatting inequality within and among countries, preserving the planet, creating sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth and fostering social inclusion are linked to each other and are interdependent (United Nations 2030 Agenda, 2016-2030).
Election	An election is a process in which eligible citizens vote to choose a person or group of people to hold an official public position and is the most visible activity in a democracy (Clark, 2019)
Election year	A period when there is a scheduled national elections (Mohr, 2018).
Non-Election year	A period when there are no scheduled national elections (James, 2020).

By-election	This is an election that occurs during a period when there are no scheduled elections (Electoral Commission of Zambia, 2021)
General election	This is an election that is held in regular intervals in which candidates are elected at presidential, parliamentary, Mayoral and Councillor positions (ECZ, 2021)
Governance	Governance refers to a process by which a country is controlled and operates, and the mechanisms by which it, and its people, are held to (International Foundation for Electoral Systems, 2022).
Public Expenditure	It is spending made by the government of a country on collective goods and services (Collaborative Africa Budget reform Initiative, 2015)
Service Delivery	This is the act of providing essential services to citizens by their government-essential utilities, social, regulatory and infrastructure (UN, 2013; Deolalikar and Jha, 2015)
Poverty	This is a state or condition in which or person or community lacks the financial resources and essentials for a minimum standard of living (World Bank, 2021)

1.8 Scope and Limitations of Study

The extent of this study covered 22 observations between 2000 and 2021. Specifically, election expenditure was analysed for trends in election and non-election years. Election expenditure in this research included all public funds as allocated and expended by the ECZ in one fiscal year on election administration and conducting of elections. In Zambia, this runs from 1st January to 31st December. Data for election expenditure was sourced from expenditure reports of the ECZ while budgetary allocation was taken from the budget estimates as approved by the National Assembly of Zambia in the Yellow Book.

Additionally, the study analysed public expenditure on agriculture service delivery in the study period. Service delivery components were limited to the FISP, the FRA and R&D. The FISP and FRA were selected as they consumed the largest chunk of the agriculture budget reaching over 65% by 2015

(IAPRI, 2015). Research and Development was selected because the literature identified investment in research and extension services as most vital for growth. This was found to be enhanced by increased investment in rural infrastructure as well as education and health to lead to higher productivity and poverty reduction (World Bank, 2020; FAO, 2021). R&D expenditure was limited to that which the ZARI expended on actual research and extension services. Expenditure data for agriculture service delivery components was sourced from expenditure reports of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). Budgetary allocation data was derived from the budget estimates in the Yellow Book as approved by the National Assembly in each fiscal year of study.

Without ignoring the fact that the agricultural sector has over the years either been combined or divided into crops and livestock, poultry and fisheries ministries, in this study agriculture referred to crop agriculture only. Forest economy was under the Ministries of Lands and Natural Environment while floriculture and horticulture were found to be anchored in the Ministry of Commerce Trade and Industry. Rural infrastructure development including agriculture related works also fell across a number of ministries from water development, energy, local government and infrastructure development. In most cases, specific agriculture infrastructure was directly funded and supervised by donor agencies thereby falling out of the scope of this study.

One of the limitations of the study was the observation period. Initial investigations showed that reliable data on the FISP variable were only available from 2000. Discussions with government officials also revealed that a wide usage of computers only began after 1998. As such, any data on expenditure related to a specific related service delivery variables before 1998, may have been damaged, misplaced or lost. Though the ECZ was enacted in October 1996, it only became autonomous in 1998 and physically moved officers from the office of the Vice President in 2000. Reliable digital data was only available from the 2001 general election. This implies that the missing data point of 2000 was extrapolated from the available data. The data for the FRA seemed to also be only readily available from 2000. While it was enacted in 1998, the FRA became fully operational in 2000 together with the Fertiliser Support Programme (FSP), which later became Fertiliser and Input Support Programme (FISP) in 2003.

It should be noted that verification of the data through the Auditor General’s Office also proved difficult. This is because the audited accounts of various government ministries and spending agencies were usually many years behind with filing not up to date even at the National Assembly where each spending ministries and agencies expenditure reports were expected to be deposited. Even copies of the Yellow book were mostly obtained from the National Archives. Collecting the information also proved challenging as the key sources were not conversant with the data due to people movements and loss of institutional memory or just bad record keeping. They may also not have been very easily willing to share data fearing the study may put them in bad light considering that Zambia is a very political country. However, whatever data that was collected were continuously verified with relevant officials.

The study picked on a post positivist world view as recommended by Philips and Burbules (2000) and Creswell (2014). Accepting personal knowledge of the researcher, after years of public service in government, this view provided an opportunity to limit the biases through quantitative research. Analysis of public expenditure through an adapted political budget cycle theory, which included observation of actual expenditure on elections, supported the post positivism lens. The main motivation for the research was from a personal experience in a by-election in Chindwali in Katete, Eastern Zambia. The researcher observed that the community in the ward had very clear needs: three boreholes at a cost of the equivalent of US$10,000 (exchange rate average of US$1-ZMK12 in 2017). And yet the ECZ was there to spend an equivalent of over a US$100, 000 (ECZ, 2019) as average public expenditure on the ward by-election back then (ECZ, 2019). This was outside the campaign finance of the participating political parties. Given a choice, would the community have preferred the election costs instead paid for the boreholes and other needs immediately? Or were they happy to participate in the electoral process to elect a council leader with no control over fiscal transfers for boreholes which had been outstanding for years in spite of past elections? These questions, in our view could only be investigated through analysis of public expenditure on elections as a proxy for signalling to those in office and their response to needs of the majority in society, in this case expenditure on agriculture service delivery.

This research introduced a new lens to the PBC theory away from election timing impacts on fiscal variables only, and analysing the functionality burden on democracy. This was defined as measure of investment in electoral governance on one hand and how that triggered commensurate expenditure on delivery of services in agriculture (good governance). Time series data from 2000 to 2021 was analysed using ordinary least squares regression selected because of its robustness.

1.9 Organisation of Thesis

The report is organised into seven chapters. Chapter one provides an introduction of the study. It constitutes the following; background of the study and research problem, problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions, objectives and study delimitations.

Chapter two provides a review of related literature on election expenditure and agriculture service delivery. The literature reviewed provides similar scholarly work done on the topic. The literature is arranged according to main themes as they relate to the subject matter.

Chapter three presents a discussion on the theoretical arguments in view of the topic. It draws a conceptual to provide for ease of understanding of the variables analysed. The theoretical underpinning of the study is explained in this chapter.

Chapter four will contain the study’s philosophical view and methodology. The chapter outlines the various tools and techniques the research will employ to address the research problem. These among others include the research design and data analysis procedures.

Chapter five presents the research findings of the study in line with the research questions. The chapter includes various visual diagrams and statistical computations of the findings of the study.

Chapter six discusses the research findings of the study. It interprets the findings in view of past studies, relevant arguments and policy implications.

Chapter seven provides overall conclusions and recommendations of the study. It also provides insights for further policy discussion and suggested areas for further research.

1.10 Chapter Summary

Chapter one of the report demonstrated the need for study of the topic. While elections have been quite regular in Zambia since 1991, service delivery in agriculture does not seem to have been well tracked to determine the existence of a commensurate relationship between expenditure on elections and that on agriculture service delivery. As a result of the absence of this data, there is an on-going debate on election expenditure being wasteful and increasing calls for abolition of by-elections.

In chapter two, literature related to the subject matter will be reviewed .Empirical studies and other research works will be reviewed in relation to election expenditure and agriculture service delivery.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The chapter provided a review of literature on public expenditure levels, composition and service delivery on elections and agriculture. It included a search of studies on how shifts in election expenditure and that on agriculture service delivery related. It first focused on public expenditure and how governments have used this policy instrument to improve the wellbeing of citizens. The studies reviewed were presented as sub-themes under public expenditure and its role in economic growth and service delivery. These sub-themes included studies on expenditure levels at national level, expenditure levels and composition of public expenditure in agriculture, budget allocation processes and laws. This review also paid attention to evidence on whether decentralisation enhanced expenditure trends and service delivery specifically in agriculture and on the overall enhancement of democracy and local election expenditure.

Attention was paid to literature review on trends in election administration expenditure and cost of elections. An analysis of the arguments and findings in the studies were provided at the end of this chapter. Finally, an insight on the knowledge gap in the literature in view of the research topic was presented and the chapter closed with a literature map.

2.1 Public Expenditure Review

2.1.1 Public Expenditure and Democracy

One of the earliest studies linking democracy, public expenditure and the wellbeing of society was by August Boeckh (1817) which discussed the public economy of ancient Athens. Boeckh accused the Athenian voters of preferring to spend more on festivals than on wars and for levying unjust taxes to pay for their bloated government. This view was disputed in a recent study by Pritchard (2015) who used newly found ancient writings and current analysis tools. He found that in fact the voters in Athens were well aware of the costs of all Bills they voted on. His conclusion was that they spent about 35% of public finances on two important religious festivals, one held every year and the other once every four years. War expenditure was still viewed as a priority and the expenditure on wars changed according to the priorities of a particular year. The other major expenditure was maintaining the government.

Public expenditure has been the single most important policy instrument available to governments of most developing countries for the promotion of growth, equitable distribution and delivery of public goods and services (Das & Kar, 2016; Garry & Valdivia, 2017; Ligon & Sadoulet, 2018; Mogues & Caceres, 2018; Doumbia, 2021; FAO, 2021). In democratic Africa, elections were expected to weed out incompetent politicians and signal priority preferences of voters in terms of economic and social development. The role of government was to consolidate good governance through institutions such as parliament and the judiciary amid nationally shared goals as well as transparency through citizen engagement on budget processes and fiscal policies (Chang, 2010; OECD, 2015; Mazzucato, 2020).

Public spending enables governments to produce goods and services, in order to fulfil their economic and welfare objectives. The available long-run data (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2021) shows that the role of and size of government around the world has changed drastically. For example during the pre-world war II period, the USA spent about 2% of GDP as public expenditure. However in the war period this went as high as 44%. The steep growth in the second half of the 21st century was attributed to increased expenditure on education and health. In countries such as France, central government spending accounted for almost 50% of all national output in 2020, but in Nigeria, this figure was close to only 6%. India spent US$1,800 dollars per person in the 2016 fiscal year while in Norway expenditure per person was just over US$30, 000 dollars. High income countries also spent more on social protection than low income countries. In the same study, it was found that low income nations spent between 30% and 50% of public expenditure on compensation of government employees while throughout Europe this was limited to between 5% and 15%.

Fiscal policy must be anchored on the economic health of a nation amid many demanding needs. The manipulation of these demands through budget allocation and public expenditure is seen as a major contributor to the wellbeing of society (Mogues, 2012). In 2016, the United Arab Emirates created a position called the Minister of State for Happiness. The main responsibilities of the job include harmonisation of all government plans, programs and policies to achieve a happier society (The UAE, 2018). As in ancient Athens, many democratic nations recognise that public expenditure on the delivery of goods and services, as well as the contribution of elections to good governance, are key factors for the wellbeing of society (Balamatsias, 2018; Moyo, 2018; Clark, 2019; Mazzucato, 2020).

Traditionally, there have been two threads of thought on the role of public expenditure related to Wagner (1883) and Keynes (1936). The former, based his argument on national income rise as the driver for increased public expenditure. This was because, an increase in income, made people expect more social services, which led to government increasing expenditure towards the same. According to this theory, determination of public expenditure and taxation happened on the basis of public preferences which were revealed by themselves. Wagner's Law relied heavily on taxes. However, it became apparent very quickly that states at the highest level of taxation could not increase the taxes beyond a certain level. The effect of increasing deficits was reduced spending. Critics of Wagner argued that it was only relevant to the industrialisation age such as Germany was going through in the 19th century and could not be applied generally. On the other hand, Keynes proposed that consumer demand was the key to increased public expenditure. While Keynes called for expansionary fiscal policy during recessionary times, he also called for government restraint in rapidly growing economies. Critics of this growth path argued that government borrowing even in recession times led to crowding and increased interest rates. Milton Friedman (1963) argued that Keynesians erred by urging government to be interventionist.

Fiscal policy measures, including targeted government spending and taxation are one of the two main sets of macroeconomic tools at the disposal of governments to enhance growth, stability and shape the outcomes of expenditure. Garry & Valdivia (2017) collected real economic growth rate secondary data on Mexico, Central America and the Dominican Republic, to analyse the contribution of public expenditure to growth. The study used three different estimation techniques including the Vector Auto Regression (VAR), Structured Vector Auto Regression (SVAR) and the Dynamic Stochastic General Equilibrium (DSGE) models to analyse their data. It was pointed out that empirical evidence suggested a wide range of results for fiscal multipliers and the reason for the dispersions were not clear. This may have been due to different estimation multipliers used, or even that differences were due to varieties in definition, coverage and precision of available data. Their results showed that public expenditure contribution to growth was significant during the study period of 2005 to 2014. The correlation coefficients revealed that there was a positive and strong relationship between economic growth and current account spending in all the countries but a weak relationship with capital investment. Co-integration tests for economic growth and public expenditure (current and capital) posited existence of a long term relationship for all the countries.

Ahuja and Pandit (2020) tested Wagner's Law against Keynesian theory using extant research model and concluded that it was public expenditure which spurred economic growth. Secondary data was collected from 59 countries between 1990 and 2019. The results confirmed a unidirectional causality between public spending and growth. Further evidence showed that the results were firm even after considering for control variables such as trade accessibility, investment and inflation spending. Unlike Garry and Valdivia (2017) this study found a positive and significant bearing of the investment control variable with economic growth. Population and unemployment were found to impact economic growth negatively.

Das and Kar (2016) deployed the SVAR model to investigate whether public expenditure in education, health and physical infrastructure were conducive for rapid economic growth in India. The study considered demographic changes in an endogenous growth model. It was indicated that in 2016, 60% of the Indian population was between 15 and 59 years old with a mean age close to 27 years. The main focus of the study was to investigate how expenditure on education and health influenced productivity in the working population which in turn impacts economic growth. The results showed that health expenditure had a positive impact on the working age population. However, higher allocations to education and training were found to draw workers away from the labour market. This was noted as peculiar considering India had a large share of unskilled workers in the informal sector already.

After the end of the cold war most authoritarian regimes fell in developing countries, and gave way to plural elections. The governance space grew and created room for a free press and operations of civil society. Elected governments immediately embarked on tackling the structural impediments to political administration and economic challenges, and began to move away from less transparent, and in some instances, even secret expenditure. Creation of election management bodies, focus on education and health, investment in agriculture and provision of water, power and other public goods and services, became part of most strategy papers to reduce the high levels of poverty in these poor countries (UN Development Report, 2004; OECD, 2005; Moyo, 2018).

The IMF provided adjustment programs to these new democracies. These adjustments required institutional reforms especially in the finance ministry with budgeting laws and systems as the focus. These reforms resulted in tighter fiscal discipline and a withdrawal of government from performing of non-core functions like running state enterprises, and in most cases this included state farms, airlines, manufacturing and mines, etc. The structural adjustment interventions were aimed at reducing inflation, debt and increasing economic stability and growth (IMF, 2013). Service delivery systems were also scrutinised. In response, many new democracies began to experiment with devolving of authority and resources to local levels. Government intended to be limited to provision of public goods and services. Coupled with regular elections, new private property laws and investment incentives, the reforms were expected to trigger more private direct investment flows in these poor but new democratic nations. However, in a study on Zambia, it was found that FDI was only beneficial in the short term (Mpundu et al., 2019).

Critics of the IMF programs claimed that most of the reforms in poor countries had a one solution fits all approach and did not consider the country specific social and economic context. The fund was observed to have been prescribing the same template to countries in all developing regions with no regard for cultural and political context. Stiglitz (2002) accused the fund of having begun on the wrong premise when addressing the challenges in newly democratised states, which was a belief in perfect markets and imperfect governments. The rapid privatisation in some of these countries resulted in urban unrest. As a result, academics in development studies were pushed to provide new solutions to low economic growth and service delivery failure in newly democratised nations (Fritzbein, 2005; Friis-Hansen, 2014; Moyo, 2018).

After decades of perceived failures of structural reforms in developing new democracies, new academic theories suggested that political reasons, and not free markets, were responsible for the levels, composition and timing of public expenditure which led to poor service delivery. The evidence was that incumbent politicians manipulated electoral outcomes to their own advantage by creating short-term economic boosts and/or improving the economic conditions of citizens just before elections. But this led to unmanageable deficits in the long term which led to unhealthy economies which could not sustainably deliver services to citizens. In some of the studies it was suggested that fiscal manipulations were a phenomenon of developing countries (Block, 2002; Schuknecht, 2002, 2006; Shi & Svensson, 2006; and Vergne, 2011), in other literature that it was found only in new democracies (Brender & Drazen, 2005) and yet in others, that it was a phenomenon present in democratic developing countries with low levels of fiscal transparency (Alt & Lassen, 2006). Shi and Svensson (2006), confirmed that government fiscal deficits increased by 1% of GDP in election years and this deficit was more significant in developing nations. The research concluded that the magnitude of the electoral budget cycle depended on politicians' desire for re-election as well as the share of informed voters in the electorate. The study analysed a cross section of 85 countries over a 21-year period. In their studies, which included non-democratic countries, Shi and Svensson (2002, 2006) argued that electoral cycles were also present in non-democratic nations, as leaders had an incentive to manipulate the budget, to address possible discontent among citizens. However, this view was not very popular since in neoliberalism, capitalism and plural politics are two sides of the same coin, so to speak, and electoral governance was viewed as the precipitator of public expenditure, expected to enhance economic efficiencies such as private sector growth.

Recent studies on budget manipulation have also disputed the evidence that it was only a phenomenon of newly democratised and developing countries. Efthyvoulous (2012) confirmed budget and public expenditure policies' manipulation for purposes of re-election by incumbents in the EU. Cross sectional data for 27 countries over the period 1997 to 2008 found large and statistically more robust manipulations in Eurozone countries than in countries where the Euro had not been adopted. The study found that government manipulation extent of fiscal policy was negatively correlated to non-economic voting and positively correlated with electoral competitiveness. Brender and Drazen (2013) also confirmed expenditure composition changes with leadership changes in established democracies. Their study analysed a data set of 71 countries from 1972 to 2009. It was found that fiscal changes were noticeable up to 2 years after elections. Moyo (2018) also alluded to electoral impacts and political party gridlocks, as partly to blame for public expenditure challenges in countries such as the USA. She identified structural problems with public expenditure, such as one wing of government being able to override commitments made by another, policy changeability when politicians change, and lack of commitment to ratified international agreements.

In an IMF working paper, Ebeke & Olcer (2013) analysed data on low income countries to investigate the behaviour of fiscal variables during and after elections. They argued that earlier studies by Brender and Drazen (2005) and Shi and Svensson (2006) pooled together developing countries, with no special focus on low income countries, which they said were more at risk of election related cycles. The study by Block (2002) was also disregarded because even though the study sample was restricted to Sub Saharan Africa from 1985 to 1995, they observed that many of the countries only witnessed competitive elections after 1990. Ebeke and Olcer (2013) used a panel data set of 68 low income countries from 1990 to 2010 to investigate government spending in election years and included all countries that had benefited from the IMF Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust as of 2010. The results indicated that during election years, government consumption increased and led to a higher fiscal deficit by about1%. Following the two years after elections, government reduced consumption through increased trade taxes and cuts to government investments. However, these efforts were not found to match reduction in the current account spending nor resource mobilisation, to fully offset the deviation allowed during the election year. The study, did however note, that actual expenditure on elections was a macro economic cost that could impact small economies, on top of electoral impacts.

2.2 Public Expenditure on Agriculture

2.2.1 Expenditure Trends

Government expenditure levels in agriculture play a critical role in the economy and welfare of its people. Investment in agriculture is treated as one of the most effective strategies in reducing poverty and hunger, enhancing agriculture productivity and sustainable development (FAO, 2012). However, despite the evidence that enhanced agriculture expenditure is essential in promoting agricultural growth and reducing poverty and hunger, the share of agriculture in government expenditure has been declining in many countries. (FAO, 2021). Empirical evidence by the FAO suggests that the role of agriculture in the economy is a result of different activities. The value chain was found to be significant all the way from the farm to the market (Dastagiri, 2019). Mellor (1976) regarded as the father of modern agriculture demonstrated the link between agriculture spending and development and overall economic growth. Other studies have tried to link the role of government spending in agriculture to growth and poverty reduction (Fan & Rao, 2003; Akroyd & Smith, 2007; Fan, Omilola & Lambert 2009).

At the behest of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the World Bank carried out a second agriculture public expenditure review in 2020 to 2021. The purpose was to understand the strengths and weaknesses of existing and anticipated agriculture public expenditures and how to better align them with objectives of the country's strategy (approved in 2019) for agriculture development covering 2020-2030. In this study, the World Bank defined agriculture under classification of functions of government to include; crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and irrigation and drainage. It was found that the level at which public expenditure had been increasing in both nominal and real terms reflected the government's high focus on food security, rural jobs and agriculture diversification. Uzbekistan was found to have spent 2.2% of GDP during the 2016 to 2020 on agriculture which was almost double when compared to most OECD countries with an average spending of 0.2% from 2015 to 2017. The close peers such as China and Kazakhstan spent in the range of 0.8% to 0.9% in the same period. Agriculture contributed 30.8% to the GDP in Uzbekistan and employed 25% of the national labour force in 2016. In China agriculture contribution to the GDP was 8.9% with 27% jobs created in the total labour force, while in Kazakhstan it was 4.8% and 18% respectively. The average in the OECD was 3.1% as agriculture contribution to the GDP and a farm labour force of 6.2% in 2016.

The FAO (2021) carried out a global review of public expenditure to determine expenditure trends in agriculture between 2001 and 2020. It was indicated that total government expenditure recorded an all-time high in 2020 mostly due to the COVID-19 Pandemic interventions. However, the overall share of spending in agriculture continued to fall in most countries. Agriculture expenditure increased from 1.73% globally in 2010 to 2.18% in 2020. National expenditure levels were also quite varied from 0.02% to 25% of national expenditure (IMF, 2021). The Americas, Europe and Oceania each allocated 1% to 1.5% of total government spending to agriculture in 2001. This share dropped by 2020 to 0.81% in the Americas, 0.62% in Europe and Oceania. The decrease was highest between 2001 and 2015, a period before the Pandemic. The FAO (2021) observed that in Europe government expenditure on agriculture in absolute terms had declined.

Wielechowski (2019) conducted a similar investigation examining global expenditure on agriculture using SDG regional groupings data between 2003 and 2017. It included the Agriculture Orientation Index (AOI) of National economies on agriculture. Data was sourced from the FAO. The AOI formulated by the FAO is defined as the share of central government expenditure allocated to agriculture, in relation to agriculture value added share of the GDP. In the study agriculture included crop farming, forestry, fishing and hunting sectors. The index is currency free and calculated as a ratio of the two above mentioned shares. The rationale is that a ratio greater than 1 refers to higher orientation towards the agriculture sector and receives a higher share of government spending relative to its contribution to GDP. A ratio less than 1 reflects a lower orientation of the central government towards the agriculture sector. An AOI equal to 1 indicates neutrality (FAO, 2018). Wielechowski (2019) observed that most central government’s orientation towards agriculture sector had fallen significantly worldwide. The global AOI fell from 0.36 in 2003 to 0.26 in 2017. This was in opposition to the SDG second goal which is reduction of poverty and is monitored through AOI values. Europe and North America had the highest AOI values. In the European region, Belarus, Switzerland and the Republic of Moldova were found to spend the most on agriculture. The EU allocated over 55 billion Euros on the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) in 2021 representing 33.1% of the total EU budget (EU, 2021). In 2013, the EU agriculture political goals shifted to market measure, direct payments, horizontal issues such as value chains and rural development (Bonfiglio et al., 2015). The 2021 CAP budget was a direct response to those new policy priorities and provided for 76.8% on direct payments and market research and 23.2% on rural development. Agriculture and food related industries and services in the EU provide over 44 million jobs and included regular work for 20 million people within the agriculture sector itself (EU, 2017). However, the EU is an industrialised region with well-established financial systems to provide for other inflows to the agriculture sector outside dwindling government expenditure (Mandle et al. 2012). However, these private inflows were not well captured in the literature.

Governments in Latin America and the Caribbean spent 1.45% and 4.01% respectively in 2001 on agriculture as a share of total public spending. By 2020 this dropped to 1.11% and 3.83% respectively in 2020 (FAO/IMF, 2021). Guyana was found to have the highest share of government expenditure between 2016 and 2020 at 8.7%. The FAO (2021) global expenditure report revealed that countries that provided a detailed breakdown of their agriculture expenditure showed they allocated more to the current account (such as salaries, wages, operational and over-head costs) than capital investment (assets such as land, machinery, research). The increased global expenditure between 2010 and 2020 were largely driven by Asia. Average expenditure trends for the Asian region were at 3.24 in 2001 and at 5.93 in 2020 (FAO/IMF, 2021). Country rates included China at 9.6%, India at 7.6% followed by Nepal at 7.1% and Thailand at 6.3%.

The Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) was initiated in 2000 and enhanced through the Maputo Protocol (2003). A recommitment was made in Malabo in 2014, to continue with 10% of national public expenditure to be spent in the agriculture sector. Further in 2016 in Khartoum, the AU call was extended to add 1% of total public spending to be specifically spent on research and development in the agriculture sector. The Maputo Protocol had pegged annual agriculture growth at 6% for African countries. As observed by Keefer and Khemani (2005) these efforts were part of the global effort to reduce hunger and poverty, and to create rural jobs. In 2009, Fan et al. examined progress on agriculture expenditure trends in Africa against the CAADP. They analysed 38 countries from the North and Sub-Saharan Africa and concluded that most countries had not met the 10% target. Only 8 countries were at 10% followed by 16 others that had reached expenditure shares of between 5-10%. The remaining 14 countries in the sample had allocated less than 5%. This study observed that expenditure on research and development and agriculture related infrastructure such as feeder roads had been neglected and yet it could have acted as the ignition for agriculture transformation. The study concluded that education played an important role in enhancing agricultural growth. Earlier, Fan and Rao (2003) observed that the Asian agrarian revolution involved agriculture expenditure in some instances as high as 15% of the national budget.

A further analysis of the FAO (2021) report revealed that between 2001 and 2020 the share of expenditure in Africa had declined slightly from 3.06% to 2.55%. In absolute terms though Africa's expenditure increased threefold from US$4.2 billion to US$14 billion in 2020. The question to ask though is how comparable was the shift in expenditure when matched against government expenditure in other sectors. Many developing countries seemed to have observed major quantitative shifts in public expenditure in general but without matching delivery in public service nor reduction of poverty (Deolalikar & Jha, 2015). Malawi was found to be the top country spending 11.8% of total national expenditure on agriculture with Mali a close second at 11.6%. Togo and the Central African Republic were both found to expend 6.6%.

In the study, the FAO used the Monitoring and Analysing of Food and Agriculture Policies (MAFAP) to collect expenditure data in Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda and United republic of Tanzania from 2004 to 2018. Data analysed was the agriculture specific expenditure defined as: transfer to agents in the agriculture sector mostly to producers and consumers with a small share to traders, transporters and input suppliers; secondly, general support expenditure which benefits the sector such as through agriculture infrastructure, extension services, research or marketing and administrative costs linked to policy formulation and coordination and running costs of agriculture ministries and other spending agencies. Eight of the thirteen countries experienced double digit growth in food and agriculture budgets, of over 20% during the study. However, when inflation and exchange rate fluctuations were considered, the average budget growth shifted down from 13% to 5% among the whole sample. In fact, Ghana and Tanzania had a negative trend in agriculture expenditure during the period. Donor funding was found to account for 36% of total expenditure on food and agriculture spending with some countries relying heavily on donor support. Earlier studies confirmed that underspending on food and agriculture in SSA is not a recent trend. Between 1980 and 2010, food and agriculture expenditure per capita was the lowest compared to any other region in the world and followed a declining trend (Fan and Breisinger, 2011).

The FAO (2021) attributed the downward trend in agriculture expenditure in SSA to the following; structural adjustment programs in the 80s and 90s which led to government withdrawal from the sector through subsidy and other forms of government support cuts. Secondly, economic context of the SSA has only seen annual growth of 16% in tax revenue excluding grants during the study period. Average food and agriculture expenditure growth rate of 13% was too close to the revenue rate in fiscal space which was already challenging. The IMF also reported that SSA countries spent 10% of their revenues on debt servicing. Thirdly, budget execution and programme implementation challenges resulted in non-performance of some of the budgeted funds even when allocation had reached the CAADP threshold.

Mink (2016) reviewed agriculture public expenditure in 20 countries of Southern Africa from 2009 to 2015. These included Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroun, Chad, Cote D'Ivoire, Congo DR, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Rwanda, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, Uganda, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Zambia. The focus included level of expenditure against the CAADP targets, composition and actual expenditure against stated priority polices among others. All the countries had positive expenditure growth though Malawi at 3%, Guinea at 6% and Cote D'Ivoire at 4% were in the lower end of the expenditure growth spectrum. Only 4 countries reached or surpassed the 10% expenditure target on agriculture, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Malawi and Sierra Leone. On average countries were found to have increased public expenditure but expenditure on agriculture remained below 6% or had even declined. This study agrees with the FAO (2021) findings. Mink (2021) recommended enhanced budgeting procedures, budget performance monitoring and creation of reliable data bases. The study also called for intra and inter sectorial coordination and cost effectiveness of various public expenditures to meet national goals.

In Ghana, Benin (2019) analysed trends and composition of government expenditure from 1960 to 2015. Results showed that the share of government agriculture expenditure for the non-cocoa subsector had declined from 8% annually to only 2% in the CAADP era. R&D plus extension services had suffered though these areas were known for their high return and long term benefits. General administration expenditure was found to have increased far more rapidly out running expenditure on critical service delivery. The study raised concerns on overestimation to meet the Maputo Protocol targets. For example, Ghana reported 6.5% to 21.2% growth range between 2001 and 2011 and 5.8% to 7.5% from 2012 to 2015. Discrepancies in this positive growth included reporting of expenditure on rural feeder roads which is outside the AU guidelines on CAADP 10% expenditure on agriculture. Another expenditure reported was that of the Cocoa Board, a management organisation operating outside government. The study used descriptive statistics to analyse the secondary data.

In a related research, Udoh (2013) found that increase in public expenditure had a positive influence on output growth in agriculture. The results also revealed that foreign investment had insignificant impact in the short ran. The study used the Auto Regressive Distributed Lag modelling approach. The analysed data was from 1970 to 2008 in Nigeria. Ademola et al. (2013) also investigated the contribution of the agriculture sector to national earnings from 1981 to 2010 in Nigeria. The research found a significant relationship between expenditure trends in agriculture and economic growth. The study applied times series data obtained from the Central Bank of Nigeria. The empirical perspective used the Unit Root Test and Co-integration for the results. However, Idoko and Jatto (2018) found that agriculture expenditure trend was lower than expected despite its high contribution to poverty reduction. The study investigated expenditure trends on agriculture in Nigeria from 1985 to 2015. Ordinary Least Squares technique was used to determine the results. The findings on Nigeria were similar to the case study results on African agriculture expenditure by FAO (2021).

In Mozambique, government priorities between 2004 and 2007 as reflected by public spending composition were found to be education at 19%, infrastructure at 15.2%, health at 11.8%, good governance at 7.9% and agriculture at 7.8% (Zavale et al, 2011). The study found that in 2011, 80% of Mozambicans depended on agriculture for their livelihood and 73% lived in rural areas. It is important to note though that the World Bank (2007) noted that expenditure levels alone were not sufficient to guarantee increased productivity in agriculture. A holistic approach was recommended involving complementary investments in rural infrastructure, health, education and institutional mechanisms. The failure to invest in these areas was seen as continuing biases against agriculture policy setting, agriculture budget composition and price manipulation (Zouhar, 2021; Fan, Omilola & Lambert, 2009). By 2021, the situation had not changed much in Mozambique with investment levels still below the continental targets (Mogues & Erman 2016).

2.2.2 Agriculture Expenditure Composition

The EU agriculture budget share has been steadily declining from 66% in the 1980s to 37.8% in the 2014-2020 period. The 2019 EU financial report revealed that 94% of the CAP budget between 2014 and 2020 was targeted as direct aid to farmers which resulted in export subsidies almost being eliminated by 2019 (EU Financial Report, 2022). The remaining 6% of the 43.9 billion Euros was allocated to storage promotion and information actions as well as school distribution programs. In 2019 the largest CAP recipient was France at 17.3% followed by Spain at 12.4%, Germany at 11.2% and Italy at 10.4%. The latest EU 13 countries received 26.8% of the CAP European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Funds (EAGG). The same countries have prioritised modernisation of agricultural facilities and rural development and in 2019 received 32.2% of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). Distribution disparities were identified among beneficiary farmers in 28 CAP members receiving only 5000 Euros in annual payments in 2019, representing only 15.1% of the total funds. In contrast, 121, 844 farmers out of 6.3 million beneficiaries received 30.6% of direct payments. These payments were to countries with large farms including Denmark, the UK, Czech Republic, Slovakia and France. The EU financial report (2022) showed that this posed a problem of legitimacy of aid in view of principles meant to apply to all EU citizens (tax progressivity, fight against inequality and economic-social recovery due to the pandemic). The EU Parliament was awarded a greater role on compulsory expenditure, direct payment to farmers and modernisation and rural development following inter-institutional agreements in 1988, 1983, 1999 and 2006.

In the World Bank (2021) analysis of agriculture public expenditure in Uzbekistan, the major spending functions included agro-food value chains, agriculture knowledge and innovation, sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures, market infrastructure, irrigation and drainage, market information systems and finance and investment support. Other studies conducted globally found a lower impact for aggregate spending on agriculture growth compared to analysis of individual expenditures which meant that not all agriculture investments have the same impact (Mogues, 2012; World Bank, 2019). The study in Uzbekistan found that in 2016, 40% of agriculture public expenditure was used as direct farm payment (subsidies or public financing of private goods). This increased to 49% in 2020 mostly for various input use such as subsidised interest rates to cotton and wheat farmers and the irrigation electricity subsidy. These expenditures accounted for 85% of all direct farm payments in 2020. The largest general services support (public good) expenditure item was development and maintenance of irrigation infrastructure, which was 64% in 2016 but declined to 55% in 2020. Even though generally agreed that agriculture knowledge and innovation is critical investment for agricultural growth, the general services support budget for the same declined in 2020 to 6% from 13% in 2016. Public spending on animal health and other sanitary measures increased tenfold between 2016 and 2020. While it was true that R&D doubled in the same period it remained relatively low compared to other expenditures.

Governments sometimes spend too much on input and output subsidies which hurts agriculture growth. A study of 10 LAC countries from 1985 to 2000 period revealed that reallocated 10 percentage points of public expenditure from private goods to public goods increased per capita agricultural income by

2.3% (Lopez, 2005; World Bank, 2019). This debate has continued on why many agrarian democracies spend more on private goods (production and consumer subsidies) and not on public good investments such as on R&D, irrigation, storage and development of agro-value chains.

Stads and Beintema (2009) reviewed major institutional development, investments and human resource trends in public expenditure on R&D in Latin America from 1981 to 2006. Data was drawn from a set of country briefs and a regional report prepared by the Agriculture Science and Technology indicators Initiative (ASTI). The study found that in 2006 Latin America employed over 19 thousand researchers in agriculture and invested US$3 billion corresponding to 1.4% of the regions total agriculture expenditure. However, 70% of the total R&D budget expenditure was spent by only 3 countries, Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, thereby skewing the regional agriculture GDP.

Empirical evidence suggests that level and composition of rural public expenditure in the LAC has had an impact on agriculture expenditure (Lopez, 2004). More recently, Anriquez et al. (2018) confirmed that although the level of agriculture expenditure matters it is the change of composition from private to public goods that is responsible for enhanced productivity. Between 1958 and 2001, many LAC countries expended the agriculture rural expenditure on private goods. Salazer, Lopez and De Salvo (2015) investigated four LAC countries on the impact of subsidised fertiliser in Guatemala, subsidised technology in Bolivia and expenditure on public goods including plant health in Peru and agriculture information in Colombia to determine their impact on productivity, household income and food security in rural areas. In Guatemala the subsidised fertiliser program was implemented in 2000 with the objective of improving maize and bean yields and increasing food security among small farmers. Using cross-sectional data, the study found that bean yields of participating farmers reduced by 1.54 quintiles per hectare and this was attributed to possible insufficient application techniques of fertiliser. Participating farmers, however, had increased maize yields though the association with the subsidy was not statistically significant. The subsidised fertiliser was found to have no impact on food security, household income nor per capita income. In Bolivia, the study found that there was a positive and significant impact on productivity due to subsidised technology which government co-financed at 90% compared to non-beneficiary farms. The technology included handsets and text messages on weather and market prices. On average the beneficiaries farm annual production value increased by 92%. The results showed that net household income increased by 36% and probability of being food secure by 20 to 30%.

In 1997 Peru launched an aggressive fruit fly control and eradication program to boost productivity and stimulate competition for the global market. The researchers analysed the short-run impacts of the third phase of the program. The evidence was significant increase in productivity of fruit crops (measured as value of production per plant) of 15% on average for the treatment group compared to the control group. In Colombia, the study reviewed the 2008 implemented agriculture information system based on competitiveness, productivity, technology adoption, income and investments of household producers and agribusiness. The results showed that household income, measured at net monthly income per hectare was significantly lower for beneficiaries under irrigation projects compared to control group with same projects but with no access to the information system. The study concluded that the various expenditure on public goods and private goods provided results confined to a few studies. However they recommended that rural infrastructure played a key role in sustainable development in agriculture and that deficiencies hindered growth. Technology and agriculture information were generally found to reduce disparities and gaps and impacted farmers' ability to obtain higher prices.

India spent 0.7% of the agriculture GDP on aggregate research including education, extension and training in 2014-2015. This was below the World Bank's recommended 2% for the region. Out of the allocated aggregate, 0.54% was used for research and education alone at all levels in India (Ghulati et al, 2018). The researchers examined the organisation of research and education and in particular extension systems in six states in India and how much was spent in absolute terms as public expenditure. The study revealed that 70% of public expenditure was skewed towards crop agriculture while animal husbandry and diary development benefited from the remaining 10%. Similarly, decomposition of the aggregate expenditure on extension and training showed that 92% was used for crop management and only 0.9% was allocated to animal welfare and diary development. This was in opposition to existing policy of diversification to include a serious focus on livestock development. Using field focused group interviews and economic analysis with simple OLS and Engel-Granger Test of co-integration, a significant association was found between public expenditure on research and education, training and extension service and growth in agriculture GDP in 5 out of the 6 states in the study.

The impact of public expenditure on service delivery, inequality and reduction of poverty was found to be dependent on its size, composition, progressivity and the way it is funded (Zouhar et al., 2021). The FAO (2021) study on agriculture expenditure trends and composition in 13 SSA countries found that 22% and 9% of the budget was paid as subsidies to producers and consumers respectively. Input subsidies were scaled down through reforms in Malawi while in Ethiopia they were shifted towards more consumer subsidy spending. Infrastructure in the agriculture sector was found to be mostly supported by donors with only 16% expenditure on average from the governments in the study. During the study period, donor funding for agriculture related infrastructure was as high as 25% of total spending on the subsector. R&D in the 13 countries accounted on average for 18% only of the agriculture expenditure. However, none of the countries had spent the committed 1% of GDP annually on agriculture R&D. Uganda with 0.7% was the highest with the rest tallying around or below 0.6%. Agriculture research expenditure has been identified often as having the largest effect on agriculture growth and poverty reduction (Goyal and Nash, 2017; FAO, 2021). There was evidence too of marked increases in expenditure on forestry, land and environment protection in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda and Tanzania.

Economists are in agreement that input subsidies are a potentially useful tool in developing countries where food markets remain largely imperfect. The rationale is that budgetary support to farmers may produce significant public benefits in terms of food availability and affordability in countries with high hunger and poverty levels (Jayne, Chamberlain & Benfica, 2018). This is in contrast to the IMF programs which initially recommended scrapping of such subsidies as they were viewed as being too costly to be beneficial for economic growth and were not viewed as supporting agriculture growth, food security and poverty reduction in the long term. The recent discourse, however, is more focused on the need to analyse weaknesses in input subsidies, so as to address poor targeting, inefficient distribution mechanism and avoidance of leakages (Mason & Tembo, 2015; World Bank, 2017). The FAO (2021) found that though a big share of food and agriculture spending, input subsidies per capita in the countries in the study amounted to less than US$10 during the period of study except for Malawi which was at US$11. The FAO noted that input subsidies, expanded during the food price crisis of 2007/8, have largely remained in place because they were politically difficult to remove. In almost all the countries observed the input subsidy was towards the staple cereal while in Benin it was used to support growing of cotton and groundnuts in Senegal.

Manyise et al. (2015) compared the impact of public expenditure on agriculture growth in South Africa and Zimbabwe based on the error correction model approach. Data on Zimbabwe was from 1981 to 2006 while for South Africa it was from 1983 to 2011.It was established that both governments have higher current expenditure at the expense of capital goods and services. Non-agriculture expenditure showed both positive and negative impact on agricultural growth depending on the economic state of the country. This finding is in line with other studies (World Bank, 2007; Fan et al, 2009; FAO, 2021) that while consistent and increased expenditure trends are important for growth, there have to be investment in the whole agriculture value chain including in non-agriculture items such as rural roads, dams and irrigation systems.

2.3 Budget Allocation Processes and Challenges

The precursor to public expenditure is the budget process. It is at this point that what monies are spent and on what, including who influences that process, comes into play (Mogues & Caceres 2018). Many of the challenges in budget execution were common across agriculture and non-agriculture sectors and included inaccurate revenue forecasting and implementation challenges. The FAO (2021) found that revenue forecasts were consistently higher than actual revenues in Tanzania between 2007 and 2012, and the short fall in revenue reached 10% in two, out of the five years during the study. Revenue shortfall meant that some ministries did not receive their allocations at all or implementation of their programs was delayed. The second aspect was that revenue shortfalls may have also resulted in trade-offs, where predictable and politically easier expenditures, such as subsidies and wages, were prioritised over capital expenditure (Mogues & Caceres, 2018; Zouhar et al. 2021). The question continued to be what role did electoral governance play in this process?

Public Financial Management (PFM) refers to the procedures established by law for the management of public monies through the budget process which includes formulation, execution reporting and analysis (Cole, 2015). In 2012, a study by the African Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (AfrOSAI), African Tax Administrators Forum (ATAF) and the Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI) identified four major challenges that impeded public expenditure being managed with integrity for effective service delivery, sustainable economic growth and development (CABRI, 2012). The study found that even though many African countries lagged behind the Open Budget Index in the world, some of the higher performers were from Africa. The biggest challenge, though, was that very basic information was provided even when the data was available internally and this made critical analysis of the budget performance difficult. Transparency was encouraged and studies did find that it bound key players to particular fiscal outcomes and made it costly for any misbehaviour. A change in citizens' preferences and increased demands led public expenditure to become even more complicated. This was identified as the second challenging factor. The development of sophisticated fiscal forecasting models, costed sector plans, financial management information systems and the shift to risk based internal audit systems etc., required professional, technical and managerial skills. An impaired accountability relationship between the executive and implementers of the budget was the third challenge. Many African financial professionals in government were said to be in constant turmoil to restrain the executive, while not hampering its ability to fulfil its constitutional obligations and electorate mandate. The point on bad relations also agreed with the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA, 2009), who found the legislature was weak in providing efficient and effective oversight. The fourth challenge, usually an area of conflict was donor influence which in some cases had resulted into creation of institutions familiar to donors, but not appropriate for Africa. However, it has been stated by some academics and practitioners that beyond economists and donors, African politicians and citizens must take responsibility for their own reform requirements, sequencing and achievement of results (Cole, 2015; Moyo, 2018).

Social accountability as a tool focuses on the demand side of governance and is concerned with the responsibility and responsiveness of authorities as well as citizens to make claims on those in authority to account for their actions (Friis-Hansen, 2014). A brain child of Donors, social accountability is widely viewed as part of the democratisation process. It was birthed out of the glaring 'lack' in service delivery, particularly in rural Sub-Sahara Africa, where even after years of donor supported programmes, transformation and impact of service delivery was still quite low. This discourse was part of the 'second generation' interventions after the IMF institutional reforms of the 1990s. The policy recommendations included going beyond mere technical understanding of institutional challenges to effective and efficient economic management, and appreciating the actual political context in which public expenditure occurs. A rights based approach on certain services was recommended.

For example, as part of the constitution review process in Zambia (Mungomba Commission, 2005; National Constitutional Conference, 2007 & 2013) there was a call for the Bill of Rights in the many submissions from the public, but this was later defeated in a referendum vote in 2016 (ECZ, 2016). The Bill of Rights is a declaration of individual rights and freedoms, usually issued by a government (Zambia National Assembly, 2016). In 2017 the UN, in partnership with the International Budget Partnerships (IBP) published '*Realising Human Rights through Budgets*' and called for legislative reforms to ensure basic services like provision of clean water and decent sanitation, access to education and healthcare etc., were enshrined in the budget laws. Fritz-Hansen (2014) also proposed that dedicated organisations needed to be created to work alongside local authorities in the provision of services. Democratic local organisations were encouraged, which would offer an 'invited political space' for resolution of conflict when it came to program implementation. The fourth recommendation was the training of local government staff to be more responsive to the community and enhance their management of financial resources and program implementation.

Arguments from Norton & Elson (2002) as well as Cole (2015) showed that within the budget process, there were both formal and informal power struggles which made it difficult to balance interests. A case in point was in the USA where public expenditure on elections was found to increase at local level, whenever the Republicans where in office (Foltz, 2014). In that case, it was important to recognise that the budget was not just a technical process and that existence of political interests needed to be recognised. There was also sufficient evidence in the literature on the impact of political interests in service delivery, resulting in the so called 'weak democratic push' by citizens to get their preferences attended to by those elected in government (De Haan & Klomp, 2013; Poulton, 2014; Kosec & Wantchekon, 2018)

Vergne (2011) conducted a study on 42 developing countries from 1975 to 2001 to investigate how electoral cycles impacted budget composition and changes in spending. The study focused on aggregate government expenditure and deficits. The results showed that experienced politicians were able to manipulate budget composition without necessarily increasing the deficit. This change in allocation was targeted mostly at visible current account expenditure, mostly salaries, wages and subsidies in agriculture. The electoral impacts were found to be prone to more abuse in countries where the election calendar was not constitutionally stated. In another study, Ariotti (2020) investigated whether the number of political parties in a country and ministers in cabinet influenced public expenditure levels. Original data on government budget composition in 19 African countries, from 1990 to 2015, and their spending data from the World Bank was used. The results showed that a coalition at the time the budget passed, was associated with increased spending. However, the number of cabinet ministers did not appear to systematically affect levels of public spending. Balamatsias (2018), in an analysis of expenditure data in 61 countries from 1993 to 2012, also found that democracy triggered increased levels of public expenditure. Estimations and Robust tests using 2SLS regression, OLS, fixed effects and GMM estimation were used in the study.

Traditionally, budgets have been presented to allow for scrutiny of the resources raised by government and the use to which these resources are put. The publication of the budget performed the role of generating accountability for the actions of government at various levels. While the budget has historically been the authority avenue for raising and spending of public funds, more recently it has been developed into a frame work within which complex decisions are made on resource allocations. In order to be more responsive to citizens' preferences and provide more accountability, budgeting was extended as a tool for the administrative budget, the current and capital budget, programme and zero-base budget. This therefore implies that, while these systems may aim to provide more transparency, the civil society, Media and most importantly, a critical mass of citizens, must be well informed and interested in budget issues, to raise and sustain the level of government accountability to national priorities. This is in tandem with the views of Moyo (2018) who observed that economic issues must be part and parcel of politics, if elections are to become a process for electing leaders, with the best growth plan.

The literature recommended that for public expenditure to impact service delivery effectively the minimum steps must include: Constitutional budget provisions recognising nationally agreed rights; pursuit of economic growth and revenue generation for wide-scale delivery of basic services; clear framework for citizens, politicians and civil service participation on policy goal setting; systems for identifying key actors and actions at each point in the implementation and evaluation of budget performance and results achieved against policy goals; transparent budget allocation with availability of disaggregated data in budget lines to make it easy for many to understand the budget; an active civil society and free press and active and informed citizenry with more public big data and ICT innovation available to them (Santiso,2007; Cole, 2015; OECD, 2015; UN/IBP, 2017). Social accountability is not feasible when both politicians and voters do not have access to relevant and detailed information on which budget lines take up the most expenditure and the opportunity cost on other budget lines, as well as the budget results against policy objectives (Lucas, 2015; Kosec & Wantchekon, 2018; Friis-Hansen, 2014).

In 2017, the EU requested the OECD to carry out an independent review of its 2015 initiative on results focused budgeting, and that those results were in fact beneficial to the citizens. Performance budgeting was defined as the systematic use of information about the outputs, results and/or impacts of public policies in order to inform, influence and/or determine the level of public funds to be allocated towards those policies in the budget context (Downes, Moretti & Nicol, OECD, 2017). The results were measured against the EU objectives of growth, jobs and stability. The EU strategic and operational goals were set out in a number of frameworks: Europe 2020, the Junker 10 Priorities, and the Strategic

Agenda of the European Council. To deal with the challenges of managing multiple but complementary frameworks, the Europe 2020 of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth was the reference whose influence was transmitted in all other programs. It was found that there was still room for enhanced communication among the programs especially with country programs. The study also recommended a limitation on budget lines to avoid information overload. It was also suggested that since the EU budget was primarily an investment budget with annual ceilings set in 7-year Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), opportunities were limited for performance signals to influence the debate on the annual budget. This is a critical point which may also apply to national budgets. Citizens only get a one off chance in four to five years to reward or punish leaders on public expenditure performance and service delivery. As a result, budget formulation and implementation cycles have been attracting a lot of debate especially on how citizens' priority expenditure signalling can be effectively interpreted after an election (Mazzucato, 2020). The EU considered budget responsiveness and flexibility as a priority considering the high number of member states. As such, the OECD assessment encouraged the EU to introduce spending reviews to critically assess the baseline public expenditure in view of performance and findings. A mid-term review was also recommended.

In a later EU-OECD (2020) study, it was found that 51% of the population trusted their government up by 6.3% from 2007. The increase in trust was viewed as a response to governments' performance during the pandemic crisis. However, the trust varied across institutions. About 72% of the people trusted the police, 49% the civil service while only 37% trusted national parliaments (EU-OECD, 2020). In 2018, less than half of the population (40%) had confidence in the political system in their country, giving them a chance to have a say in what the government did. This was an important observation. It is taken for granted that in established democracies, such as those in the OECD, participation by the majority in national affairs, which is the bedrock of democracy, was a given. By 2020, 27 out of the 32 countries had government-wide participation portals where all central/federal ministries published consultation and engagement opportunities. A further 38% of the OECD (2020) nations had several portals while 47% had a single portal. Since 2017 use of virtual consultation at early stages of regulatory policy had increased from 35% to 62% and from 41% to 57% at late stage of consultation. In 92% of the OECD countries, policy makers consulted early on draft regulation with selected groups. Most of the countries in 2020 had public mitigating strategies against integrity risks particularly corruption. However, only 40% of the integrity strategies underwent inter-governmental and public consultation. Less than half of the countries had transparency requirements covering most of the actors who were regularly engaged in lobbying. This was an important observation. Experts have already stated that the budget process is not just a technical process but occurs in a real political environment on assignment of resources. This includes election delivery and agriculture development as well as being impacted by manipulation based on re-election desires by politicians (Vergne, 2011; Cole, 2015; Benin, 2016; Ebeke & Olcer, 2013). Lobbyists have the potential for state capture on expenditure on elections, expenditure on agriculture and general budget and fiscal policies when the environment does not provide for clear transparency rules. These rules include publication of disaggregated budget information and expenditure reports.

The world population is 50% women and budgets are impacted by how many women are part of the process. In most of Africa, Zambia inclusive, the majority of small holder famers are women. The argument is extended to having more women in political office so that they may influence women responsive policies and expenditure trends. In 2019, there were only 37% of women holding public sector senior management positions on average in the OECD countries. There had been a slight increase in women in politics from 26% a decade ago to 32% in 2021 of women in lower/single houses of parliament. While the EU Budget in 2017 represented only 2% of overall public expenditure, the process for scrutinising and approving the budget-in parliament, political and audit terms were intensive. Most of the EU countries (59%) who responded to a 2015 OECD budget performance survey reported that the performance framework for EU funds was more rigorous than even for their national budgets. No details were provided on disaggregated data on expenditure on elections in the EU or national budget lines.

In Latin America and Caribbean countries (LAC), many governments were faced with fiscal challenges following considerable growth in debt ratios in relation to the GDP. Substantial fiscal tightening was expected in all the countries accompanied by structural reforms (ECLAC, 2018). However, many policy makers claimed inherent rigidities in the budget constrained decisions on large public expenditure cut backs. These rigidities were institutional, contractual and legal in nature. The source of these rigidities were a bloated public service and high wages allocated during economic growth periods, a large aging population which induced pension payments and externally influenced predetermined level of expenditure and fragmentation. There was found to be rigidity too in the budget's dual role as a legal instrument of accountability and as a functional tool to manage public spending levels and composition. With lower inflation, governments lost a revenue source and a mechanism to reduce in real terms, nominal debt and other contracts. As such, countries relied heavily on cutting public expenditure which was more flexible than addressing budget rigidities (Herrera & Olaberria, 2020). It was observed that before the 2008 financial crisis, the LAC nations' reduction in public expenditure represented 55% of typical fiscal adjustments and after the debt crisis this increased to 79%.

Herrera and Olaberria (2020) also found that most studies had ignored the impact of cutbacks in public spending on the long term health of the economy. It was proposed that a new measure of spending rigidity should be applied to a larger set of countries across time and focused on inflexible expenditure such as wages, pensions and debt service which policy makers complained about. The LAC study though did not include analysis on how the countries dealt with allocations to elections, both scheduled and unscheduled elections and how that was impacted by rigidity in budgeting. The study focused more on rigidity impacts on the aggregate budget and not so much on the functional analysis budget lines and how that impacted service delivery and poverty reduction.

The study on LAC was part of the OECD investigation which included 120 countries across various regions in the world for the years 2000 to 2017. It was shown that rigidity in spending was not just a phenomenon of the LAC. Other regions such as Europe and Central Asia (ECA), the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), as well as high income countries in the OECD had high rigidity expenditures than the LAC. LAC rigid spending was found to be lower at 70% compared to the ECA or MENA. Within the LAC, there was an indication of significant heterogeneity with budget rigid spending component highest in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Jamaica than in other countries. Secondly, analysis instruments used for measuring the rigid spending were found to be faulty and believed to have been overestimated by 25%. Sources of rigidity spending were also quite varied. In Barbados, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Jamaica, interest payments were the source. However in the other countries a large wage bill was the source of the rigid spending and was highest in Colombia and Panama. Pension payments were a large source in Chile, Panama and Peru. The study recommended enhanced dialogue and reform on rights based expenditure such as pensions, inclusion of forecast wage bill increases in planning and providing constitutional exist clauses in spending mandates when the situation called for it.

Post the 2016 Constitution Amendment in Zambia, public spending rigidities introduced, included continued salary payments to retired teachers until their pension was paid (National Assembly, 2016). There had been many complaints from members of parliament that retired civil servants were not paid their benefits for years and thus government was forced to leave retired teachers and other civil servants not only on the payroll but they also continued occupying government accommodation until their retirement benefits were paid (NAZ Hansard, 2015).

The quest for better fiscal control and service delivery has put the modernisation of the budget and expenditure management systems at the forefront of public administration reforms in most developing nations. For example, some studies by the Africa Growth Initiative (AGI) found that addressing low budget execution rates in Africa could increase spending on general infrastructure by 50% (AGI, 2021). The low budget execution rates were often attributed to poor planning, deficiencies in project preparation and delays in procurement. In Africa, the CABRI is a platform for peer learning and availability of comparative information on how budget systems work across the continent. This is aimed at enriching the interaction of African Finance and Planning Ministers. In 2015, the CABRI conducted the Budget Practices and Procedures Survey (BPP) in 23 African countries. The aim was to elicit data on budget preparation processes, national planning and budget execution. The countries were Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritius, Namibia, Niger, Seychelles, Sierra Leon, South Africa, Tanzania, Gambia, Tunisia and Uganda.

Multi-year perspectives in the budget process were found to be common with a third of the countries even using item level forward estimates. These forward costs were mostly estimates based on anticipated policies. The top-down ceiling approach was used by all countries. The CABRI observed that the practice of top-down issued ceilings was often misinterpreted by ministries and spending agencies as there being no room for adjustment. This was found to have impacted budgeting in critical sectors such as agriculture as it closed the door on further dialogue. The immediate past year's estimates were also found to be the favourite for the current year baseline. This, though, was found to be problematic in some instances as once misallocation occurred in the previous year, it was carried forward to the current year, and led to rigidities in allocation which had potential to negatively impact service delivery. In agriculture service delivery, for example, traditional baseline budgeting perhaps meant that drought, floods and pest attacks, were not adequately addressed as part of the current year budget to avert bigger potential disaster. In expenditure on elections, it could have led to under allocation of most expensive budget lines, such as poll staff, particularly in election years (James Clark, 2020). Performance information was also found to be tested by almost all the countries, especially by finance ministers, as an indicator for allocation. A majority number of 14 countries in the study reported integrated handling of capital and recurrent expenditure while 9 countries kept the two separate. However out of those 9, there were 3 countries that reported integrated reporting for accounting purposes only. A single treasury account was the common practice in 2015 among the countries surveyed and often this did not include foreign currency accounts. There was rigidity reported in any possible changes that could be made once appropriations had been approved. Supplementary budgets were however issued to respond to changing macroeconomic circumstances and natural disasters. The surveyed countries reported significant increase in usage of reserve funds between 2008 and 2015. This may have been a response to the financial crisis of 2008 and the 2014 recession and power challenges.

All the countries commonly used national development plans linked to the budget process. The researchers attributed this to donor pressure in the 80s and 90s, which forced African governments to initiate holistic public investment and development, and poverty reducing plans. Regardless of the source of the pressure, these plans played a critical role in providing an important stake holder engagement platform, thereby enhancing transparency in the policy setting, budget preparation and public expenditure processes. The study used descriptive statistics and thereby did not establish any causal relationship between budget preparation and execution of the budget against achieved results.

Mogues and Caceres (2018) conducted a budget evaluation in fiscal policy analysis and government performance on public expenditure in Mozambique. The budget cycle was found to be influenced by planning, budgeting and public expenditure policy and legal documents. These planning documents included the government five year plans, the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Medium Term Expenditure Framework and the Economic and Social Plan (PES is Portuguese acronym). The other documents were the budgeting and public expenditure execution reports issued quarterly and annually in a fiscal year running 1st January to 31st December. Some reports were at multi-layer intervals. The study found that reporting and recording of budget and public expenditure data relied on the integrated financial management system developed in 2002 (Portuguese acronym SISTAFE) and its electronic counterpart (e-SISTAFE), rolled out in 2007 by the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF). The e-SISTAFE generated three reports capturing the state budget and public expenditure across different stages of the budget cycle. The core reports were the State Budget Laws, the Budget Execution Reports and the General State Accounts. The reports contained full details of the approved budgets and expenditure details and were posted on the MEF National Directorate of Budget website. The study noted that this was not a common occurrence in Africa as most data on the budget and public expenditure were usually aggregated summaries with details sourced by researchers through personal contacts in the Ministries and Agencies responsible. It was indicated that a limitation though, in the Mozambique case was that, the online posts were in PDF and without databases which made it difficult to transfer to spreadsheets for easy analysis.

The state budget laws served as economic forecast for revenue and expenditure based on the PES. Planned expenditures were presented according to administrative and economic classifications. Each year the Ministry of Planning and National Development (MPD) wrote the PES and formulated the budget estimates. Once approved and published, Ministries and Spending Agencies were authorised to spend money consistent with the legal appropriations and the categories as per classification. The Budget execution report was issued quarterly by the MEF directorate of public accounts and included reviewed expenditure performance in the period. In the course of one year, Ministries and Agencies could request more expenditure for unforeseen circumstances. This was handled by the budget directorate which has power to reallocate resources while preserving macro stability and fiscal principles. Mogues and Caceres (2018) noted that the budget execution report was a snap shot at a particular time in public expenditure and could contain data that had not yet been processed by the e-SISTAFE. Some units were also processed in the e-SISTAFE before being incorporated in the budget execution report. The government's Annual Consolidated Financial Statement was compiled at the end of each fiscal year. It highlighted budget implementation and financial management and contained collected revenue, paid expenses and tables of budget execution, juxtaposed against the original budget allocations. Once the statement was issued, it was sent to parliament which sent it to the auditor general with comments. The auditor general then submitted it back to parliament with comments where it was debated in plenary each year in March, usually about 15 months after the relevant fiscal year. The researchers found that the delay was due to incapacity at parliament to analyse the financial statement and debate that year's budget at the same time. This study was from 2010 to 2013 and used secondary data from the reports as well as interviews with officials relevant to the study. The study found deviations in the allocations and budget executions. These were attributed to deviations from planned disbursements of donor funds, shortfalls or unanticipated excesses in revenue collection and availability of supplementary funds. In 2010 and 2012 the budget was not impacted by reallocations. However, in 2011 the budget was revised upwards once and twice in 2013 mostly due to donor inflows and international loans.

In Nigeria the budget process begun five months before the beginning of the new financial year when the budget office of the finance ministry met with key revenue generating and economic agencies to assess economic indicators and revenue trends. Iloh and Nwokedi (2016) reported that Nigeria used a three year medium term frame work for budget estimation. Nigeria was in congruence with the CABRI findings, as it used a top-down approach for ceilings through a 'Call Circular' from the minister of finance to ministries, departments and spending agencies. The budget estimates were approved at ministry, cabinet and parliament levels before being signed into law by the President. The parliamentary debate happened in both the House of Representatives and Senate of the national assembly as provided by law. Iloh and Nwokedi (2016) found that it was at that stage that citizens sometimes participated in the budget process. The harmonised budgets of the two houses were approved separately. Earlier though, Obara (2013) observed that at lower levels, participation by government officials and citizens was not always guaranteed.

The Zambian constitution, amended in 2016 provided for public finance and the budget in section 16. The provisions are applied in tandem with the National Planning and Budget Act (2020) and the Zambia Financial Management Regulations (2018). The budget process was initiated by the Ministry of Finance and National Planning (MoFNP) through a Call Circular which contained budget estimate ceilings for ministries and spending agencies (MASA) arrived at after a revenue forecasting exercise with stakeholders. Each MASA was given an opportunity to defend its proposal and depending on their case, sometimes managed to shift the provisional ceiling. These ceilings took into consideration local and international macroeconomic indicators, revenue generating capacity, domestic and international debt, priority sectors and rigid spending and capital investment among others (MoFNP, 2021). Budget allocations included direct allocations to ministries, local government councils through operational grants and equalisation fund, grants to spending agencies as well as allocations for constituency development funds for all the 156 constituencies. The Medium term Expenditure Frame Work was adopted in 2004 as part of the Public Expenditure Management and Financial Accountability Framework.

While budgets maybe complex, the aim in a democracy was intended to craft budgets that deliver to ordinary people. But their involvement may support innovation to quickly realign misallocated or underperforming expenditure relative to national priorities.

2.4 Public Expenditure Levels and Service Delivery

While on an aggregate level, budgets may seem very quantitative, allocation levels and actual releases to sectors as well as specific budget lines were also found to be critical drivers of the quality of governance, service delivery and poverty reduction strategies. For example, some studies in agriculture found that while budgetary allocation to the sector had been found to be increasing, expenditure was on non-growth budget lines with very little support to R&D, which was found to be the most critical investment for agriculture transformation (Fan, Omilola & Lambert, 2009; Mogues, 2012; Mink, 2016; FAO, 2021). It was also revealed that there was very limited expenditure on agriculture related infrastructure in rural areas. There is evidence too that expenditure on R&D alone is not enough to trigger the necessary rural development and must be supported with increased and consistent expenditure on education and health. Evidence supported the view that expenditure on elections was also impacted by lack of analysed data on optimum allocations. This, in some cases led to withholding or misallocation to the electoral administration budget and/or even actual election expenditure (Mohr et al., 2018; Clark, 2019).

The AU through the CAADP provided for a minimum 10% of national expenditure on agriculture with another 1 % of total expenditure on agriculture R&D. African nations also committed to 20% of total expenditure on education and 15% for health under the Abuja declaration as initiatives to accelerate achievement of MDGs and now SDGs. However, no guidance was provided on expenditure on election management. A land mark 2005 study supported by the International Foundation on Electoral Systems (IFES) reviewed budgeting on election allocation in 10 countries from Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa and found only Guatemala with a 5% cap of total expenditure on election management. This is an important point in democratic nations in view of the findings by Van der Straaten (2019) and James (2020). Van der Straaten (2021) noted that Israel had held four general elections in two years between 2019 and 2021 due to a political stalemate at a cost of US$450 dollars per person. He noted that this was seven times more than the Western countries spent on general elections usually after every four years. This data raises a lot of questions on management of elections in terms of budget caps and how to address unscheduled elections due to political challenges so that government may be able to deliver more services effectively to more people, and thereby meeting the whole objective of electoral governance

FAO (2020) reported that in Africa 20% of the agriculture budget went unspent. In studies on local government expenditure, evidence revealed that commitments from the central government were not met often and usually came with expenditure conditions which sometimes did not match the priorities of the local people (World Bank, 2016; Iwata, 2017; Rednick, 2019). The political mistrust between the central and local government was found to impact most expenditure decisions. In Africa most Local governments are rural based with agriculture as the mainstay activity for the people. In this case, agriculture budget composition and expenditure levels fluctuated often depending on who had more political capital between the centre and district levels. There were incidences, as will be shown below, when the impaired relations even impacted the expenditure on local elections. There were also instances when local government elections were cancelled because the politicians at the centre felt that local politicians had either more electoral capital, and/or had personal differences with them or they belonged to a rival political party (Mukwena et al., 2014; Iwata, 2017). By withholding the funding to local elections, democracy was eroded as people in the locality were not able to participate in priority policy setting without electing leaders of their choice.

In an analysis of the European Union (EU) public expenditure composition data between 2004 and 2005, Mandl, Dierx, and Likovtz (2008) observed that at the most aggregated level, the composition of public spending had an impact on the output of the public sector and ultimately the quality of life of the citizens. This is a critical point that requires even more buttressing for poor countries. This is because in developing countries public expenditure plays even a bigger role as the private sector is limited and most of the required financial and insurance infrastructure may not be fully developed to act as alternative source of financing private business and development projects. This fact alone, therefore places more weight on public expenditure for the provision of goods and services.

In addition, the researches indicated that public expenditure by function in the EU was 41% on social protection. However, there were huge country variations with 9.5% in Ireland and 23.8% in Sweden. Similarly, the EU public spending on general services was 14% with a range of 2.7% in Estonia and 9.4% in Hungary. There was no data specifically provided for the composition of public expenditure on managing elections or even on agriculture expenditure in this study. The central question for the study was how to determine the role that efficiency and effectiveness played in public service delivery. According to the study efficiency was defined as less input for more output while effectiveness related the input or output to the final objective to be achieved. The study concluded that measurement of efficiency and effectiveness of public spending remains a conceptual challenge mostly because of multiple public objectives, lack of suitable data and interference of external factors.

However, while government may have multiple objectives, the essence of elections is signalling for priority national interests (Miller, Hart and Hadley 2021). As such, elected officials are expected to tailor the budget and public expenditure accordingly. This is the link between election expenditure and service delivery. The problem though may be that priority policies are not well formulated, or do not adequately capture priority areas in a sectors. The worst case scenario is that the policies are not even nationally shared with elected officials not responding commensurately to what societal preferences are (Mazzucato, 2020). In this case, the 2008 OECD study recommended a function-by-function analysis to properly measure efficiency and effectiveness at national level as opposed to aggregate budget analysis. This would have allowed for investigation of electoral impacts as observed by Vergne (2011). However, the study did not provide data on public expenditure on elections nor agriculture. Overall Snyder and Stromberg (2010) traced that increasingly informed voters, through greater politician effort, led to better policy outcomes in the USA. Bidwell, Casey and Glennerster (2019) found a *speculative* relationship between public and media political debates and policy delivery by the elected officials in Sierra Leone. Using 2012 data, the study analysed electoral races in 112 constituencies using Ordinary Least Squares linear regression and found a standard deviation of 0.298, significant at 95% confidence for policy response by elected MPs after having participated in public and media political campaign debates. The research design was based on an experiment to test the distinct steps in accountability that run from more informed voters, through responsive candidates, to better behaved elected officials. In relation to the welfare of voters, significantly high spending on development projects was observed by those elected officials who participated in the media political debates. The data in this study did not include agriculture expenditure composition or even what Sierra Leone spent on elections. A comparison of expenditure on the two was also not provided.

The OECD (2021) did an investigation on expenditure patterns of all 37 OECD countries. The definition of government was based on the general government sector found in the System of National Accounts. Data was collected from the OECD National Accounts Statistics data base and the Euro Stat Government Finance Statistics and the ILO Stat data bases for 2021. To build resilience during the recovery and adaptation of the COVID-19 shock, governments in the OECD were advised to ensure that they remained able to act at speed and scale, while better safe guarding against threats to trust and transparency. This involved innovation at public policy and procurement. Before the pandemic, 30%

of the OECD public expenditure was through public procurement. The second pillar was outward-facing reforms aimed at improving how governments interacted with the wider society to better support the health functioning of democracy. The OECD observed that the environmental impact of 83% of government expenditure as post pandemic shock recovery had not yet been determined. The spending priorities among the OECD were restoring growth to pre-pandemic levels, protecting the vulnerable and building a green economy. Among OECD countries with already approved recovery packages, 71% identified infrastructure investment as an important component. In Chile, Costa Rica, Hungry, Ireland, New Zealand and Slovenia, 30% or more of the stimulus package was allocated to infrastructure investments (OECD, 2020). Public investment was said to enhance productivity and promote economic growth as well as foster the wellbeing of society.

General government expenditure comparisons in some countries whose data was available increased by 6% in 2021 from 40.8% in 2019. On average in 2019, the OECD countries spent the largest portion of government resources, 13.3% of GDP on social protection which included old age pensions, sickness and disability benefits, and unemployment benefits. This expenditure increased by 1.4% of GDP on average from 2007. The expenditure range among the countries was from 24% in Finland, 23.9% in France and 21.4% in Denmark. Chile spent 5.9%, Korea 6.9% and the United States spent 7.6%. General public services such as public debt transactions, functioning of the executive and legislative wings and transfers between levels of government accounted for 5.4% in the OECD countries in 2019. Italy and Greece spent the highest on this function in the group at over 7.5%.

There was evidence that inequality had taken on an intergenerational dimension. The OECD (2021) found that during the pre-pandemic period, the difference in disposal income between the 10% of the richest OECD population was 9.5 times more than that of the poorest 10%. This had increased from 7 times 25 years ago. The study saw this as a threat to the health of democratic systems. This point captures the very essence of the research title in this study, based on the assumption that, democracy as a political system remains threatened if inequality continues to increase especially in newly established small economies. Disaggregated information on policy impact on different groups such as children, women and others was recommended as vital for systematic integration into policy design and evaluation. This information is even more critical to this research when the fact that urban bias was identified way back in Zambia (Bates, 1981). To date the majority poor continue to be in agriculture and rural based. The OECD concern for inequality as impacting the health of democracy links the expenditure on elections and wellbeing of the majority of citizens. However, details on expenditure on elections in the study were not provided.

Misinformation and disinformation were identified as real threats to public expenditure successes post the pandemic and that lessons had to be learnt from what happened during the crisis. The study found that only 11 out of 27 OECD member countries had official documents, policies and frameworks in place to guide their response to misinformation and disinformation. Effective public communication was recommended with public communicators playing a key role in tracking and responding to false or misleading narratives regarding pandemic management and public expenditure.

The above made a good case for the current study to compare election expenditure against expenditure on agriculture service delivery. Most budget performance is usually measured using releases against budget estimates and not necessarily the outcome of that expenditure. There were observations that the tension between the civil service and elected leadership and the influence of interest groups often resulted in misallocation. Comparison of cross functional expenditure analysis would provide an objective view of what money is spent on and how that compares to priority policy goals.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2022) observed that even though the ECLAC GDP had grown by 6.2% in 2021, the growth by itself was not enough to address the severe COVID-19 Pandemic effects because of pre pandemic existing structural challenges of inequality, poverty, informality and vulnerability. The report noted that the Latin American countries made significant investments in social protection in 2020, spending US$89.7 billion in the first 10 months. However, there was a significant reduction in expenditure in the first 10 months of 2021 which amounted to only US$45.3 billion worth of investments. The extreme poverty rate reached 13.8% in 2021 moving from 81 million people in 2020 to 86 million in 2021. As a result, the ECLAC (2021) recommended mitigation against generational losses based on historical public expenditure patterns and pandemic effects by moving towards fiscal policies that considered especially the youth as rights holders, regardless of whether investment in these populations had a high social return.

The study on public spending on children and adolescents with a right based approach in Latin America (ECLAC, 2021) found that spending had increased in the analysed countries; in Chile it increased from 3.3% of GDP in 2010 to 5.2% in 2020, in Costa Rica from 5.4% of GDP in 2010 to 6.3% in 2020 and in Peru from 2.8% of GDP in 2010 to 4.2% of GDP in 2020. The highest composition in the spending was on education, while public expenditure on leisure, culture and sports was limited. Estimates for

23 countries found investment in youths in the Latin America and the Caribbean, on average rose from US$5,096 in 2000 to US$9,842 per person in 2019 and was mainly spent on education. Spending on education was identified as critical for agricultural rural areas in developing countries (Fan et al, 2009). With the exception of Paraguay, the LAC countries cash transfer initiative accounted for more than 7% of the income of one third of the women in the region. This was based on the recognition that there were excessive burdens of care in households with women with children aged under five, especially during the pandemic. The report emphasised that without health care, physical and mental well-being, there can be no sustainable production or a sustainable economy. The report called for a care economy and care society with construction of welfare states at the centre for a broad social dialogue to redistribute and increase public resources invested in the common good. Franzoni and Sanchez-Ancochea (2020) noted that historically, building of welfare states required political and social coalitions that acted as the engines of social change and that in the short term some sectors may entail costs but argued that over the medium to long-term it brings with it benefits in stability, governance and sustained productive gains. A social compact for the welfare state was defined as a political instrument based on broad and participatory dialogue, serving to build consensus and forge structural agreement. The main aim of the process was an explicit attempt to resolve structural issues where all other channels had failed. The ECLAC (2022) report also indicated that the pandemic had provided an opportunity for new thinking as it had exposed the limitations of the current development patterns and called for a universal guarantee of a certain level of wellbeing of citizens in a society especially for citizens who under the current development model had felt that they had no control over their lives nor futures.

The ECLAC (2020) reported that increased spending in the region was driven by cash transfers and subsidies. Of particular note were Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Peru where this public spending increased by 2.5% of GDP. Capital spending in 2020/2021 rose by 0.2% of the GDP marking a break with the downward trend observed between 2013 and 2019. In the Caribbean public spending also rose in most countries but the increase reflected differences in the composition of the type of spending. In Belize, spending was associated with investment projects aimed at addressing the COVID-19 crisis. In Grenada it was the existing investment program which drove capital spending. In Saint Vincent and Grenadines, the increased capital spending was as a result of spending on projects aimed at reducing vulnerability to disasters and other infrastructural developments. Current account expenditures also increased and were aimed at supporting many households and the economy during the pandemic crisis years.

Before the pandemic, subnational government spending had dropped from 4.9% of GDP in 2018 to 4.8% in 2019. However, local government spending remained the same in both 2020/21 at 3.6% of the GDP. The ECLAC (2021) pointed out that one of the greatest methodological challenges in the analysis of decentralisation and intergovernmental fiscal relations in the region lay in the need for information to comprehensively determine the distribution of spending responsibilities among the different levels of government. Currently, this has been focused on the normative aspect with no complimentary empirical evidence. As was noted earlier in the budget performance review (Mandle et al., 2008) the best way to do this is a function by function analysis of government spending over time against policy objectives. Argentina, Brazil, the Dominican Republic and Peru had adopted this method. In Argentina, the government published information on the Ministry of Economy website on consolidated public spending covering the national government, provinces, the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires and municipalities. This spending was presented according to its purpose and disaggregated into 15 functions. In Brazil, the government published consolidated budget and assets on the public sector broken down as the federal government, states and municipalities. Expenditure figures were based on functional classification as per the provisions of the Ordinance No.42 of 1999 which broke down public spending into 28 functions and more than 100 sub-functions of government. In Peru the economic transparency website of the Ministry of Economy and Finance presents functional expenditure as the national government, regional governments, local governments, State enterprises and other organisations. The Dominican Republic sends an annual report to the Chamber of Accounts to the National Congress which includes public spending in Municipalities based on the five government functions. This classification is also used by the General Budget Directorate of the Ministry of Finance which broke it down further into 21 more functions. One of the advantages of using the functional classification of public spending was that it allowed for an estimate on social spending. The ECLAC (2021) found that Argentina, at provincial and local level, spent 70% of expenditure on the six of the classified functions; environmental protection, housing and community amenities, health, recreation, culture and religion, education and social protection. Brazil spent 50% to 80% on the same while Peru's regional and local governments spent between 40% and 85% on social functions. Local governments in the Dominican spent almost 43% on social objectives.

In 2020 it was found that South Asian nations spent less on health, education and social protection than any other region in the world (UNICEF, 2020). Investments in the social sector have been known to generate positive externalities, given that an educated and health population benefits the whole society. This was the evidence in India too (Das & Kar, 2016). It was reported that a wide spread accumulation of human capital can improve productivity, increase tax collection, reduce disease transmission among others. (De Janvry & Sadoulet, 2015; UNICEF, 2015). The aim of the UNICEF study was to examine how governments in South Asia spent resources on public policy priorities as captured in the MDGs, SDGs, Education for All, Universal Health Care, Universal Social Protection, among others. Certain expectations were laid on the state in the region on its capacity to deliver services in response to these priorities. The investigation focused on public expenditure trends, challenges and opportunities in a comparative analysis of the nations. However, the authors noted that the findings were limited in establishing a causal relationship between public social expenditure and outcomes. The study recommended vigorous evaluations of specific interventions in each sector to generate evidence for policy makers. The need for this evidence was the basis of this research in view of the ongoing debate on the relationship between benefits of expenditure on competitive electoral governance and its impact on development expenditure and how the two may combine in the long run to deliver faster and better services. In various studies, aggregated data was seen as inadequate to tell the whole expenditure story and outcomes of that expenditure (Mandl, Dierx & Likvotz, 2008; De Janvry & Sadoulet, 2015; UNICEF, 2020; OECD, 2021; FAO, 2021). The conclusion was birthed from investigations which included country level analysis of data on government expenditure in the sectors as well as key indicators of aggregate health, education and other social outcomes of the population in the region.

The UNICEF (2020) study found that the average Human Development Index was around 0.6 ranging from 0.5 in Afghanistan to 0.8 in Sri Lanka. Poverty was found to be highest in Bangladesh, Nepal and Afghanistan while Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka had the lowest poverty (World Bank, 2019). According to UNESCO (2019) 11 million children of primary school going age and 18 million of lower secondary age were out of school in the region. Only Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka were found to be close to universal health care access. In comparison, South Asia spent an average 0.95% of GDP on health compared to 5.23% in Europe and Central Asia (ECA), 1.84% in SSA, 3.83% in the LAC 3% in the MENA and a world average expenditure of 5.84%. In education expenditure in the region was 3.37% of GDP compared to 4.88 in the ECA, 4.56 in SSA, 4.52 in the LAC, 4.47 in the MENA and a world average of 4.81%. Social sector assistance in South Asia was 0.90%, while in the

ECA it was 2.20%, at 1.53% in SSA, 1.50% in the LAC, 1% in the MENA and a global average of 1.54%.

Despite low level expenditure in comparison to the GDP, all countries in the region spent at least 10% of the budget on education. The regional Education 2030 framework proposed allocation to education of not less than 15% to attain education for all. Most of the expenditure in the education sector was found to be current expenditure. Results showed that spending varied widely among the top four. Afghanistan still had over half of the population as illiterate and was faring as the worst on education indicators in the region. Maldives had the highest literacy rate, primary enrolment and lowest rate of out of school children in the region. Bhutan accorded 25% of government expenditure to education yet only 67% of population was literate. The study pointed out that this observation could not be described as poor performance as some interventions took long to mature. Nepal spent 54% of the education budget on primary education and results were seen to be encouraging.

The study noted challenges in the definitions of social protection expenditure between the different development agencies. The study based its analysis on this expenditure on the World Bank ASPIRE's data set claiming it provided for easier classification of expenditure lines, benefit incidence as well as impact of social expenditure on poverty and inequality. India was found to have the highest social protection spending at 1.5% of the GDP. The largest portion of this expenditure in the region went to food and in-kind transfers. Nepal spent 1.3% with many cash transfers targeting children, single women, the elderly and endangered ethnic groups. Maldives spent more on social pensions including the senior citizens allowance which is the country's old-age basic pension scheme. Results showed that in Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka, there was indication that a greater share of the benefits went to the lowest quintiles. Richer households benefited more from social assistance in Afghanistan, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan. Results were mixed in Bhutan as 50% went to the richest households and 40% to the first 2 quintiles.

In 2016, Sub-Saharan Africa general government expenditure amounted to an average of 16.1% of the regions GDP slightly behind the global average of 17.1%. At country level disparities were large, ranging from 35.8% in South Sudan to 4.4% in Chad. Highest general government expenditure growth was in Central African Republic, Mali and Sierra Leone all conflict or post conflict countries at the time (World Bank, 2017; Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2019). Military expenditure grew by more than 47% between 2007 and 2016. However, defence budgets decreased between 2014 and 2016 by -6.9%.

Despite the Abuja declaration (2001) on health which committed 15% of public expenditure, by 2014 only Malawi, Swaziland, Ethiopia and Gambia had met the annual target. However, these highest spenders also had very huge donor contributions to the health budget. In education the SSA spent 16.6% of public expenditure in 2013. Tunisia spent the highest on social protection for people of working age, Madagascar on children and Algeria on the elderly. The data was based on the World Bank (2017) and the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG, 2018) a tool that assesses good governance and public service delivery. This tool is built on 100 indicators produced by 36 independent institutions based on the following equally weighted dimensions; safety and rule of law, participation and human rights, sustainable economic opportunity and human development, all together making up overall Governance. Between 2007 and 2016, 40 African countries had improved in overall governance. Out of the 40, 18 of them, home to 58% of African citizens such as Cote d'Ivoire, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria and Senegal had even accelerated their progress. However, 22 countries had done so at a slower rate such as Ethiopia and Rwanda while others declined for example Angola, Cameroun and Mauritius. Good governance based on free and fair elections and decentralised political, administrative and fiscal authority, clear budget processes supported by law, participation of citizens in public expenditure composition and performance evaluation against policy targets continued to be raised as the driver of enhanced public service delivery. The point cannot be over emphasised, being that in most of poor rural Africa, this calls for service delivery enhancement on free and fair elections, responsive local government and enhanced expenditure on education, health, agriculture extension services and related infrastructure (OECD, 2010; De Janvry & Sadoulet, 2018, FAO, 2021). However, on average the continent's poverty and welfare public perception registered improvement between 2012 and 2016.

From 1950 to 2015, the population in Africa grew by over 40%. From 2018 the population growth was expected to account for half of the total world population. In 2015 more than 60% of the population was below 25 years with 41% being under 15. The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA, 2016) reported that by 2050, 26 African countries would double their population, with five of the nine global countries with concentrated growth, in Africa (DRC, Ethiopia, Nigeria Tanzania and Uganda). This demographic growth will put a strain on service delivery in Africa. The IIAG (2018) reported that the average African youth unemployment had reached 13.6% more than twice that of adults. Over 164.4 Million people were affected by conflict, natural disasters and food insecurity in 2016. This was worsened by increasing food prices due to the high energy prices, increased use of grains in bio fuels and climate change. Rural areas registered deterioration in the five years leading to 2016. The report pointed out that agriculture value addition was impaired because of limited irrigation coverage and declining investment in the agriculture sector. Only 5% of land in Africa was irrigated in 2016 compared to 41% in Asia and 21% globally.

It is the above points that raised questions about the sustainability of the health of democracy in Africa considering the huge threat from insufficient service provision and food insecurity. Our observation was in line with the OECD (2021) report that democracy is at risk, in spite of regular elections and institutions of good governance when the majority of citizens are found to be dissatisfied due to the absence of basic needs. Beyond public expenditure on elections and participation by voters, the purpose of regular elections is to create an accountability platform for those who vote to signal their preferences and those in office to respond through public expenditure as the literature review has already illustrated. However, there was evidence even in healthy economies of instability due to election calendar related impacts which often led to deficits that had negative long-term impacts on economic growth and fiscal plans. The results from the IIGA (2018) on Africa and other studies such as the OECD (2020) and EU (2008) studies which called for a deeper analysis of disaggregated expenditure, cannot be over emphasised. There was also a need to provide empirical evidence on how particular budget functions impact each other and what the opportunity costs are of certain budget trade-offs in certain years and over time (Lucas, 2015; Mogues & Caceres, 2018).

Though budgetary allocation to social protection and jobs has increased in Zambia, financial sustainability was found to be a concern as budget allocations went unmet and pension funds performed poorly (UNICEF and World Bank, 2022). Public spending as a percentage of GDP more than doubled between 2010 and 2015, when it was about 15% and in 2017 rose to 40% as found by Mpundu et al. (2019). As was the case in the LAC countries (OECD/ECLAC, 2015, 2016), the World Bank (2022) found that pilling debt introduced rigidities in public expenditure with discretionary spending reducing from 33% of total expenditure in 2014 to only 12% in 2019. They reported that labour force was at 7.4 million in 2019 with more than 2 million people of working age outside the labour force. Poverty levels grew by 1.4% from 2015 to 2019 and by 1.8% in 2020 alone to become 57.8%. The pandemic contributed to 2020 poverty levels hike in Zambia (Paul et al. 2021). Between 2015 and 2019 rural poverty increased by 3.9% while urban poverty reduced by 0.5%. In 2020, rural poverty was expected to reach 80%. In Zambia, it is the majority rural poor who produce over 90% of the staple food (GRZ, 2018). This entails that urban bias and the negative stereotyping narrative of rural areas, unless stemmed, will leave agriculture, education and health sectors without much investment (Bates 1981; World Bank, 2016; Chansa et al., 2019). The World Bank confirmed that Zambia ranked fourth, as one of the most unequal countries in the world behind only South Africa, Namibia and Suriname. The Bank recommended diversification to agriculture, manufacturing and tourism even though their contribution to the GDP had dropped between 2010 and 2015.

Budget allocations to social protection and jobs increased between 2014 and 2021, averaging 0.89% of GDP. Social protection expenditure had also became more pro-poor between 2014 and 2017. However, actual releases of authorised budget provisions averaged 65% between 2014 and 2018. The study noted that social assistance programs' low execution rates and high dependence on donors was a function of broader fiscal challenges in Zambia. The Bank reported that the political economy of financing social protection and jobs had a critical role to play as agriculture subsidies, even though regressive and ineffective, seemed to have received greater allocations with almost total budget execution. Zambia was found to have a young population with 80% of them below 35 years old and with 43% among the group not in education, employment or training. The World Bank also noted the non-availability of data on all aspects of expenditure on social protection apart from the social cash transfer. This last point raises concern for effective decision making during the budget process especially in view of aligning campaign promises with policy and priority expenditures. Mpundu et al. (2019), however, argued that while Zambia followed Keynesian economics to spur growth, it may not have been ideal to achieve the intended objective. They explored changes in public expenditure from 1980 to 2017 using an ARDL approach using time series. Control variables included foreign direct investment and current account balance. They found only short run benefits of FDI. The study recommended fiscal discipline and reallocation of resources to yield national objectives.

In 2019/20, the South African government spent 60% of total output on general public services, education and social protection. General services at 24% comprised debt servicing and the executive and legislature taking 10% each. In the remaining 36%, education took 20% with the balance allocated to social protection (Stats SA, 2020). The health sector at 11% confirmed the Mo Ibrahim IIAG (2018) observation that few countries had attained the Abuja declaration of 15%. However, in 2016, 44% of respondents in the country of South Africa expressed dissatisfaction with service delivery in education and health sectors. The IIAG (2018) cautioned on the mismatch between education and health inputs against public satisfactions with outputs. However, on average the continent's poverty and welfare public perception registered improvement between 2012 and 2016. There is a point to be made here.

In an earlier study, Fan et al. (2009) confirmed that while R&D, especially extension services, was the most effective trigger for agriculture transformation, best results could only be achieved if the intervention was coupled with investment in education and health in rural Africa.

Public expenditure tracking and quantitative service delivery survey was applied in Zambia to assess the financing and delivery of health services and whether the reform objectives were met. The tracking involved reviewing the flow of financing from the administrative releasing unit to the service delivery point at the health facility level (Chansa et al. 2019) The data was collected from administrative units, health workers and patients to determine the various dimensions of the health system that include financial flows, management of infrastructure, human resources and patient management. Specifically, the survey analysed availability, adequacy, and timeliness of resources for service delivery.

In the period of study, 2006 to 2016, Chansa et al. (2019) found that public expenditure on health in Zambia averaged 4.5% of the GDP below the regional average of 5.4%. The current health expenditure per capita in 2016 was US$60 dollars, also below the average of lower-middle income countries which was at US$82 while the SSA region was at US$85.The study concluded that while expenditure had been growing both in nominal and real terms, the growth rate was too low to move the sector from donor dependency in the near future. The government’s contribution to health expenditure between 2011 and 2016 was 41% which equalled the donor contribution. There were massive shifts due to increases in wages, salaries and recruitments over the study period. And while there were elaborate planning and budgeting systems, effectiveness was hampered by poor budget execution and absorption of funds. Execution for drugs and medical supplies was found to be at an average 67%. However, with the exception of 2016, district level execution was fairly good. There was also an urban bias with the seven rural provinces not being as well serviced as the urban three, confirming a continued urban bias argument.

The World Bank (2016) also employed the public expenditure tracking survey and quality service delivery for a microscopic analysis of performance in the education sector in Zambia. Education expenditure reached more than 20%, the single largest share of the budget in 2015 and equal to the AU recommendation. The pupil- per teacher ratio over the study period reduced from 59 to 40. There were noted improvements in general enrolments from grade 1 to 12. However, secondary learning enrolment declined from 61% in 2010 to 59% in 2013. The study found substantial differences in expenditure per pupil at school level depending on the number of poor or rich students. Schools with well to do families had more of both public and private revenues. The inequalities grew even wider when you compared schools in urban and rural areas which was a similar finding in the health sector (Chansa et al, 2019). The study determined that in spite of the available government grant formula, 19% of grant eligible schools did not receive any grants.

The public expenditure at school level seemed to favour schools with more poor children at primary level. But when the urban and rural inequalities are taken into consideration, the expenditure impact is low. This was evidenced by the performance of children from poor families whose scores were in the lower mean. The World Bank (2016) study recommended decentralisation of public school expenditure with transfers directly from finance ministry to each school, similar to findings of a study conducted in Tanzania by JICA (2008). Other issues highlighted by the study were lack of access to clean water, high book-pupil ratio, high teacher attrition, absenteeism and insufficient subject knowledge by teachers. The study recommended enhancement of local level capacities including community involvement in teacher recruitment with most decisions at provincial level to curb these concerns.

The above studies provided evidence on the importance of public expenditure composition and levels, and illustrated that increased aggregate expenditure alone was not enough to address social challenges. Expenditure levels at budget line levels were found to play a bigger role in response to policy objectives. The role of E-government and E-participation for timely access to critical information to influence what goes in to the budget and expenditure was, however, not vigorously analysed.

A number of issues were, however, raised in the empirical studies on levels of public expenditure. The nexus involving the citizens, politicians and civil service and how they influenced what monies were spent on, has been a running thread since the Athenian time in ancient Greece. The World Bank (Fritzbein, 2005) recognised that democracy was only one element in the shift to broader government accountability that can lead to enhanced service delivery. And even after decades of structural adjustments and institutional reforms in developing countries, coverage of services especially in rural areas continued to be a challenge. Major thematic areas were policy crafting, citizens' access to information, budget allocation, citizen responsive fiscal policy and rights based service delivery. The studies though did not directly address the issue of expenditure levels on elections and how that impacted service delivery in agriculture. There was recognition that the election cycle did induce some fiscal volatility which undermined public expenditure in most instances. A liberalised political and fiscal system were thought to be a way to improve service delivery as discussed below.

2.4.1 Fiscal Decentralisation

For decades, decentralisation has been viewed as an important component for the enhancement of government electoral accountability and citizen participation in development and poverty reducing strategies especially in rural areas. On a theoretical level, decentralisation was expected to ignite a new energy in government management at the lowest level. Local policy makers located closer to the citizens, meant that they could effectively grasp the priority preferences of the communities they served, which had been found to be more homogeneous than at national levels (Resnick, 2020). In turn, because of their accessibility to policy makers at local level, citizens may be more communicative and demanding about their preferences. Competitively elected local leadership was to lead the way in galvanizing the ‘small’ people in setting priorities that were specific to their areas and identifying the competences and skills to address the challenges hindering improvement of service delivery. This was part of motivation for our research, viewing it as the link between election expenditure, elected officials and service delivery, especially in agriculture led rural areas.

Dorn (2021) found that public service delivery efficiency increased pre-election and in election years especially when the executive and local electoral cycles coincided and when the incumbent ran again for office. The research applied Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) fixed effects, event study and instrumental variable estimations in a large balanced panel of 2000 municipalities in the German state of Bavaria. The study basically considered how election expenditure (whenever elections occurred) enhanced service delivery. In our view, these two points have not been usually related: considering how service delivery may or may not be impacted due to fiscal stress because of election expenditure cycles. The study, however, only focused on the electoral impacts on fiscal variables and service delivery induced by local incumbent politicians. The model did not include actual expenditure on the elections and how that also contributed to public expenditure patterns beyond electoral cycles and who got elected.

In California, Connolly and Mason (2016) used a 2011 survey of locally elected officials to determine if personal ideology of elected officials impacted decisions on public funding of specific categories. The study found that the more conservative the elected official and citizens were, the more likely they wanted to cut welfare programs at local level. Using the Multinomial Probit model, further analysis revealed that the more liberal citizens were, the more likely there was a negative and significant association to limiting expenditure on services away from welfare such as libraries and police protection.

In Argentina, Meloin (2016) found electoral impacts at local level where expenditure in election years was tilted towards the current account to the detriment of capital investments. Analysed data was from 1985 to 2007 on fiscal fluctuations in government. Using Bayesian techniques, Balaguer-Coll et al. (2014) analysed public spending at local government during election cycles in Spain and found a positive relationship between capital expenditure and re-election over the period 2000-2007. However, pre-election spending was found to be favoured by voters. The gap in this study in relation to our research was that though the data was about public expenditure, no data on actual expenditure on election was analysed to determine any opportunity costs in spite of a positive relationship between occurrence of elections and enhanced capital expenditure at local level.

Saez and Sinha (2010) found election timing impacts on local government expenditure in India. These comprised changes in budget composition in agriculture, health and education. The study used secondary data to review public expenditure from 1980 to 2000. Khemani (2004, 2019) found that public expenditure on capital projects improved two years before elections. The research analysed local government elections in India. In another study of four mayoral elections in Columbia, Drazen & Eslava (2005) found that politicians avoid big deficit punishment from voters by altering budget composition and not the aggregate size of the budget. The study showed that between 1992 and 2000, local expenditure targeted areas more likely to get votes. Rationality of voters was given as reason for re-election of incumbents as long as targeted expenditure signalled competence in politicians.

Even though expenditure analysis was at local level, these studies only provided data on the behaviour impact of subnational elections on local politicians. There was no data to explain any expenditure level variations on elections and/or its impact on election service delivery. Even more importantly, in our view, sources of election funding for subnational elections were not the focus, a critical factor in efficient and effective election delivery. There have been instances in Zambia when local elections were not held due to '*unavailability'* of funds from the central government (Mukwena, 2014). There was also no data provided on what role voters played in determining, especially election expenditure levels and what got funded. Communication systems were also not addressed especially as far as access to information was concerned. This had been found to be an important factor in the strengthening of democracy and enhancing service delivery at local level (Khemani, 2004; De Haan & Klomp, 2013; Poulton, 2014; Kosec & Wantchekon, 2018).

The Political will to decentralise and create credible local governments must be the precursor to delivery of genuine local elections. But as observed, this has not been the case. In most of Africa's outlying areas far from the capital is where the majority have been marginalised from political power. This is the power at the centre of fiscal policy and service delivery

2.4.2 Decentralisation and Service Delivery

There are three main types of decentralisation. The easiest was identified as delegation which was limited to contract of a Central government function to another public or private entity. The second is de-concentration, which occurs when local units are outposts of government Ministries and carry out the roles and functions assigned to them by the national government. Specific functions are then accountable to their line Ministries. The most comprehensive form of decentralisation is devolution where elected local governments are provided autonomy in service delivery as well as control over human resources, budgeting and financial management (Connelly & Mason, 2010; Chitembo et al., 2014; Resnick, 2020). However, Khan (2021) wrote that the empirical evidence for the relationship between decentralisation and service delivery remains inconclusive. He further added that our understanding of the causes of ineffectiveness of decentralisation initiatives with respect to service delivery is not clear. He used a comparative case study of two localities in Pakistan, in which amelioration and deterioration had been experienced post devolution. Data was collected through in depth interviews and focus group discussions. The study found that political interference, political polarisation, and bureaucracy had played a role in the locality with deterioration.

In an early study of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) nations, Curristine, Jourmad and Lonti (2007) concluded that enhanced decentralisation of political-power and spending responsibilities enhanced performance information for result oriented approaches to budgeting. In education and the health sectors, increasing the scale of operation was also found to be a critical factor in enhancing service delivery. The study used mixed methods and concluded that there was lack of empirical evidence and systematic evaluation of the impact of institutional variables on efficiency in service delivery. The study was in response to pressure to improve public sector performance and at the same time contain public expenditure growth. It was observed in the investigation back then, that while institutional reforms had occurred in individual countries of the

OECD, the empirical evidence of their impact had been limited due to lack of evaluations, pre-reform performance measures, complexities in measuring efficiency in public sector and the problem of isolating impact of specific public reforms from other external influences.

The authors of the above study recommended the following as important for enhanced budget performance; the support of political and administrative leaders in implementation, the staff and resource capacity of the Ministry of Finance and spending Ministries was identified as critical and designing of government-wide systems which automatically linked performance to resource allocation were to be avoided as they distorted incentives among others. Performance information was generally found to generate sharper focus on results within the government. Secondly, it provided better information on goals and priorities and how different programs contributed to these goals. Thirdly, it was found to encourage greater emphasis on planning and acted as a signalling mechanism that provided key actors with details on what was working and what was not. Further, performance information improved transparency by providing more and better information to Parliament and to the public and had the potential to improve public management and efficiency.

However, Poulton (2014) argued that while decentralisation was viewed by many as a remedy to service delivery challenges especially in rural agricultural SSA, there had been a 'weak' democratic push by the poor because of the presence of powerful local politicians and other interest groups, similar to latest finding by Khan (2021). This made it difficult to ascertain expenditure performance as the intended target was missed. This argument was in line with other studies on election related fiscal manipulation and its impact on service delivery. In a case study of six countries Poulton used secondary data to review policy changes in view of CAADP. He concluded though that electoral impacts would perhaps positively impact pro poor policies due to perceived threats to regime survival. This two observations by Poulton lay at the heart of the study on Zambia. In another study, Pop-Eleches and Pop-Eleches (2012) used secondary data to determine political power buying at local government level. They used a regression discontinuity approach to investigate the impact of a 200 Million Euro coupon program distributed to poor families towards purchase of a computer. The findings indicated that beneficiaries were more likely to support incumbents of the ruling coalition. Further evidence was that local governments benefited from increased trust from voters and it was mostly in urban areas where incumbent coalition parties enjoyed support. Even though the study referred to service delivery through social protection, the study did not relate the possible opportunity costs of election expenditure to that spent on computer purchase subsidies. There is also vast literature especially in agriculture on the lack of sustainability of subsidies unless well targeted and sequenced, otherwise they could harm the long term economic health. Moyo (2018) stated that while economists took most of the blame for the economic challenges especially in the 2007/8 financial crisis, citizens as voters were also complicity in their desire for immediate gain that resulted from decisions by political and business interests but which could have negative long-term impacts on the economy.

Studies on campaign finance showed that many voters especially in Africa treated there elected local officials as both political representatives and providers of basic items including food stuffs and school fees (IDEA, 2018; WDF, 2018). The pressure to continue to deliver while remaining in office at a huge personal cost was viewed as possible reason for budget manipulation for re-election and abuse of state resources. The studies showed that even in more advanced countries with clear laws providing for public political financing it was not easy to separate legal financing from state resource abuses or even how to determine what kind of impact that expenditure caused in other sectors. More evidence on this will be presented in the next section of the literature review on expenditure on elections. However, the point of campaign finance distortion is buttressed by Van der Straaten (2022) of the Civil Registration Centre for Development (CRC4D) who observed that the Kenyan general elections in 2022 was expected to cost over US$1 billion dollars with half of it as campaign finance. Most of the campaign finance is spent on voter gifts and welfare payments as observed by the IDEA (2018). This raises the question of why administrative expenditure on elections is not avoided all together or at least not executed in a short space of time (usually 5 years) so that the one billion dollars maybe used for actual public service delivery. This was a critical point raised by Moyo (2018), arguing that the short electoral cycle in most democracies maybe the very cause of poor growth.

The Life in Transition Survey was conducted jointly by the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction in 2006 and 2010. The purpose of the survey was to examine citizens' satisfaction with public service delivery in newly democratised Europe and Central Asia. Almost 39 thousand households were interviewed in 34 countries to assess public attitudes, well-being and impacts of economic and political change. Using descriptive statistics, Diagne, Ringold and Salman (2012) found that primary and secondary education provided the most satisfaction at over 70%. This was followed by a request for official documents at 60%. Most of the countries in the survey were still in transition after having just broken away from the Soviet Block. As such, some had just experienced free elections and were just getting used to the concept of democracy. The study concluded that regular elections improved perception of service delivery and citizens' engagement with service providers. This point may explain the Kenyan example of why citizens may not be concerned with low government service delivery as they expect gifts and other welfare donations during elections. The study, however, noted that an effective grievance redress system is a critical component in ensuring successful public expenditure response to policy objectives. The assumption here would be that public service delivery scrutiny included delivery of efficient and effective elections. But the study did not share that information. However, the focus on the societal well-being was a very important element. Regular elections in democracies must aim at the well-being of the majority of the citizens as the price for electoral governance (Clark, 2017).

Deolalikar & Jha (2015) pointed out that although governments in Asia were spending substantial sums on provision of public services, the expenditure was not translating into improved indicators of social welfare such as education, life expectancy, portable water, feeder roads and uninterrupted power supply. They conducted an analysis of the role of good governance and empowerment of citizens in a mixed methods approach to determine service delivery effectiveness. The study defined public services as essential services provided to citizens by their government while empowerment was defined as “the process of enhancing an individual’s or group’s capacity to make purposive choices and to transform those choices into desired action and outcomes”. The research categorised public services as; essential utility or infrastructure services, social services and regulatory services. Deolalikar and Jha (2015) theorised that in developing countries some public services such as agricultural extension services and supplemental income schemes among others, are deemed necessary to achieve national objectives such as income redistribution and poverty alleviation. Their work identified stiff electoral competition and inefficient government performance as some of the reasons for inadequate delivery of services.

The ineffectiveness of authoritarian regimes in Latin American Countries (LAC) naturally heightened general expectations of democratisation in bringing about major improvements in service delivery (World Bank, 2005). This study described children going to school and learning, parents taking children for regular health visits, the sick receiving proper and timely health care and safe water flowing out of the tap, electricity reliably reaching homes and businesses, as basic service delivery. Unequal service delivery was found to be the traditional problem in the region. For example, in Mexico, a person in the bottom income quintile distribution had 3.5 years of schooling compared to 11.6years for a person in the top quintile. In Brazil a child born to parents in the poorest 20% of the income distribution was three times as likely to die before the age of five compared to a child born in the top 5%. A Guatemalan family whose income fell in the bottom 20% of distribution had a 57%

chance of being connected to the water mains and 49% probability of being connected to electricity, while a house in the top 20% had a 92% and 93% chance, respectively. Despite the noted increases in secondary education in the region, average was below 70% with large differences between countries. For example, in Guatemala the minimum coverage in secondary education was 26% while Argentina had the highest at 79%.

Fritzbein (2005) did an investigation using the World Bank Human Development (2004) document entitled Citizens, Politicians and Service Providers Compact. The long route frame work was identified as one where citizens influenced policy makers who then provided the policy and resources for providers to run services. This was described as the classic model of an effective Weberian Bureaucracy which was ultimately accountable to the citizens through an elective democracy. The short route to service delivery was where there was more direct influence of the ultimate beneficiaries and clients directly control how services are delivered or from whom they could get the services. The question asked was why service delivery had remained relatively low in the region given political, institutional and social reforms which had taken root including regular elections and administrative and fiscal decentralisation. The study concluded that democracy was only one element in the shift to broad government accountability. While decentralisation was expected to enhance service delivery, the study reported that in some cases it only led to relocation of patronage from central government to local levels and the consequent capture of benefits by local elites. Institutional capacity continued to be a challenge with most reforms at a macro level without much focus on sector reforms. Fritzbein (2005) reported that failed civil service reforms, were a major stumbling block to service delivery, due to resistance from labour unions and political pressures. An attempt to involve civil society in service delivery until line Ministries were strengthened also proved problematic. Procurement procedures, social funds accountability and problems of capture became a problem. In some cases such as Peru, the social funded projects were politically influenced to serve areas where the party in government hoped to swing votes during elections. Score cards were also used initially in Peru and Columbia by the citizens to express their sentiments on education, health and security service delivery by the government among others. The education results were regularly announced on local television reaching up to 3 million people.

In a recent study of Latin American and Caribbean service delivery by the OECD (2018) it was found that despite decades of political and institutional reforms, the region was still characterised by a growing disconnection between the state and the citizens. Even after a decade of social economic progress, the recent years have been marked by a decline in trust in public institutions, a growing dissatisfaction by society with public services and a significant transformation of citizens' aspirations and preferences. The study also identified rethinking of institutions as a way to overcome failure in inadequate service delivery.

In addition to the above, the study found that the regions citizens' perception of the rule of law in 2016 was at 87%, followed by corruption at 79%, civil service merit at 45% and open government, the access to public information at 62%. The use of E-government that is the ability of the government to delivery services and government documents electronically was at 0.44% in 2003 and at 0.53% in 2016. Service delivery through E-participation by citizens grew from 0.24% to 0.52% in the same period. The share of women in Ministerial or other leadership positions was 23.8% in 2016. The major challenges to the well-functioning of the state to deliver effectively on public expenditure were identified as; firstly, groups and private interests interfered with the state often diverting it from serving the interests of the general public, secondly, institutional capacities were found to be generally weak, thirdly, the states lacked functioning channels for interaction with society, which made it very difficult for them to appreciate their citizens demands. This study was over a decade after Fritzbein (2005) but the findings, as illustrated above were found to be the same. The OECD (2018) study pointed out further that there was a lack of innovation in the search of new responses to changing societal preferences. The study recommended rebuilding of the social contract between governments and citizens by retooling institutions so that they were able to deliver basic functions and in so doing promote the wellbeing of the whole society. This was based on the social contract referred to by Friss-Hansen (2014). In this process, leadership at the centre of government which the OECD defined as organisational units that provided direct support to the Head of government (President or Prime Minister) and performed key cross cutting functions, was expected to prioritise national goals and coordinate the ministries and agencies that contribute to these goals. This unit managed obstacles when performance was lagging as well as the politics around the Head of government to enable approval and implementation of priority programmes and thereafter communicated the results to the public. Mazzucato (2020) made the same call in *Mission Economy.*

While the LAC nations began to implement decentralisation plans back in the 2000s, evaluation of spending effectiveness was still found to be lacking. The attempt at decentralisation was said to have been carried out without the necessary perquisite conditions. The OECD identified the following as the fertile ground for devolving power and resources to the local level; capacities at local level, sufficient resources to meet new responsibilities, balance in the way various policy functions are decentralised and effective coordination instruments and monitoring systems at the central government level. However, optimum decentralisation was said to be very country specific depending on a number of factors such as national human competences and organisational skills and the economic performance and institutional environment of the country (OECD, 2013). Digital tools were encouraged to become a core component of public sector modernisation efforts in delivering quality public services but not to substitute the redesign of good processes and public sector coordination.

The gap in the studies (WB, 2004; OECD, 2013; OECD, 2015) was that while institutional reforms had been recommended for over 3 decades including public financial management programs in the 1980s and 1990s, a critical understanding on how the various budget lines and sector expenditure impacted each other had not yet been investigated in the LAC. Deolalikar and Jha (2015) observed that in Asia, apart from government inefficiencies, electoral competitions hugely impacted service delivery poorly. This raised questions on the role of expenditure on elections: firstly, as an investment in good governance and social stability (IDEA, 2017; Clark, 2019); secondly, on the link of this electoral investment to inducement of budget manipulation by incumbents due to stiff competition (Quaicoe, 2021); thirdly, the share of voters interested in actual economic information especially in low income countries (Moyo, 2018) and further how electioneering maybe enhanced by electoral laws and voter education to encourage economic performance as an important issue especially at local level: and fourth, how transparency through access to economic performance and service delivery may be enhanced through E-government and E-participation during local electoral cycles. A number of LAC countries including Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru had by 2016 created local citizens' councils to make governance more inclusive and participative.

In 2008, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) analysed three East African countries (Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya) to determine the improvement of service delivery under decentralisation. This was measured based on effectiveness, which the study defined as delivery based on accurate assessment of the people's needs and the local context. Efficiency was another measure and was applied to determine the prompt and appropriate manner by which limited resources such as personnel and budgets were used in delivering services. Added to this was a measure to determine the level of transparency in service provision and earning the trust of the public as accountability. As a final measure for the success of decentralisation the study analysed equity in terms of fair distribution to the poor and equality among different regions.

In Uganda, the institutional pillar for reforms was the local council ranging from the village as one to the district as five (JICA, 2008). The study observed two specific features; that there already was practical experience of organising local consultations with the Central Government before the actual legal design of a new administrative structure was implemented and support from the grassroots through the Buganda Kingdom. Health and education were the leading sectors for devolution and had experienced progressive decentralisation with improvements in monitoring, supervision and mentoring provided by the line Ministries at the centre. The mechanism involved collaboration between the Central Government and local council and among the various layers at district level. In contrast, the agriculture sector lacked smooth coordination especially between farmers and service providers. The agriculture sector's decentralisation plans were found to have been hampered by financial constraints, and thereby negatively impacted modernisation of agriculture through extension services delivery.

Connected to the above, the JICA (2008) established that in Tanzania during the 2005/6 fiscal year, local authorities received 89.9% of grants from the Central Government after taxes such as market and livestock levies were abolished in 2003. The budget was divided into a recurrent and development budget and guidelines were provided by the central government in advance on ceilings to be observed. The establishment of Local Government Capital Development Grants (LGCDGs) gave local authorities autonomy on expenditure once the budget was approved. In education, schools received funding directly though the study observed increased clerical processes to account for the funds after use. The quality of the education delivered was also of concern despite the increased number of primary schools during decentralisation reforms which also entailed free primary education. In contrast, user fees were introduced in the health sector. The biggest challenge was well trained personnel since local councils were allowed to hire locally even though salaries were paid by the Central Government. Most rural areas did not attract very qualified education and health personnel.

The expenditures of the LGCDG in Tanzania by sector reflected low commitment to agriculture. The study found evidence that that agriculture officials at local level of government were not perceived as important people in government. The JICA (2008) study attributed this to low incentives in the sector which attracted very poorly trained personnel. The number of extension officers was found to be extremely low. In general the study recommended that Tanzania considers independent sources of income to fund the public sector as donor funds would not be in perpetuity.

Connected to the above study, additional findings found that Kenya had a four tier decentralisation system comprising local councils, provincial administration with a district level, sector ministries and constituencies. The local level, though it had elected officials was viewed as having no real authority. The main line of administration was the provincial level, which through districts was linked as far down as the village and all the way up to the Central Government. Constituencies received the development funds via the districts. Other funding lines were the Local Authority Transfer Fund (LATF) and the Road Maintenance Levy Fund (RMLF). However, the study observed a lack of coordination in which financial and human resources were managed in the decentralisation process in Kenya. For example, while public health centres, primary schools and other facilities were built using LATF and CDF, no budget existed for personnel as they were recruited by the Central Government. Furthermore, even though the local authorities were not involved in education, the free primary education policy was implemented at local level and resulted in a rapid increase in school attendance. The study recommended with the exception of the capital, making towns and villages into a single unit by absorbing them into a district level legislation and administration system.

Reforms take long to mature and this 2008 JICA study is a good reference point to determine what progress has been made wherever decentralisation has been implemented in Africa since then.

The public expenditure and service delivery challenges continue to be daunting. While most studies in the past focused on poverty and rural development, urban areas are very much part of the problem because urbanisation in Africa has largely been due to declining agriculture activity in rural areas. The rural-urban migration without sufficient savings for survival and housing in urban areas adds more pressure on service delivery in urban areas. Somik (2020) in a research for Africa Growth Initiative (AGI) called for increased public expenditure on agricultural research and innovation systems to curtail the rural-urban migration which has left 60% of urban dwellers in Africa in slums with inadequate water and sanitation and power supply. The study recommended, as a priority, legislation and administration reforms to provide for well-functioning land markets in Africa. It was found that in Kenya lack of property registration affects 25% of land owning households in Nairobi alone leading to informal housing supply. The capital value forgone by not developing 1000 acres of land was calculated at US$1 billion dollars, translated as US$446 dollars per person in Nairobi, or 70% of Kenya's GDP per capita in 2014. In Tanzania only 10% of land was registered and it took 65 days to transfer property. These figures demonstrate clearly the potential for revenue generation to support critical sectors such as rural agriculture through R&D, feeder roads, irrigation, schools, and other related infrastructure which in turn would reduce the urban bias. Further investigation is necessary on budget trade-offs regarding expenditure in agriculture and other sectors to provide evidence on why accelerated land reforms are necessary if they are to be a revenue source for many in rural Africa. According to the AGI report, domestic revenue could also be raised through improved land use planning.

Service delivery in rural areas is even more costly than in urban areas and was found to be a serious problem for government at all levels of development. In OECD nations, Moreno-Monroy et al. (2020) found that lower density also meant that there were higher transportation costs, loss of economies of scope and scale and greater difficulty in retaining professionals. New technologies did however, open new doors for provision of some services virtually to rural areas. The main challenge remained for governments to formulate clear policies and goals that maximised revenue generation and public expenditure in direct response to needs of the rural areas. The Moreno-Monroy study involved among others understanding the costs of delivering services by developing data on the cost in different geographical units. Fine grained population projections was used to determine future costs of service delivery based on different population scenarios. Five drivers of costs and policy were earmarked as: forward-looking plans to assist governments and communities better plan for demographic and other changes impacting service provision needs such as education and health; to better understand the role of integrated spatial planning to enhance joint investment among communities and reduce transport and infrastructure costs; to understand the role community based partners and NGOs play in service delivery in rural areas; and to understand how roles and responsibilities of different government levels and stakeholders could be reformed to improve the quality of service delivery in rural areas including the regulatory environment. Ameliorating risks was identified as key in this process as well as investigation of the conditions for success of E-government and E-participation. In an earlier report the OECD (2006) promoted a new rural paradigm which focused away from sector investment and towards specific rural area activity development potential. Agriculture subsidies were concluded to not have delivered as expected in harnessing agriculture.

Innovation to improve services in rural areas in Africa was also recommended in a study by Dipeolu (2021) particularly for the health sector. The study identified text messaging as a way to fill the gap in the delivery of health services such as contact tracing, appointments, diagnosis. However, it was cautioned that confidentiality was still a matter that required the necessary technical and legal reforms to encourage citizen participation in Africa. In another study in the UK, James et al. (2020) begun exploring the possibility of Automatic Voter Registration using existing central government data bases as a way to improve delivery of local government and national elections. Though the study was ongoing, it was revealed that the right to private data and weak legislation against technology companies as they share personal data, were some of the challenges that may be expected if automatic voter registration were to be implemented by the UK government.

OECD (2014), as a follow up on the 2006 and 2008 OECD studies, reviewed rural service delivery policies required in the OECD nations. The new paradigm called for a new look at rural areas, not as underdeveloped but as areas of significant opportunities in the OECD nations. It was pointed out by the study that these entrenched stereotype outlooks misinformed policy. The study recommended that rural change would best be elucidated through its link to a positive agro-centric narrative against rural-urban narrative and narratives of globalisation and capitalist penetration. Interventions were recommended at both macro and micro levels.

The JICA (2008) study on rural development through decentralisation pointed out that whatever the processes, understanding the context of development in a specific country and area was important. The report alluded to the critical role the economic development of a country played in supporting public expenditure for service delivery. This was supported in a study of four African countries (Uganda, South Africa, Kenya and Senegal) by Resnick (2012) who analysed the impact of politics on decentralisation and urban service delivery. The four were selected because they all had vertically divided authority in key cities and had implemented major decentralisation reforms in the 1990s. However, South Africa had a quasi-federal system with decentralisation imbedded in the constitution. South Africa and Senegal also had the least intergovernmental fiscal transfers as a share of local expenditure. Uganda had the highest at 97.6% with Kenya at 40.1%. Senegal and Uganda were found to have the most person-centred political party regime in contrast to the most institutionalised in South Africa, with Kenya having fallen somewhere in between. Preliminary findings were that in some instances, vertically divided authority may have provided one party an advantage or disadvantage, among voters in subsequent elections. In this case, the study observed that both central and local actors preferred maximum autonomy but preferred to be held accountable only when service delivery was perceived as favourable by the voters. These tactics, which included removing elected officials in opposition strong holds in Senegal who were replaced by government appointed officials and removing revenue collection authority from local taxes once led to lack of garbage collection in the capital Dakar. Resnick (2012) concluded that these negative interventions were enabled by low education, lack of information and complex institutional arrangements. This made it difficult for voters to clearly understand who was responsible for most services between the local and national governments. It was also recommended that any efforts towards decentralisation in Africa needed to be based on a clear understanding of the political impact on public expenditure and service delivery (JICA, 2008; De Haan & Klomp, 2013, 2019).

With the advent of information technology and social media, interest has been raised on what role access to information and leadership ideology (Brender & Drazen, 2013; De Haan & Klomp, 2013) plays in public expenditure and service delivery in democratic nations. Kosec and Wantchekon (2018) examined this question with a focus on rural areas using secondary data from 48 empirical studies. It was stated that in theory provision of information to governments may help overcome information asymmetries between service providers and end users which often results in inefficient or misdirected expenditure even when government is well-intentioned. Access to relevant and timely information by various officials within government including access by elected officials' maybe the required trigger for innovation in refocusing what does not work and enhancing what works. It was further added that government officials need to operate in an environment in which they have confidence that they can act on information they access because clear systems for communication and action are clearly available. And even more importantly, officials may only feel incentivised to take action if they believe in the shared national values which may render setting of national priorities always important (Mazzucato, 2020).

Using secondary data to investigative the effectiveness of information in service delivery in Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA) Uzuegbu (2016) found six major channels through which information reached rural dwellers; mass media, information service systems, education and training programs, change agents, personal contacts and miscellaneous channels. The study used descriptive statistics to observe the strength and weakness of each channel. Public libraries were found to be inadequately funded with few resource assets for the communities to access. It was recommended that field studies towards designing rural oriented models that will be effective for information to rural areas in the SSA. Be initiated.

Zambia's history with a one-party state system resulted in a highly centralised state (Mbikusita-Lewanika, 1993). This resulted in both domestic and donor interest tying decentralisation to good governance after the return to plural politics in 1991. Decentralisation has been an ambition of the

Zambian government since then. Reforms began with the 1991 Local Government Act which transferred 63 functions to councils. The Act provided for Mayors in Municipal and City Councils and Chairpersons in District Councils to be elected by elected Ward Councillors (GRZ, 1991). Disappointed with the performance in the decade after the 1991 Act, the government enacted the 2002 Decentralisation Policy aimed at supporting Councils with sufficient financial resources for service delivery. In 2010, the Local Government Act was amended to provide for the Local Government Service Commission (LGSC) whose main objective was to centralise the appointment of staff in Councils in the hope of improving service delivery. This goal was clearly reflected in the 5th (2006-2010) and 6th (2011-2015) National Development Plans which stated that deepening decentralisation through devolution was the main goal. The call for enhanced decentralisation was repeated in the 7th National Development Plan (2017-2021) which noted that insufficient decentralisation had added to the nation's large economic and socio inequalities. In 2019, a new Local Government Act was again passed. And yet despite this rhetoric on decentralisation, councils remained hampered in their capacity to deliver goods and services.

Resnick (2020) carried out a survey of 153 officials in 16 local authorities in four provinces out of the ten provinces in Zambia. To complement the survey, interviews were conducted with elected local level officials. The aim of the survey was to investigate how decentralisation had progressed in Zambia and identify in what way the political economy had constrained the process. The three key findings were as follows; the creation of the LGSC had undermined the organisational setting of the councils as it recruited staff centrally in response to increased number of councils, without sufficiently financing the local authority wage bill. This negatively impacted service delivery to residents; secondly there was resistance from the Ministry of Local Government to devolve authority to councils with major policy decisions only being made after consultation with the centre. In this case citizens at the local level had become more and more distanced from the government; finally there was usually a mismatch between the incentives of the local government officials and the elected officials resulting often in an impaired working environment and undermining service delivery. This was reflected in unpicked garbage collection and unmanaged market and street trading. While over 80% of staff were satisfied with their job, the study found that more than 42% were unhappy about their wages. Even more significant was the 60% who were hoping to leave the council within 5 years. This high attrition and transfer rate contributed to lack of institutional memory and negatively impacted community relations and service delivery.

The Zambia Electoral Analysis Project (ZEAP, 2021) reported that attempts were made to decentralise education, health and agriculture extension services after the 2013 Revised National Decentralisation Policy (R-NDP) was passed. The government announced intentions to strengthen the Ward Development Committees (WDCs) to enhance participation of citizens at the local level. A Local Government Equalisation Fund (LGEF) was also introduced as block funding for service delivery by councils (Resnick, 2020). Enhanced devolvement of administrative and fiscal authority consultations between 2014 and 2019 were not concluded after fears, expressed mostly by politicians and central government officials, pointed to the lack of capacity at local level (Mukwena 2014: Resnick, 2020). Between 2011 and 2018, councils created increased from 72 to 116, an effort government said was aimed at taking services closer to the people. Further in 2016, the amended constitution provided for the first time, that mayors and council chairpersons be elected by direct universal suffrage.

Traditionally, low state capabilities have often been advanced as the largest contributor to economic growth challenges in developing countries resulting even in good policies falling by the way side (Khemani, 2019). In some African cases, the situation was further exacerbated by legitimacy threats from traditional leadership especially in rural areas (Resnick, 2020). The Zambia Electoral Analysis Project (ZEAP, 2021) commented that even though the range of local political actors seeking office (due to division of existing boundaries in wards with large population) had ballooned, resources for service delivery implementation and investment had remained low. This resulted in increased expenditure on elections at local level but with no matching funds for service delivery. Initial construction for office blocks in new districts stalled with staff having to operate either from the original district or squatting in make shift office in the newly created districts (National Assembly, 2021). Soon after the 2016 general elections, WDCs were suspended. The ZEAP (2021) stated that while much attention was focused on general elections, there was much more at stake at local level elections with even more immediate implications for citizens' access to services and their participation in policy processes that directly impact their communities. In view of this study, this demonstrates failure to appreciate the link between expenditure on elections and expenditure on agriculture service delivery and how that impacts hunger and poverty reduction.

The findings in the above studies raised serious questions about the ways in which development and service delivery could be harnessed in the absence of a vibrant local authority and residents' participation. In the LAC, the so called second generation institution reforms (post IMF SAP) were initiated to relook at how local government challenges in rural areas could be addressed through social contracts and rights based services. In the OECD there was reference to a new narrative on rural areas as being positively Agro-centric and a pull for global capital as places for new businesses and innovation. The Africa Growth Initiative (Somik, 2020) demonstrated that interventions in urban land reforms could generate massive resources to support public expenditure. And in Tanzania decentralisation in education, despite the challenges, proved that it was a push for increased primary enrolment (JICA, 2008). Fan et al. (2009) and the FAO (2021) stated that any investment in agriculture must be supported with increased education for poverty reduction and rural incomes to improve.

Ghana passed the Local Governance Act in 1993 which provided the legal frame work for decentralisation. But thus far only de-concentration has occurred whereby the national government oversees policy planning and local governments are only implementers (Ayee & Dickovick, 2010). Most of the studies and success stories on decentralisation in most of Africa are in the health and education sectors (Channa & Faguet, 2016; World Bank, 2016 & 2019). Resnick (2018) however, conducted a survey with semi-structured interviews involving 960 rural households and 80 district directors of agriculture in Ghana to determine the impact on agriculture civil servants who had since 2012 been devolved to 216 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs). The study period gathered local government budget data between 2010 and 2016. The findings showed positive feedback on job mobility and a chance to engage more with the community in designing agriculture projects. The biggest hindrance was uncertainty with finances in the budget which had remained almost the same since 2012. In fact the agriculture budget after decentralisation, had dropped in absolute terms and as a proportion of agriculture households. Politicians were reported to prefer more visible expenditure on other services at local level compared to expenditure in the agriculture sector.

In India, public sector agriculture extension services gained significant focus in the new millennium decade because it was seen as the weakest link in the research-extension-farmer-market chain which was aimed at increasing productivity to 4% annually (Glendenning & Babu, 2011). However, structural challenges such as poor funding, lack of political commitment, no tangible services offered to farmers and weak linkages between extension services and research among others spurred service delivery reforms in the 10th (2002-2007) and 11th (2007-2012) Development Plans. The plans stressed the need to strengthen agriculture extension as key to reducing the yield gap. Though these reforms were initiated by the Central Government, implementation was done at the state level. One such program was the Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) a semi-autonomous decentralised participatory and market driven extension model (Swanson, 2008; Singh et al. 2016). The focus of the program was a shift from the World Bank led transfer of technology for increased staple crop production and towards diversification. Successes included strengthened linkages between research and extension services, increased land under irrigation with improved organisational capacities. After piloting in 28 districts from 1998 to 2003, the program was scaled up to 591 development districts of India from 2005 to 2010.

Despite the above efforts, agriculture extension in India was befallen by challenges. Even though operations were devolved to lower levels, general administration was still centrally done. Effective service delivery was also hampered by the low number of staff. In 2007 India had 100 thousand extension service officers while experts put the optimum number at 1.5 million (Working Group on Agriculture Extension, 2007). Only 20% of the extension staff were University graduates implying a shortage of technical skills. Over time, financial challenges hampered the program with 85 to 97% of the operational budgets going to wages there by leaving very little to be spent on research and innovation. The research apportioned dwindling political support in the local level initiative resulted in lack of financial support for the prerequisite infrastructure such as appropriate storage, post-harvest handling, and marketing systems. The majority of the funding was by the World Bank which may explain its initial success at decentralisation during the pilot stage.

In China, even though not a democracy, a study by Han (2009) found that local government was well understood to have an advantage on the provision of public goods and services. The efficiency in service delivery was expected to trigger fiscal decentralisation which would promote agriculture growth at local level. The research however found evidence that local officials were more concerned about reporting economic growth to the Central Government as this had been signalled as the basis for a promotion. In this case, fiscal funds were invested in industries with a huge return on investment and reflection of growth indicators. This did not favour agriculture where investment results were not very visible and took too long often to mature. This study also agreed with the findings in Ghana (Resnick, 2018) where local politicians preferred visible expenditure like school and not extension services.

A critical review was carried out in Indonesia to investigate progress of agricultural technology transfer after two decades of decentralisation (Suwanan, Rori & Kurnaiwan, 2021). The study found that initially agriculture technology transfer was closely related to the implementation of extension services. However, over time extension officers' role changed to include consultancy in best practice regarding farming business. To resolve accessibility of farmers to extension officers, the R&D

department set up 33 Agriculture Technology Assessment Centres (ATAC) focused on technology research, studies to develop site specific technology and field training on technology application. Agro Techno and Agro Science Parks were also set up as labs to provide information aimed at exposing famers further to technology solutions closer to their farms. In a program dubbed Agriculture 4.0, farmers had access to various resources online. Digitization in agriculture involves the development, adoption and improvement of digital technologies in the sector. These technologies were aimed at reducing input costs while increasing yields. The technology involved use of land monitoring sensors, drones, big data, machine learning and the internet. Collaboration among the central, local government and farmers was found to be central in the future success of the program.

In Nepal, a study was conducted aimed at investigating the provision and practice of extension services through village development committees. Forest and environment committees and existing government structures were analysed in relation to farmers’ access to extension services and adoption of Sustainable Soil Management (SSM) practices by farmers. Pauydal (2021) purposively selected Achham a district in a very remote area. A pre-structured questionnaire was used for data collection in face to face and focus group discussions. Secondary data was also collected for detailed analysis. The data was analysed for; provision of decentralised agriculture services at grass root level and participation of experienced leader farmers, in a farmer to farmer extension services program as well as block agent grant usage, in the decentralisation of agriculture services.

The findings were that decentralised extension services were supported by funding from district revenues, allocated budget funds from Central Government and grants from other institutions. The district utilised 85% of the funds on development works. The agriculture block grant from the Central Government accounted for 10% of the district budget. The government further instructed that 15% of allocations from the Central Government had to go even lower to agriculture at the village level. Initially only 33 out of the 75 village development committees adhered to this directive even though in the end all the 75 did adopt the financial directive. The block grant was found to be underutilised often due to demand side challenges. The bottom-up approach, though well intended, was found to lack organisational capacity at village level for identification of priorities.

In 2010, 45% of the farmers cultivated a single crop, 50% had two crops and the remaining 5% had adopted multi-cropping. However, after the adoption of the SSM technologies and further training, 27% of farmers adopted crop integration and 73% adopted a mixed pattern cropping. None of the groups were reported to have adopted single cropping. The study found that some success of the programme was due to the institutionalisation of the extension services delivery system (AFEC) supported by the local farmer leadership at district and village level.

The AU High Level Panel on Emerging Technologies (APET) and the Calestous Juma Executive Dialogues highlighted that African government service delivery remained further constrained by fractured and, uncoordinated communication among government departments, and among the countries. This had led to limited coordination of government services, which restricted access to information and crucial documents. Rapid urbanisation and very remote rural areas had also exacerbated the problem. Increased use of E-government for E-services and E-citizen participation is a model that is being encouraged in other regions such as the LAC and Asian countries. The use of digital platform was also encouraged in the private sector to compliment government services.

The AU found that Rwanda had set up a single portal called Irembo (meaning single entry) for the E-government platform. In this way, no matter where a trader is located, they could use their device to declare goods and get an electronic receipt. Other government services on the platform include passport applications, tax payments. This was found to reduce costs and provide savings to be used in other critical sectors. This was an important development. Even though most developing nations like Zambia are now established democracies, service delivery is hampered by limited financial resources. However, from some of the studies in this section, insufficient local government capacity plus its relationship with the Central Government and weak democratic push by the citizens were perceived to be even bigger challenges. This raises questions how far decentralisation has contributed to improved electoral service delivery.

2.4.3 Decentralising Politics and Election Expenditure

Aalen and Muriaas (2015) carried out an inductive study on post conflict countries to determine the causal mechanism for subnational election reforms and implementation. In South Africa and Ethiopia the local level election competition was found to be robust. The study concluded that change of leadership after the conflict was a positive mechanism for encouraging local government elections. The main contributing factor was that it induced a desire in new leaders to mobilise grass root masses against opponents regarded as the enemy in the conflict. However, in Angola local government level was found to be so fragile post conflict and led to failure to routinize local level elections. Lack of change of leadership post conflict was viewed as not a strong enough incentive for the politicians to mobilise the grass root. The political will to decentralise and establish democratically elected local government must be a precursor to the delivery of genuine local elections (Vick, 2013; UNDP, 2013). And by extension to better service delivery. The findings by Aalen and Muriaas (2015) introduced a dimension of electoral impacts on public expenditure that is not paid much attention. The traditional model has in the past provided evidence of politicians manipulating public expenditure in other sectors to enhance chances of re-election. In the case of Angola, electoral manipulation included the expenditure on elections as local elections were often cancelled based on non-availability of funds and commitment from the Central Government.

In the USA, the State of Michigan was one of the most decentralised States in the delivery of local elections. The organisational structure has nine levels. The Michigan election law designates the Secretary of State as the Chief Election officer followed by the Board of State Canvassers comprising two Democrats and two Republicans. The board is responsible for the federal and state office and minor party petitions, stakeholder proposals and word correction on the state-wide ballots, approval of voting equipment and certification of state and district elections. The Bureau of Elections is the electoral body at State level and oversees the County Election Commissioners and the Boards of County Canvassers. At the city level are the City and Township Clerks who maintain the registration records and administer all federal, state, county and local elections. The City and Townships Election Commissions manages all election matters in their jurisdiction and comprises the township clerk, the township supervisor and the township treasurer. The lowest level is the City and Township Boards of Canvassers represented equally by the two major parties and is responsible for elections at the local level (State of Michigan, 2022). There are 1,603 county and local officials in the state making it one of the biggest electoral structures in the USA. Even though still few, there are studies ongoing on local elections in America to determine the drivers of rising costs and how innovation can help reduce costs without compromising election delivery (Foltz, 2014; Mohr et al., 2018).

Iwata (2018) traced the history of political decentralisation in Benin and Burkina Faso. In 1993, Benin passed the Forum for Administrative Reforms which were aimed at reorganising the national local government structures at district and sub-district levels. These were transformed into 77 ‘communes’ and they became the main actors for local development through devolution from the central government. Local elections enabled citizens to directly choose their representatives to the commune, who in turn peer selected a chairperson. In 2018, the 77 communes received only 4% of the total national budget. This left rural local authorities at a disadvantage as only big urban authorities could afford to invest and manage local development. The National Association of the Communes of Benin had repeatedly requested government for up to 15% of fiscal devolution. Evidence revealed constant conflicts between councillors of the commune and the Mayors, with many Mayors replaced by the peers, because of the perceived support or not, of the party in power. In the process, service delivery was hampered due to inadequate funds and differing political incentives. Iwata (2018) observed, as did Resnick (2020) and Moyo (2018) that voters responded to this scenario by willing to have their immediate needs 'met' against long term development in the commune.

In a case review, Iwata (2018) traced the decentralisation impact in Abomey, 160KM North of Cotonou the capital of Benin. Iwata observed a new phenomenon spreading on the African continent, where international relations were happening at a local level. It was revealed that the commune of Abomey had a formal agreement on relations with a small town in France. The Mayor of Abomey had also established direct contacts for development support of his commune with AID agencies such as DANIDA and JICA. Abomey had also concluded cooperation agreements with Asian local governments such as Gwanju (South Korea) in 2010 and Zibo (China) in 2017. It was noted that councillors worked on a voluntary basis with no pay from the commune. This scenario would have made it more likely that elected officials sought personal and political goals using their status which may not have always aligned with the commune's development agenda. Dangnon (2009) had also observed earlier that political decentralisation in Benin had created political instability and over-politicization of local government.

The decentralisation process in Burkina Faso began in 1995 and the Local Government Act being the legal framework was established in 2004. The Act provided for 359 communes with special eight wards added from two cities under special status. In addition, the government created 13 municipalities as the supervisors of communes. In 2006, the first ever municipal elections were held to elect councillors and from among them, Mayors were peer selected. However, after the 2014 coup, the transitional government suspended communes immediately and finally dissolved them. Once Presidential and legislative elections were held in 2015, municipal elections followed in 2016. The study also observed that local politics were becoming more and more attractive in Burkina Faso as devolution progressed. This created conflict with members of Parliament as Mayors and Councillors were gaining both political and financial support from within the commune. In some cases this devolution revived traditional leadership too since locally elected leaders depended on their support to mobilise the people. It was indicated that this phenomenon was not a preserve of Burkina Faso and extended to reactivation of interest in international activists of local government issues.

The first local government elections in Zambia were in 1992 after enactment of the Local Government Act No. 22 of 1991 which also provided for the Local Government Electoral Act. This new act superseded the 1980 Local Government Administration Act which had attempted an integrated local administration system through a unified executive machinery which brought together the central and local development activities as a whole. Among the duties assigned to local government in 1991 were education, health and agriculture services. The 1992 local elections had the lowest turnout in any election in Zambia at 10% and over 402 candidates out of 1,190 went through unopposed. At the expiry of their first mandate in 1995, government declared it had no money to hold local elections. Mukwena (2014) argued that the absence of local government elections from 1992 to 2001 undermined the growth of local level democracy, in the first decade of Zambia's return to plural politics and this may have had a negative impact on public service delivery on both elections and agriculture.

In 1995 the government introduced the Constituency Development Fund (CFD) in an effort to improve fiscal transfers to the local level. Further in 1996, the Constitution was amended to specifically state that there shall be such a system of local government in Zambia based on democratically elected councils on the basis of universal suffrage (Chitembo et al., 2014). Mukwena (1998 & 2004) observed that the role of local government in development may be viewed in terms in which it stresses both functions that relate to direct improvements in the living standards of the local residents and those which create an enabling environment for social and economic transformation in that area. Since 2001, local government elections have been held together with Parliamentary and Presidential elections.

In the case studies on Zambia, Chitembo et al (2014) found that there were still a lot of structural, legal and political challenges to decentralisation. On top of the list were financing challenges, followed by political interference. Until 2016, MPs were also members of the council and this created a lot of conflict between councillors, council staff and MPS (Mukwena, 2014). In all the local government acts and decentralisation policies (1965, 1980, 1991, 2002, 2010, 2013 & 2017) the civil and political organisational structure of the district was never addressed. This resulted in confusion between the head of the council, the council secretary or town clerk and politically appointed governors, then district administrators and later district commissioners (Chitembo et al 2014; Mukwena, 2014). These finding were also confirmed by Resnick (2018).

In this section different studies on decentralisation and its role in service delivery were explored. The evidence revealed that even election delivery has been affected despite political decentralisation as the data on Zambia (Chitembo et al. 2014) and in Burkina Faso (Iwata, 2017) revealed. In the reviewed studies there were arguments that leadership change in post conflict countries and when local and national elections are on the same day, democratic push and service delivery were enhanced (Aalen & Muriaas, 2015; Dorn, 2021). The evidence in the literature also showed that the benefit of decentralisation in agriculture were short term which negatively impacted long term agriculture growth and poverty reduction (Vergne, 2011; Ebeke & Olcer, 2013; Mogues & Rosario, 2016) and reduced the local people's democratic push (De Haan & Klomp 2013; Poulton, 2014: Khan 2021) due to 'elite' approach as politicians focused only on re-election.

2.5 Election Expenditure Trends

Democracies elections are the only process which involves the whole eligible population in deciding upon their leadership, policy direction and representatives. Clark (2019) argued that there is very little scholarly literature in both democratised and democratising countries to assess the key questions of; how much does electoral democracy cost and what drives the cost of electoral governance? It was observed that while there had been a lot of studies to analyse the cost of campaigns by political parties and candidates (Jacobson, 1978; Johnston and Pattie, 2014; OECD, 2014, Electoral Integrity Project, 2015; IDEA, 2016), little had been done to examine public expenditure on elections. It was added that the governance of the electoral process was a complex one, requiring considerable administrative, organisational and financial resources. James (2020) observed that funding for public services was usually at the heart of election campaigns. There were always promises of more money for hospitals, schools and other social services as an incentive for voters to favourably consider particular election candidates. It would be considered political suicide for a politician to inform voters at a rally that he or she intended to cut funding to such public expenditure. Or even that a politician would eagerly announce that a perceived bloated government deserved more funding. And yet money to run the actual election is not something that will be found on bill boards or manifestos. Funding to elections is taken as a given by most voters whether they are underfunded, just enough or even over funded. Clark (2019) and James (2020) bemoaned the lack of focus away from only how much elections cost but more importantly to the value of investment in them. Clark (2019) identified this value as the outcome of the relationship between spending on election administration and organisational activities on one hand, while on the other is the capacity with which that spending contributes to the democratic health in nation.

At the beginning of the second millennium, the UNDP/IFES began a program on harmonising rules of operations globally for electoral bodies. The Cost of Elections and Registration (CORE) became the umbrella advocacy platform, which called for election management, especially in new democracies, to be managed independently (IFES/UPND, 2000). As pointed out already the complexity and specialist skills required to manage the electoral processes meant that new institutions were required to be responsible for electoral activities. These institutions took various forms and sizes as election commissions, department of elections, electoral councils, election units or even election boards. The term Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) was coined to refer to all bodies responsible for electoral management regardless of what format they took. EMBs are organisations that are legally responsible for managing some or all the elements that are essential for the conduct of elections (UNDP/IFES, 2000)

The IFES/UNDP acknowledged that while many studies had been done on the EMBs structure, legal framework and other operational considerations, there had been no global research exclusively devoted to the EMB operational budgets and cost of election management. As such it made it difficult to analyse the total cost of elections without data in different countries that held elections under different conditions. The CORE researchers, Lopez-Pintor and Fischer (2005) used two analytical tools to examine election costs, a case study and survey. Participants for the case study included election practitioners and academics familiar with the countries in the case study. The ten country study sample selection was based on size and grouped as large, medium or small country. The other considerations were whether the country was a stable democracy or in transition or if it was a country in conflict. These countries were Afghanistan, Australia, Cambodia, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Iraq, Mexico, Spain and Sweden. The surveys were completed by EMBs officials in each country. The CORE working model for election costs included voter registration, delimitation, voting operation, counting and transmission of results, dispute adjudication, voters' education and information dissemination. Campaign costs by political parties and candidates and vigilance by observers were viewed as costs being outside the EMBs mandate.

The study results showed that in 2004 costs per voter in Afghanistan were at $20/voter, in Haiti at $11/voter in 2005, in 2004 in Guatemala it was $5/voter, while Spain was at $4/voter in 2004 and

Sweden at $2/voter in 2004. A second major finding was that personnel and technology costs had gone up independently in new democracies because of the creation of new EMBs. It was also observed that in most post conflict countries election budgets were supported by donors. For example, Cambodia's election budget in 1998 was 80% donor funded but this support reduced to 60% in 2002 and to less than 50% in 2003. In 1993, they found the cost/voter in Cambodia was $45 and by 2003, this stood at $1.70. Australian non-election year costs were found to have increased by 0.8% and by 1.3% of national spending in election years. Government recommended increased use of ICTs to bring costs down further.

Many academics observed that despite the land mark publication of the IFES CORE (2005) Project there had been little scholarly interest in the financing of electoral processes until recently and that research was still being hampered by a lack of consistent global data (Montjoy, 2010; Mohr et.al, 2018; Clark, 2019; James, 2020). In fact Montjoy (2010) pointed to the electoral crisis following the presidential election in the USA in 2001 as the impetus for current interest in election management and costs. Some academics claimed that a lack of adequate resources to EMBs could lead to poorly run elections. These claims were based on cross-national studies (Birch, 2011), studies on USA elections (Gerken, 2009; Foltz, 2014) and evidence from studies on UK elections (Clark, 2019). But these findings were not fully accepted by James (2020) who observed that the evidence supporting or not supporting the argument was quite sparse and that more empirical evidence was required. Both sides of the argument, though, agreed that EMBs have to compete for resources like any other function requiring government funding. As such it was incumbent upon EMBs to be more convincing and efficient in their use of public resources to reduce opportunity costs in public expenditure in other sectors especially in the age of austerity (Lopez-Pintor & Fischer, 2005; Clark, 2019; James, 2020).

Montjoy (2010) conducted a qualitative research, holding interviews with managers of EMBs at local levels in the USA. Respondents agreed that once considered a clerical job, election administration now required much higher managerial skills to deal with ever growing voter demands against budget constraints. Financing of elections emerged as the most critical issue. The study found that election costs had risen much more rapidly than the number of voters registered. Major concern over the absence of data on cost of elections in the USA was raised. The study was focused on how the type of EMB administration influenced rising election cost. In a recent study on voting methods in local elections in Estonia, Krimmer et al. (2018) and WDF (2018) found that use of on-line voting reduced costs by half compared to the traditional election-day voting. In other countries, electoral decentralisation meant that there were different EMBs with different budgets and capacities to manage elections at national, regional and local levels. This raised further questions about rising costs, oversight and prudent use of resources (Caltech-MIT, 2001; Clark, 2019).

In what was known as the Farragut Pilot Project, local election officials in Knox County in the USA carried out a survey in 2009 to determine voters' attitudes towards being able to vote from any voting centre and not just from those tied to their precinct (Foltz, 2014). A focus group comprising community leaders, election workers and other interest groups, plus a pre-election telephone survey and an existing survey of voters from the 2008 elections were used as the sample. With a margin error of +/-5%, the study found 53.7% of respondents agreed to the pilot. During the election, costs were captured as setup, operation and takedown costs. To determine if costs were indeed reduced in 2009, the election costs were compared to those of 2005. The 2009 election costs were found to be less by 8.9%. In both elections, the cost for election workers was the largest single expense. In 2005, this was at 81% of the total election cost of which 26.5% was overtime pay. In the 2009 poll, salary costs were at 72% out of which 19.9% was overtime pay. This study was limited as it analysed data from only one county in the USA.

In other research, Hill (2012) formulated the extant or production model, where the cost of elections was modelled as a function based on both supply and demand for the service in the community. Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression was applied to two groups of independent variables, ran together. The first set related to the cost or production function of elections which included population, voting technology, need for bilingual materials, legal requirements costs, levels of absentee voting and polling sites. The second set related to the demand function and reflected income and socio-economic factors that would potentially affect turnout; income levels, education levels, age and the ethnic makeup of area where election was being held. The model was applied to county elections in California for the fiscal years 1992 through 2008. These findings agreed with the Caltech-MIT (2001) that economies of scale and use of technology influenced the cost of elections as did other factors. Demand factors for administration of elections were found not to be significant. The findings also indicated that rate of absentee ballots, level of election administration, number of elections, number of polling stations and population size were significant contributors to costs of administering elections.

However, Mohr et.al (2019) in a study of North Carolina proposed a different model to explain cost of elections arguing that Hill's model fell short of considering the political influence on final costs of elections. The research concluded that whenever the county electorate was a sufficient Republican majority, North Carolina spent less on elections and termed this phenomenon the ‘Political Model of Election Administration’. This finding was evidence of electoral cycle impacts on election expenditure. The study used primary data sources produced by the relevant state agencies in North Carolina. The data panel consisted of 100 counties of the state of North Carolina and the 11 general elections from 1994 to 2014. Because the panel structure had more entities than time periods, it was modelled both entity and time using fixed effects. The study by Mohr et al. (2019) showed that electoral cycles also impacted cost levels, even in the delivery of elections.

In a wider study, Mohr et.al (2018) stated that cost of elections in the USA remained relatively unknown. The study defined cost of elections as not just the cost of a particular election, which was defined as ‘election costs’, but to include cost of total election administration and other “in between” costs as did Lopez-Pintor & Fischer (2005). In data gathered from audited financial reports from 26 states, it was estimated that local elections cost $8/voter per year. Descriptive statistics and hierarchical data structure was applied. The research noted that other studies on election costs in the USA had focused on a single state data and that this was the first time more than half of the states in were analysed in a single investigation. The findings revealed that while cost per voter had reduced from $10 in 2000 to $8 by 2009 due to economies of scale, the cost of general election administration had however, increased. The study estimated that due to population growth at 250 million adults in the USA in 2017, local election costs had risen to US$2 billion dollars. Mohr et al. (2018) recommended the addition of the supply and production variables (Hill, 2012) and their political variable to the hierarchical model to create larger and more generalised models for cost of elections. Decentralised elections may have resulted in more EMBs and polling centres, which required more staff and financing to manage elections.

Following the report of the Electoral Commission (2012) on the cost of the 2011 UK-wide referendum, another report was published in 2014 on the cost of the European Parliamentary elections including full data on how money was spent. The government further announced in 2018 that the reports on the cost of elections was its commitment to publishing in detail the costs incurred in the delivery of national elections. Transparency and accountability were pointed out as key to ensuring a health democracy. Another report was published following the 2015 UK parliamentary general election. The costs of conducting the UK-wide elections were paid for by the UK government from the consolidated fund. Management of the election funding was a combined responsibility of the Cabinet Office, Scotland

Office and the Northern Ireland Office, subject to the approval of the treasury and applied to elections at parliamentary level and police and crime commissioners. The elections were funded using the Maximum Recoverable Amount (MRA) model began in 2014 and has been attributed to the accuracies observed in allocations since.

The total paid from the UK government consolidated fund for the 2015 election was £115, 732,548 British Pounds. This was spent on distribution of voters' cards, operation of polling stations, provision of postal votes, the Count and fees paid to returning officers. It also included the cost of delivery of candidates' election leaflets. The cost of electoral registration was not covered by the consolidated fund as it fell on the local authorities. There were 650 constituencies and 46.4 million eligible voters. However, only 30.8 million representing 66.4% of the possible voters participated. A Democratic Vote Audit Report (2018) examined costs of major elections in the UK between 2009 and 2013 and concluded that cost per voter over the period had been £5.91.The highest costs per voter were in 2012 for the police and crime commissioners elections estimated at £13.66 British Pounds per voter. "*Democracy costs money, although it is not always clear how much*" was the beginning quote in the report. The UK electoral commission reported in its 2019/2020 annual report and accounts a 201 staffing level which included 12 board members and 127 lower level permanent staff as part of the daily operations of the EMB.

Clark (2019) used comprehensive nationwide data from Britain to identify main drivers that impacted the cost of electoral governance. A multivariate model was applied to electoral, socio-economic, organisational and administrative data. Clark cited the 2011 UK-wide referendum single-question ballot estimated to have cost £75 million as a good reason to investigate the rising cost of electoral governance. The study argued that finding key drivers of election costs is difficult precisely because of limited data on the cost. It was noted that in the UK there is very little legislation about the formula through which public spending on elections is calculated. From the analysed data between 2007 and 2017, it was concluded that elections were becoming more expensive with the 2017 general election alone costing £143 million out of which £98 million was payment to election staff. Political environment, number of elections, funding to the EMB and practical running of elections, indirect costs by other organisations involved in the delivery of elections, funding source and evolution over time to include investments and amortisations were identified as key driver of costs. Two key points were raised here. While studies on cost of election administration had focused mainly on the actual public expenditure allocated to EMBs, there are expenditures from other functions of government such as security, courts and even the Prime Minister/President's Office whose cost may enhance further public expenditure in elections years. Another was the evolution of costs over time as observed by Mohr et al. (2018) due to population, economic and political situation. Clark (2019) however noted that population size was not appropriate to be analysed as a determining factor as did Hill (2012) since not everyone in the population was eligible nor registered voter. In our view, there may still be an argument that as national population increases over time so does the eligible voter population. It was recommended that more studies needed to be done on how public funding of election administration could be more transparent, to avoid withholding or misallocation of the funds and may by negatively impacting election delivery.

Concerns also were raised that insufficient funding to EMBs was affecting service delivery in election administration in many countries. Even though elections had to compete for public expenditure like other functions of government, the view was that under funding of elections had the potential to jeopardise total public expenditure as it threatened the existence of democracy itself. Lack of funding led to cancelling of local elections in Zambia in 1995 and 1998 (Mukwena, 2014). In a similar case, James and Jervier (2017) did a case study on England and Wales from 2010 to 2016. The study found that due to austerity measures, many local authorities saw major budget cuts while election costs were increasingly over budgeted. Budget cuts reduced the capacity of local authorities' engagement with the public on voter education and impacted voter turnout. Clark and James (2020) also investigated the impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on election delivery. In the UK, it was found that local governments which had already been under a decade of austerity measures faced further budget needs such as more polling stations, procurement of safety cloths and sanitizers, single use pencils, higher wages for staff as most were not willing to work during the pandemic. It was also shown that the extra £3.7 million pounds for general pandemic management to all councils was insufficient to address extra election costs specifically. In contrast, the study found evidence that the USA released US$400 million dollars to specifically adapt election processes to pandemic circumstances in 2020. It was noted that the pandemic had increased election costs with South Korea reporting an estimated additional US$16million dollars spent on their 2020 elections due to procurement of sanitizers and other health measures. In Sri Lanka, this amount was reported by Clark and James (2020) to have been between US$32-37 million dollars.

In Israel, four general elections were held between 2019 and 2021 at a cost of US$4 billion as reported by Straaten (2021). Though not usual to have these numbers of elections in a short period, the huge costs may have also been due to COVID-19 measures to ensure that voting was safe for the voters. It also agrees with findings by Hill (2012) and Clark (2019) that the number of elections is one of the determinants of election costs. It, indeed cements the point on how much electoral democracy costs and whether such huge sums are commensurate with service delivery to the majority of citizens in Israel. The 2021 elections alone had been expected to cost US$208.9 million dollars which included US$68.09 million for CIVID-19 measure. Polling stations were increased by 4000. Another 1,100 stations were opened at regular ones to avoid overcrowding (Kenig, 2021)

James (2020) conducted another survey on funding to EMBs in 72 countries in the world. Since the IFES study of 2005 by Lopez-Pintor and Fischer, there had been no global study done on EMBs to compare costs of election administration. Questions in the survey included which actors approved the EMB budget, the overall budget and the expenditure trend. Respondents used email in the survey. A total of 55 EMBs provided data on their annual budget while 20 provided for only the election year budget. The researcher noted that the budgets analysed did not include election costs incurred by other organisations, such as the police, media and courts, who were involved in delivery of elections. The data was also related to national level elections and thereby omitted other EMBs that may have been operating at a lower level. However, with the absence of global data on elections costs (Montjoy, 2010; Mohr et al., 2018; Clark, 2019) the study was a substantial advance in creating comparative global data on cost of elections.

The above study asked EMBs to report on their annual budget in the year of the last national election in addition to the year of the survey. The data reflected significant variations in budget sizes at different times of the electoral cycle. In Poland the National Electoral Commission spent US$216.5 million in the 2015 election year but this dropped to US$51.6 million in 2016. In Israel, the election year costs in 2015 amounted to US$63.8 million compared to US$5 million in 2017. Yet in the Electoral Council of the Netherlands, the budget only rose from US$2.3 million to US$2.6 million between 2016 and 2017 despite a national election in 2017. The researcher also noted the reduction in the police budget in the election year in the Netherlands. In some instances, EMBs budgets were quite large. For example, the Commission on Elections in the Philippines annual budget was US$894 million while the General Election Commission in Mongolia was at US$513,537. Costs per voter in 2016 showed Costa Rica at US$33.29 per voter, US$27.54 in Rwanda and US$26.53 in Panama. In contrast it was US$0.76 and US$0.07 in Albania and Tanzania respectively. Reasons for the variations were dependent on voter population size and geographical size of the country as well as type of EMB system in the country.

James (2020) used the UN National Accounts Official Country Data to compare EMBs expenditure with total national public expenditure and to national expenditure on service delivery. In almost all the countries, expenditure on EMBs and actual elections was less than 1% of total national expenditure except for Kenya at 1.98%. Costa Rica was also an outlier with the Supreme Electoral Tribunal spending 22% of the public service budget compared to the second highest country in the survey which spent only 3% of the service delivery budget. Most of the EMBs responded that their budgets had generally remained the same though increases were observed in almost all the countries within the five year period. Using the Pearson correlations, the study established a strong correlation between the state of the economy and funding to EMBs. About 61% of the 72 EMBs had their budget approved by Parliament. The Head of Government or Executive was involved in 41.7% of EMBs. Indonesia and Sao Tome and Principe reflected high involvement of civil society in their budgets.

The study further found that the national treasury at 95.1% was the most regular source of funding for EMBs. All EMBs reported that they received no funds from political parties. There was a 10.3% response to receipt of funds often, from foreign governments. Using focus group interview responses of 10 EMB, electoral officials from Africa, North America, Asia and Oceania, James (2017) found ten key challenges to public expenditure on election administrations. These are; budget cuts, competition with other service delivery functions of government, EMB relations with the politicians especially the incumbents, worker management and morale, procurement procedures, integrity and flexibility, service and goods suppliers negotiations, rising expectations, EMB leadership managerial capacities and historical relationships with various stakeholders.

In 2017, the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) indicated that while it was a fact that national elections were unquestionably expensive, those wishing to defend democracy had to ensure that criticism of election costs was publicly debated and placed in a context, based on facts, law and agreed societal values. IDEA (2017) defines democracy as a political system that advances popular control and political equality. However, the IDEA recognised that democracy had no single applicable model and debate on how best to implement it in a country specific context should be encouraged including that which improved costs in the regular conduct of elections. The IDEA (2017) encouraged a new narrative around four themes: elections are an investment, not an expense-this is supported by the IFES (2005) studies which reflected that elections acted as a conflict resolution mechanism and thereby bought peace; cost effective preparation and delivery of elections requires continuous funding; EMBs required financial and legal independence. This is an idea supported by Pal (2016) who called for EMBs to be constitutionalised as the fourth estate. The IDEA (2017) noted that population size, political systems, EMBs administration approach, country size, including global economic conditions will continue to impact election costs and required continuous study.

According to Bragon and Mattoso (2018) the first round in the 2018 Brazilian elections cost $740 million of which 73% was government funding. In the runoff, $13 million dollars was expended. This was in contrast to four years before in 2014 when the election cost was at $1.7 billion dollars. The reduction in 2018 is alluded to a 2015 new electoral law which stopped private companies such as oil companies from donating to elections. Runoffs have continued to raise debate in African countries. On one hand they are viewed as strengthening democracy by making sure that elected leaders have a popular vote. Others argue that runoffs have resulted in very divisive politics perpetuating continuous electioneering and expenditure on more elections, and taking away from development funds especially in small economies and poor countries.

In the online version of the Economic Times, Chaudhary and Rodrigues (Bloomberg, 2019) reported that the 2019 Indian elections cost $7 billion dollars translating to $8/voter in a country where the majority lived on less than $3/per day. This cost was a 40% jump from the 2014 elections, and more than the USA 2016 Presidential and Congressional elections at $6.5 billion. However, these election costs were not limited to public expenditure only as they included candidate and political party expenditure. This may explain why the cost did not conform to reduced election costs with economies of scale as argued by scholars on election cost models (Hill, 2012; Mohr et al. 2018).

In Sub-Saharan Africa the debate continued to rage on how election costs were impacting public expenditure and service delivery in other sectors. The IDEA (2021) reported that there were 600 presidential and parliamentary elections over the past three decades in Africa (1990-2020). In 2022 alone, eight African countries were expected to hold presidential and parliamentary elections predicted to be exceptionally expensive. Straaten (2019) argued that since 2000, an amount of US$125 billion was believed to have been spent on elections in the region. However, despite this election expenditure, poor assessment results of good governance election indicators contributed twice as much than any other to the cause of poor rating in the overall Freedom House. Fritzbein (2005) and Joughin and Kjaer

(2018) noted that occurrence of elections alone was not sufficient to deliver development. In view of the huge expenditure on elections, there was a great need to assess the impact of investment on democratic health. Disaggregation and evaluation of critical election and agriculture expenditure lines could be the first step

Elections and election integrity do matter in the quality of democracy. They are the core of good governance and effective delivery by the government. In fact, Kauffman (2003) found that the effects of good governance on income in the long run was as large as 400% on per capita income associated with an improvement in government by one standard deviation and similar improvement in reduced child mortality and illiteracy. This point raises a lot of questions in the case of Zambia where three decades after the return to plural politics, poverty levels especially in rural areas are still extremely high. Stunting among children of 14 years and below shifted only slightly from 40% in 2014 to 35% in 2018 according to the National Food and Nutrition Commission of Zambia (NFNCZ, 2018). Some academics point to this fact as the embryo for a lot of political unrest witnessed in many countries in the recent past. The academic interest in democracy, elections and poverty in the context of MDGs and now SDGs led to the Freedom House (2019) indicating that democracy needed defending especially in times *'when even traditional champions like the USA were seen to be stumbling'*. The observation that democracy was stumbling must be viewed in the political, economic and most of all social context. Questions are being raised on how long poor governments will continue to pay for elections when the majority of citizens were losing hope in improved standard of living as a direct outcome of those elections. The Freedom House (2019) feared that the cheaper option maybe authoritarian leadership. This is why the balance on continuous expenditure on elections and service delivery will continue to be a live topic in both new and established democracies.

The CRC4D (2019) found that election costs (US dollars market price/capita) in Europe, North America, Australasia (at \$4.00) and Africa (at \$4.50) were nearly the same. However, when the disparities are considered in disposable income between Africa and these other regions, then it is appreciated that there is a heavy burden carried by Africans in paying for their elections. The comparison was based on 2018 annual income where the USA was at an average of US\$58,000 per person while for Sub Sahara African citizens it was only at US\$1500. These descriptive statistics put into context an earlier argument by James (2020) in a study of the 72 EMBs from across the world and the results showed that apart from two outliers in the survey, all the other electoral bodies' budgets were less than 1% of total public spending at parity. When disposal income was added as a variable which seemly controlled for population and country size, then it became clear that African cost of elections were quite high in relation to economic size. Even when the SSA annual earnings were compared to India at US$1,800, the election costs per capita in Africa were found to be six times higher. The CRC4D findings did not explain the burden to pay for those elections in various economic contexts, an issue that was raised by others where it was further argued that not everyone in the population was a voter (Hill, 2012; Clark, 2019). However, it may be argued that the source of the election expenditure is from the national account and elected leaders are expected to deal with national issues affecting voters and non-voters alike. The literature also found that technological innovation had not necessarily prevented rising election costs. This is similar to findings in the USA where it was pointed out that in spite of new innovations, staff costs in managing elections kept rising (Foltz, 2014). The Freedom House (2019) also concluded that high expenditure on elections did not necessarily translate into integrity of elections or a higher quality of democracy.

A study conducted by the Economic Commission for West African States (ECOWAS) in 2009 found a correlation between lack of a solid legal framework and high cost of elections. The comparative study ranked Benin (among the 15 member states) as the country with the highest election costs while Burkina Faso was found to have lowest election costs in West Africa in 2009. The study was in direct response to concerns raised by the Network of Electoral Commissioners of West Africa (NECWA), that development funds in developing countries were being channelled to elections (Hounkpe & Madior-Fall, 2009; Hounkpe & Bucyana, 2014). The study used field surveys for data collection. The study was updated in 2011 and included an analysis of the type and varying degrees of financing to EMBs. For example in Benin, the EMB budget was decreed by the cabinet in collaboration with the EMB and donors and had staff and polling staff allowances reduced after a public uproar in 2007 as they were perceived to be the highest in the region. In contrast, the Nigerian EMB was found to be well financed except the problem was found to be accountability of the funds. This raised a question of misallocation as proposed by Clark (2019) which may raise opportunity costs for investment in other sectors (Lucas, 2015; Benin, 2016; Mogues & Caceres 2018) The study encouraged financial autonomy of EMBs because in some instances politicians were found to have used insufficient funds and political instability as reasons for the postponement or even out right cancellation of elections (Chitembo et al. 2014; IDEA, 2017, 2021; Iwata, 2018). Generally, the survey cemented evidence found by Foltz (2014) in the USA, that the work of the EMBs was no longer a clerical job. It required well trained managers with strategic thinking to manage the daily functions of staff, procurement, registration and financial records as well as to manage elections and their costs whenever they occur effectively and efficiently in very political environments and much expectations from the voters.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has entrenched the use of elections as the only means for putting governments in place. The question is rather how the elections have contributed to the quality of governance and their role in delivery of economic stability, public goods and services and poverty reduction. In 2016, Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) and Electoral Commission Forums of Southern Africa (SADC-ECF) conducted a study to examine the performance of EMBs. The focus of the investigation included comparative analysis of the legal framework, the operational structure and funding among others. The case studies were done in 12 SADC countries using a field survey questionnaire on purposively selected respondents and analysis of secondary data on the topics. This case study provided in depth data on operations of the EMBs in the region especially on how the EMBs managed their last national elections. Unfortunately, there was not much data in the results covering matters relating to cost of elections and annual budgets of the EMBs.

The Electoral Commission of Ghana (2020) reported soon after the national elections in 2020 that costs per voter had reduced from US$13 dollars in the last elections to US$7.7 dollars per person. The savings were attributed to enhanced and stringent procurement measures. The procurement was 95% through open-competitive tender. Costs were still found to have reduced even when imported items were flown in due to pandemic sea disruptions and extra expenditure on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and sanitizers which were procured for over 240 thousand staff. It is such reports that have been raising academic and public interests on what budget and transparency mechanisms should be available to reduce or avoid altogether misallocations to EMBs. There seems to be a genuine concern about ever increasing costs of managing elections in poor countries. And the IDEA (2021) pointed out that these concerns must be part of a genuine public debate based on evidence while recognising that expenditure on elections was an investment. Literature has been indicating that there is apprehension on both expenditure on elections as well as campaign finance. In the case of campaign finance, concerns were raised even when the law provided for them. This is because electoral bodies were founded on the basis of enhancing the health of democracy beyond just occurrence of regular elections and change of leaders but that public expenditure must also adequately be accounted for and respond to the basic demands of voters. However, most campaign finance all over the world is beyond the reach of EMBs as it is expended through private channels. The bigger argument has also been how EMBs would be unbiased in the disbursement of campaign finance. Of concern to academics is that campaign finance should not become a new source of public expenditure abuse and raising the opportunity costs in other sectors. However, Clark (2019) also clearly pointed out that any withholding to EMBs must be based on evidence of over allocation or poor procurement procedures to ensure that there was no integrity decline in the delivery of elections. In the case of Ghana, an extra 10, 000 polling stations were added between 2016 and 2020 (ECG, 2020). The fact that nominal costs were reduced would have to be investigated using the purchasing parity based on the World Bank data sets as recommended by James (2020).

There are a lot of studies on elections in Africa except that they are mostly limited to transparency and credibility of elections or financing of campaigns of political parties and candidates. Usman (2020) discussed elections in Nigeria using the elite approach. The Nigerian EMB was credited for improvements in the 2015 elections but it was observed that there were still deep political interests wishing that the EMB did not do its job thoroughly. This was referred to as *'rigging of elections'* in the past which led to a political crisis in 1964 and again 1979. Lack of transparency and confidence in election delivery by the government was given as the main reason. Usman credited new leadership at the EMB since 2010 which was perceived to have brought confidence to the electoral process and even spent more resources on technologies to support better delivery of elections.

In similar circumstances, the Electoral Commission of South Africa (ECSA, 2019) revealed that the increase in contesting political parties increased election costs. Over 600 people stood for elections representing 48 political parties in the 2019 election. An extra 1000 people had to be trained in leadership among the political parties to reduce violent incidents and that impacted expenditure on election management.

Tubei (2017) relayed concern in the Kenyan Public over high cost of elections forcing the treasury to cut spending in critical sectors and diverting resources from others. Budgetary allocation for 2017 general election alone was found to be equivalent to US$499 million of which US$166 million dollars was described as indirect costs. The election expenditure translated into US$ 25.40 per voter for each of the 19.6 million voters making it the most expensive in the world except for guinea at US$63. However, some of the expenditure reported fell out of the core EMB functions as it included expenditure by the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IECB), the Judiciary, National Intelligence Service and Registrar of Political Parties. Funds were also allocated to election-related security operations to prevent violence in 27 out of the 47 counties. This extra expenditure on election related activities may explain the skewed results reported in the James (2020) study where only Kenya out of 72 EMBs reported an annual budget in an election year of close to 2% of national expenditure. Even though his questionnaire requested for expenditure related to EMB expenditure on national elections, the study did indicate that one of the limitations in compiling global data on cost of elections was that it was not easy to verify the information as it may include expenditure away from the core business of EMBs. Oduor-Oduku (2022) also reported that extremely high cost of elections were a platform for corrupt EMBs and skewed the electoral process against other societal needs. Empirical studies by Norris et al. (2015 & 2016) and Ohman and Lintari (2015) found a link between campaign finance and abuse of state resources. These concerns were also observed by Straaten (2021) who pointed out that about half of the US$1 billion for the 2022 Kenyan elections was targeted at campaign finance.

In Zambia, the Presidential by-election of 2015 is alleged to have cost the equivalent of US$35 million with a voter turnout of only 30% out of the eligible 5.17 million registered voters (ECZ, 2015). This translated into a cost per voter of just over US$22.61 for each of the 1,551,000 people who voted. Once all the registered voters are included this reduced to US$6.77 per voter still above the Africa average of US$4.50 (Straaten, 2019). Global statistics on Zambia have revealed that it is a country with poverty levels of over 65% while the majority of the citizens live off a dollar per day (Jesuit Theological Centre Reflections (JCTR), 2020). Zambia is also one of four countries with the highest inequality in the world (World Bank, 2020). Though the elections in Zambia are managed through an autonomous ECZ, audited annual accounts statements for presentation to Parliament were usually years behind (ECZ, 2021). Often, election costs were debated by the public and the media as a result of Parliamentary questions and answers quoted by the media especially on costs of by-elections (National Assembly, 2009-2016). The ECZ was also often behind in making annual reports, making it difficult to compile data on costs of elections except through actual requests of the data directly from the institution itself. Many publications on the elections in Zambia were limited to service delivery issues such as whether the elections had been free and fair, political party access to media, campaign finance and corruption, violence, postelection conflict resolution, voter turnout and international observers' role (Goldring & Wahman, 2016; OSISA & SADC-ECF, 2016; ZEAP, 2021).

In the UK, James and Bernal (2020) conducted a research to determine the use of Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) and its role in reducing costs of elections especially those incurred in urgent registration just before elections as well as to increase numbers of registered voters. It will be interesting to see how the research findings can be generalised to poor countries. The academic interest will also be around issues of protection of personal data since government will have to access voter data information. Cyber security against hackers is a very live matter currently that is of concern in increasing use of digital technology in the world. But of interest to this study, is the additional cost that may be added to election expenditure in the coming years as cyber security and use of technologies to deliver elections quickly, take root in low income countries. Of course, the counter argument is that scale will reduce costs over time. But studies in developed countries (Hill & Wallis, 2011: Hill, 2012) showed that areas will low population density had higher costs per voter as not all fixed costs could be absorbed by the small population.

The International IDEA Handbook on Funding Parties and Election Campaigns mentions that abuse of state resources is regarded as one of the most common challenges in election financing of politics. There was a lot of literature that identified campaign finance during elections in nations where this was legally supported by public funds. However, there was also quite a lot of literature on campaign finance from private funds and sometimes whose source was not so clear (WDF, 2018). Many studies have argued that these funds, especially those which did not seem to have much clarity in terms of the actual source posed a danger to the health of democracy and encouraged pandering to narrow interests. Some of these concerns were extended public finance geared towards campaigns without the support of proper electoral rules, stating that they also had the potential to distort intended outcomes of elections in a democracy. In the long run that too negatively impacted public policy, public expenditure and service delivery. International democratic institutions such as the IDEA, IFES, OSISA and other research organisations and academics on elections, have in the past, expressed concern on the huge inflows of cash during elections. Even though the distinction between public and private campaign financing is not always very clear in some countries and campaign finance regulations are more often than not, not able to control abuse of even public sources, the conclusion was that these funds have even a higher potential of influencing who gets elected and end up shaping the socio-economic development of the society. The concern on campaign finance does not seem to be limited to any particular region nor group of countries in the world. In recent times there have been many media debates on the impact of these funds on elections, democracy and state capture worldwide. All experts agreed that state capture through corruption and unwarranted policy and public expenditure influence raises cost of elections and also negatively impacts service delivery especially to the poor.

In a study on the workings of democracy, Wildavsky (2002) reflected that working their will through democratic procedures "perhaps people are doing and getting what they want". The study quoted Berry (1978) who observed that it was "*important to know if the forces of electoral competition can be expected to operate in some systematic way to give people what they don't want, or more specifically to give them something that would be defeated by some alternative, in a straight vote, for this would suggest that there was some kind of internal flaw of democracy..*" To date, there appears to be no suitable alternative to democratic electoral competition. However, that does not suggest democracy does not face burdens as it functions in an imperfect environment.

Moyo (2018) noted that a vote for Hilary Clinton and Donald Trump in the 2016 Presidential election cost US$21.64 and US$15.20 respectively in donated funds, nine times more compared to Emmanuel Macron's campaign in France in 2017 where legislation restricted donations to political campaigns. This data is important and highlights many concerns that unconstrained campaign funds and the political system in which money commands influence, risks politicians spending their time pandering only to the needs of their wealthy benefactors rather than the wishes of their voters. The evidence is plenty on how electoral cycles trigger manipulation of the budget and fiscal adjustment. Unregulated campaign finances also show that they have the capacity to trigger policy and public expenditure changes which may not be beneficial to the majority of the citizens.

In Latin America, Casas-Zamora and Zovatto (2015) found that unregulated campaign funds impacted political parties and candidates by how effectively they could get their campaign messages to voters. The study also indicated that unregulated campaign finance created an uneven playing field where people with economic power were influencing political parties and candidates to do their bidding when elected. This meant that political power became a mirror of economic power with the principle of one person, one vote rendered meaningless. In this case, democracy ceased to be a process for participation by the majority. The study observed that in a region with a lot of income-inequality and illicit flows from the drug business, state capture usually occurred and this had negatively impacted economic and social development. The end result was political and social volatility. Casas-Zamora and Zovatto (2015) examined the political evolution in 17 countries in Latin America from 1990 to 2010. The evidence was that there was a lot of political fragmentation in Peru and Guatemala. Institutionalised political party system was quite low in Costa Rica, Uruguay and Chile. All the countries were found to have regulatory frameworks in place banning contributions from foreign governments, contractors with government, anonymous sources and in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay there were limitations even on contribution levels. The researchers recommended the German 'unending legislation' approach in dealing with election financing regulation which focused always in to the future.

In 2014, the OECD countries adopted the OECD Strategy on Trust (Terracino & Hamada, 2014) which included a Module on 'securing fairness on policy making' whose aim was curbing policy capture by private interests. This followed the OECD Edelman Trust Barometer (2013) which found that 50% of respondents in 26 countries in the survey did not trust their government. The key factor cited for the perceived mistrust was that wrong incentives were driving policy. Trust in political parties was found to be even lower. There was established a correlation between campaign spending and performance in elections (Silver, 2013; Speck & Mancuso, 2013). However, there was no clear consensus on causality in the question on whether candidates with more money got elected purely on that basis (OECD, 2014).

In 2013, OECD governments did not allow political funding from foreign sources, state organisations, corporate donations and trade unions. While public funding was available to political parties such as access to media, questions were raised on how much that contributed to a level playing field. The study found that the majority of citizens saw fund raising for political parties and candidates as a fundamental right. However, this was highly regulated to avoid risk of undue influence and corruption. The debate continues on appropriate regulations for those close to lobbying activities who may use their platform to unduly influence policy to cater for narrow interests (OECD, 2015; OECD, 2016). This also included loans and sponsorship funds which may include hidden private funding. Seventeen of the OECD countries in 2013 banned all anonymous donations to political parties while thirteen banned them after a certain threshold. Ten countries banned all anonymous donations to candidates while fourteen countries banned them only after a certain threshold.

Setting spending limits was also found to reduce cost of elections and prevented a spending race among political parties or between candidates. On the other hand, opponents of spending limits argued that spending on political campaigns was a fundamental right under the freedom of free speech, and that any limitations had equalled a limitation on political expression (Citizens United vs. Federal Election Commission, 2010). Research had also shown that resources were always more important for challengers than incumbents. In 2013, there were no limits on campaign spending in 35% of OECD countries. Limits on both political party and candidate spending were introduced in 47% of the countries. In 12% of the OECD countries limits were only imposed on candidates and not political parties while 6% limited political parties but not candidates. For example in Austria, a political party could not spend more than 7 million Euros, in Canada it was 70% of the Canadian dollar multiplied by the number of registered voters, Portugal based limits between 150 and 12 000 minimum monthly wages depending on election types while in Greece it was based on 20% of the most recent total amount of regular public funding received. For candidates, in New Zealand a maximum of US$170, 000 was allowed for general elections and US$35 thousand for by-elections, while in Italy a candidate could spend 52, 000 Euros in addition to 0.1% of a Euro per citizen in the electoral district.

In 2016, the Economic Intelligence Unit's (EIU) Democracy Index found no full democracy in South East Asia. Four countries were classified as 'flawed' democracies, three as 'hybrid' and two others as authoritarian regimes. The Electoral Integrity Report (2017) supported by the Koffi Anan Initiative and IDEA acknowledged that between 2000 to 2016, all but 11 countries in the world held national elections. An observation made was that these democratic developments had neither been linear nor unchallenged. The failure of democracy to deliver economic and social democracy in new democracies and inequalities in older democracies were highlighted as areas of concern and that they undermined trust and support in democracy. This was seen to increase chances of both incidental and organised crime and political corruption beyond the region (IDEA, 2017).

The Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD, 2022) and the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD, 2022) defined the cost of politics away from cost of elections (public expenditure on election administration) as the cost of how much it costs to run for office and the funds needed to maintain that office. The study on West and East Africa and Eastern Europe aimed at drawing links between how funds were raised and how that impacted the election cycle (from decision to run for office at the party primary to the end of elected tenure) and electoral democracy. The focus was on the spending by individual candidates and not political parties. The study sought to contribute to the understanding on how spending decisions were made and why there was an absence of adherence to existing electoral regulations and how to better curb and monitor spending in future elections. Of particular importance the study wished to know how vertical accountability (citizens' role in holding their leaders to account) and horizontal accountability (internal checks and oversight processes) were impacted by the spending.

Huntington (1996) defined a successful democracy as one where there is equitable and open competition for votes between political parties and without harassment or restriction of opposition groups. There are artificial mechanisms that hinder this process by incumbents and parliamentarians through the abuse of state resources. This creates a vicious cycle of political corruption with power holders diverting state resources to their campaigns making the costs of elections too high for their opponents and ultimately impacting public expenditure. In a study in Ukraine, Meleshevych (2016) conducted a primary research on the cost of parliamentary politics based on semi-structured interviews with current and former members of the RADA (National Parliament). Unsuccessful candidates and subject matter experts were also included and complemented by desk-based literature review on the research topic. The questions included the historical context of campaign finance, key drivers of electoral costs during campaigns and while in office and barriers that the costs created for particular groups such as women. The findings were that the first democratic elections in 1994 were the least expensive and corrupt free election with most expenditure limited to public expenditure to hold the elections. Since then, successful candidates in a single member district spent between US$1-5 million dollars in an electoral race and the investigation found that most of these funds came from illegal sources including abuse of state resources. Citizens' contributions to political parties in Ukraine was not allowed beyond 400 minimum salaries. The study found that a single political party campaign trip to one of the 25 regions in Ukraine which included party leaders, press conference and coverage by local media cost on average US$100,000 dollars. The study established a correlation between the funds spent and those elected to the RADA. In 2015, all private campaign funds on elections were banned and all political parties were funded by the government from 2016. However, observers noted the legislative reforms did not involve wide participation especially by political parties and that this may threaten the success of the reforms in terms of adequate, timely and transparent allocations to political parties.

In Kyrgyzstan, Ibraev (2016) conducted a study under the WFD and found that in 2015 political parties paid US$74,000 dollars to the electoral body to participate in an election, a fivefold increase from previous elections. The public radio and television station commonly known as OTRK earned over US$1.25 million dollars from parties' campaign funds. When in office in Ukraine, the MPs openly provided financial support to needy people in the constituency. In 2015, these campaign funds drove election costs to US$25-80 per voter depending on the region. The Albanian Enterprise Institute found that in 2017, a quarter of MPs in each district in Albania was a business person. Trust in politics by citizens was found to be low due to lack of transparency in funding accountability and therefore reduced their incentive to engage in politics. Low voter turnout was identified as factor contributing to election costs (CORE, 2005; OECD, 2013; IDEA, 2018; WFD, 2020). In the survey political candidates claimed that only 28% of campaign funds were private with 54% of their income coming from public funds. The study indicated that candidates spent on average US$200,000 to become an MP with average cost per voter at US$18. More than 52% of women said high campaign costs made it very difficult to participate in elections. WFD (2016) found that in Northern Albania, the proportional election model secured only large parties and coalitions who had the political infrastructure to mobilise large numbers of voters. Legally, party funding from both public and private sources is shared with 30% allocated equally to all parties that won at least 1% of votes even if no seats were won. The remaining 70% is given to all parties that won seats in a proportionate manner. Corporate donations are limited to not more than 150 average salaries. The electoral code provides for election expenditure compensation of US$0.30 per voter to winning candidates. The media was found to benefit from the state advertising funds for incumbents and ran content on behalf of government Ministries, public enterprises and local authorities. An issue raised in many developing countries is whether a political party in government should use state resources for advertising its manifesto in public media and if the bill is actually paid to the public media at the end of the day. More than 40 regional and local broadcasters appeared on political platforms as major contributors to the election campaign of the ruling party in the 2014 Parliamentary elections in Northern Albania. There were many media stories of EMBs in Africa owing state media too for content related to election programs.

The WFD (2016) found that in Nigeria in 2015, leading political parties charged US$5800 to US$6,300 to candidates wishing to run for the House of Representatives. The study observed that aspiring federal MPs spent on average US$526,000 on campaigns which was five times more than the legal limit. The two leading party Presidential candidates of the APC and PDP spent three times and eight times more than legally allowed respectively on the media. Crowd renting for rallies cost as much US$8-18 dollars per person. The Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) traceable Presidential campaign expenses were found to be 77.4% above the legally allowed amount in 2015. WFD (2017) found that in Sierra Leone, critical to the winning by an MP was the financial support received from the diaspora. Participants in the survey said the most expensive part in the electoral cycle was getting adopted by a party where potential candidates said they spent on average US$400-600 dollars per week on their constituents. Even the nomination fee once adopted by a party was found to have increased ten times from 2012 to 2018. A big factor in the cost of electioneering was the pressure MPS faced to meet welfare demands of the electorates.

The NIMD (2017) found that US$46,500 was the average cost for MP candidates in Nigeria which translated into 139% of an elected MPs annual salary. The cost for election to the local council was estimated at US$65,580. The law did not provide any restriction on election spending and massive increases were noted between 2011 and 2016. The study found that the higher the number of political parties competing, the more the cost of politics. In Mali the NIMD found that it cost US$66,956 for one to be elected as an MP which translated into 252% of MPs annual salary. The main source of funding was from personal resources. Political parties required candidates to contribute an average US$18,300 to the party's election campaign. The study found that voters were more interested in what the candidate could do for them immediately to take care of their needs and not their ideas.

Kitamireke and Kisaakye (2020) under WFD and NIMD investigated the cost of politics in Uganda. A Parliamentary candidate was found to spend an average US$136, 084 to get elected, which was 132% of MPs annual salary. Personal resources were the main source of funding. Once in office many MPS spent an estimated US$112,356 to meet demands of their constituents. In the field survey, 61% of respondents said the high electioneering costs disadvantaged women, while 50% felt the situation disadvantage youth participation in politics. Of those MPs interviewed 77% said they expected to spend more if they contested another election. Kanyinga and Mboya (2020) found that it cost US$182,000 for an MP in Kenya to get to national assembly. Personal resources were found to be the main source of funding too. About US$93,600 was spent annually on electorates needs. An election to the senate, however, cost US$350,000, while the county assembly election cycle was placed at US$31,000. The survey showed that 71% of MPs felt they would have to spend more if they contested another election.

Wahman (2019) found that in Malawi it cost US$37,000 to get elected to Parliament which was 147% of the MPs annual salary. Again, personal resources were the main source of funding. The survey found that 62% of candidates spent more than they expected in the campaign. Among the respondents, 83% and 87% felt high electioneering costs disadvantaged women and youths respectively. There were 56% among the candidates in favour of a spending cap. In Mauritius, Kasenally and Ramtohul (2020) found that the spending cap of US3, 950 dollars has been unchanged since 1989 even though expenditure was found to be high. The main source of funding for candidates were personal, family and friends. There were no primaries in Mauritius with adoption to stand on a political party ticked based on nomination by the party leader of party they expressed interest in. In 2019, voters in Mauritius were generally found to charge a fee for their vote ranging from US$132-264 dollars. This amount increased when a candidate dealt with family members to about US$2,600 dollars. Some voters were only given the money once they showed proof of voting with a picture taken on their mobile phone of their vote bulletin. The costs increased with the length of the campaign period which a 1958 law provides as not less than 15 days and not more than 30 days. Most candidates said that their largest cost was maintenance of the Baz (constituency campaign centre) whose costs were as high as US$131,000 per constituency. In 2014, a political party expenditure on campaigns was estimated at US8.25 million across the 21 constituencies.

Ndamase (2020) found that since 1998 public funding to political parties was regulated but this did not cover private funding. In 2019, the Political Party Funding Act 6 of 2018 was enacted to regulate private funding. The act stipulates that parties will disclose sources of private funding above certain threshold, prohibits certain donation, and encourages parties to be more accountable to their constituencies about funding among others. The enactment was six months before the national and provincial elections in 2019 and its operationalisation received a lot of resistance from political parties, private donors and other stakeholders. The law was in response to increased Parliamentary debates between 2011 and 2017 on state capture which saw South Africa drop from 38 in 2001 to 70 in 2019 on the Transparency International Corruption Index.

The main focus of the EISA research focused on identifying observable trends in election expenditure in 2019 elections and perceptions of political parties and stakeholders on private funds regulations in South Africa. Data was collected using desktop and filed research on campaign activities, polling station visits, cost verification and key informant interviews. The major limitation was that since the law had not yet been operationalized, respondents were not keen to reveal sources and amounts of funding. Key to the findings were that some mandates of the leading political party in government were similar to government mandates and that made it difficult to distinguish usage of state resources on party activities. Some smaller parties expressed fear that regulation of private funding will disadvantage them as public funding was proportionally distributed with small parties receiving less. The study also observed that production of billboards, electronic media adverts and social media posts formed the greatest part of campaign budgets. The mobile operator MTN was found to have contributed to the budgets of all political parties for the same in 2019. The ANC had to refund a donation for Ayo Technology on the eve of the election in 2019 since the company was in court at the time for allegedly acquiring a government tender fraudulently.

In relation to the above, the EISA study recommended a review of the political party funding legislation to include consideration of possible capping on campaign expenditure so that a level playing field is provided for all players. Political commentator Professor Steven Freidman observed in 2020 that it was vital that tax payers funded political parties better considering that parties such as the ANC had confirmed that private donors were not willing to go public with their donations resulting in decreased party funding since the enactment of the new political party funding act in 2019. Friedman argued that this response by the so called donors was a clear message of private funding being more often than not an attempt by the moneyed to ensure that government served them and not the voters by turning democracy into their properties. The EISA found that though the Independent Electoral Commission funded parties proportional to their last election results accountability for these funds was not strong.

In the 2021 general election in Zambia parliamentary nomination fees were divided in four categories; male candidates at ZMK15, 000, females candidates at ZMK13, 500, youths and those with disabilities at ZMK10, 000. At Presidential level; males at ZMK95, 000; females at ZMK75, 000, youths and people with disabilities at ZMK60, 000. The Zambian Kwacha average exchange rate to the dollar in 2021 was a US$1 to ZMK15 (ECZ, 2021).

Lynch, Gadjanova and Saibu (2021) investigated the impact of social media on cost of elections in Ghana. It was found that the significance of social media in politics was far greater than internet penetration figures alone suggested. Politicians were investing heavily in the space. The study confirmed that in Ghana social media increased election costs and that wealthier politicians were better able to utilise the space. For example Ghana’s ruling New Patriotic Party hired 700 people to work on social media and were paid salaries and given phone credit. This was in addition to media teams in each constituency and other social media communicators hired by individual candidates. These cost were on top of traditional campaign costs. The study concluded that social media could reduce election costs for EMBs through voter education to encourage voter turnout and as whistle blowers for accountability in political financing. Studies are on-going on cyber security issues and additional costs for AVR and universal online voting (James & Bernal, 2020). In 2020, Zambians were able to register and verify their details online for the first time (ECZ, 2020).

From the review above, the size and composition of EMBs, polling stations and size/geography of the country, voter turnout and frequency of elections, use/absence of technology and campaign finance all add to cost of elections. These costs also act as barriers to participation of women and youths in politics which can impact decision and policy making. Even though campaign finance is not public expenditure in many countries, it may still be able to impact public expenditure through state capture by party donors, abuse of state resources and the general health of liquidity in the economy which may derail development plans and voter expectations.

In a survey of 72 EMBs from Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas, 18% of respondents had a budget below US$1 million dollars, another 18% between US$1-US$10 million dollars, 39% were in US$10-US$99 million dollars while 24% had budgets above US$100 million. In 70% of the EMBs, there were found to be differences in expenditure in election and non-election years. All the EMBs in the survey except for one country, had budgets below 1% of national budgets (James, 2020)

The debate has continued to accelerate on why developing countries have not achieved the anticipated development forty years after the democracy wave despite the many elections (Olcer & Ebeke, 2013; Friss-Hansen, 2014; Moyo, 2018; World Bank, 2020; Mazzucato, 2020). A number of studies have continued to offer new explanations for this state of affairs. These studies linked fiscal policy to political influence whenever elections occurred which inevitably is when election expenditure occurred. Empirical evidence of this is mixed but overall there is evidence that electoral cycles influence budgetary allocations and expenditure decisions, in favour of incumbents, with possibilities of negative impacts economic stability (Deolalikar & Jha, 2015; Benin, 2019).

Mukwena (2014) reported electoral impacts in the 2001 general election in Zambia whose date was kept a secret for months by the then President. Consequently, this prompted a constitutional review which set the date of national elections as the second Thursday in August after every five years. The effect of the delay in the election date announcement (finally set in the rain season) was viewed as having increased administrative and logistical costs for the ECZ as well as campaign finance in one of the longest campaign periods in Zambia. Extremely low voter turnout also meant a waste of resources on voter registration. This may have been a class case of the use of election date to manipulate the budget for re-election. This also ties with data on increased agriculture subsidy expenditure that year (Chilunga & Mulundika, 2016).

Latest studies by Bobbo and Bates (2022) revealed the existence of political impacts in SSA in the lead to and during elections. These electoral impacts were towards the current account and resulted in increased deficits and lower taxes. The research analysed data between 1990 and 2015 and identified that the fight against corruption was a mitigating factor against electoral impacts. Ethnicity was found to be a contributing factor to the size of PBCs.

Ebeke and Olcer (2013) reported that whenever elections occurred in low income countries, there was a macroeconomic cost incurred. However, the study did not provide further details on the magnitude by which this changed in election and non-election years. The study focused on electoral impacts on fiscal variables during and after elections. Dynamic equation analysis was applied to public expenditure IMF data from 65 countries. The investigation found evidence of fiscal volatility in elections years lasting up to two years after elections. It concluded that electoral fiscal adjustment led to capital investment being largely sacrificed.

Brender and Drazen (2005) found existence of electoral cycles in their research and concluded that these were a phenomenon of democracies with regular competitive elections because there was no incentive for the same in non-democratic nations. They also initially concluded that these budget manipulations, triggered by the occurrence of elections, were also limited to new democracies in developing nations. These arguments were based on a study of 74 countries, both developed and less developed countries, from 1960 to 2003. However, in a follow up study in 2013, it was found that electoral cycles exited in all democracies. Additionally, in the 72 countries in the survey, the change of leadership led to budget composition changes for almost two years after election. In another study of four mayoral elections in Columbia, Drazen & Eslava (2005) found that politicians avoided big deficit punishment from voters by altering budget composition and not the aggregate size of the budget. It was observed that between 1992 and 2000, local expenditure targeted areas more likely to get votes. Rationality of voters was given as reason for re-election of incumbents as long as targeted expenditure signalled competence in politicians.

In another study, Keefer & Khemani (2005) also observed that even in established democracies politicians often have incentives to divert resources to transfers that benefit a few at the expense of many. Using secondary data it was revealed that inadequate information about the true performance of politicians, identity based voting and lack of credibility in campaign promises negatively impacted service delivery. This was also confirmed in a study of the EU and OECD countries by Cans and Wrone (2002) and Ethyvolous (2012). In similar studies Keefer and Khemani (2005) and Mogues and Rosario (2016) also found that special interest groups may have a lot of electoral capital which they may use to compel elected officials to consider targeted investments that may not be so beneficial for the majority of citizens.

The literature analysis on election trends was quite wide. Some studies were an investigation on funding trends to electoral bodies while others found evidence of ever rising cost of elections. However, the majority of the studies were based on electoral cycle shifts in public expenditure but not specifically how expenditure on elections also changed.

2.6 Meeting Agriculture Budget Targets

Estimates of population growth indicate that food production will have to increase by 60% by 2050 to meet expected global demand for food, fibre and fuel (UN, 2015). One of the regions with the potential for this extra food production is said to be the SSA countries. However, growth in agriculture production and productivity in the region is still being hampered by policy and budget implementation bottlenecks. The FAO (2021) found that on average the countries analysed in the study between 2004 and 2018 had a 79% rate in budget execution on food and agriculture. The reasons for the poor releases included over reliance on donor funded projects, misalignment between the release of funds and the seasonal nature of the agriculture sector and the nature of some expenditures being difficult to plan. The slow and late releases were found to influence low and decreasing allocations and actual expenditure over time in agriculture in countries examined by FAO. For example, in Burundi between 2012 and 2014 and in Senegal between 2012 and 2018 the government allocated more than 10% to CAADP but that was not reflected in the actual expenditure.

The inherent seasonality of agriculture also makes budget execution rates in agriculture lower and more variable than in other sectors. This means that for certain investments to be successful the right amount of funding needs to be released at the right time. For example in Uganda, the National Agriculture Advisory Services (NAADS) received four equal tranches for release for extension services each quarter of the year. However, this did not reflect needs on the ground as the need for releases peaked only in the first and third quarter of the year when crops had to be planed (World Bank, 2010). Execution of the agriculture budget was also impacted by the level of staff expenditures which a World Bank review between 2005 and 2014 found to be in the range of 6-53% in Africa. Mink (2016) found salaries as a composition of the agriculture budget to be lower than 10% in Senegal and Uganda, 10-15% in Burkina Faso and 20-30% in Ghana and Rwanda.

Further, The FAO (2021) found that there were low releases to agriculture in countries were agriculture services had been decentralised. These findings were similar to studies by Poulton (2014) who described a *'weak democratic'* push by locals to get support for more expenditure on agriculture in Africa. Conceptually, increasing the proximity of policy makers to their beneficiaries through political and fiscal decentralisation was expected to lead to better service delivery (Bardhan, 2002; Fismann & Gatti, 2002; Hobdari et al., 2018). However, there were studies to show funds in agriculture being diverted to cover local government activities away from services related to agriculture (Anson & Mogues, 2016; Resnick, 2018). The evidence in the literature also revealed that spending is higher per capita where poverty is higher as poor people may be viewed as an investment for poverty reduction. Granado, Martinez-Vasquez and Mcnab (2016) found that higher levels of decentralisation were more associated with higher expenditure in education and health and not agriculture service delivery confirming the JICA (2008) study in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. FAO (2021) found that Ethiopia had the highest spending at subnational level at 50% of total agriculture expenditure between 2016 and 2017 followed by Mozambique with 36% from 2009 to 2017. Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania were found to have spent only 30% at subnational levels. Mink (2016) observed that more often than not, the fiscal decentralisation system is driven by politics and administrative considerations away from agriculture-specific concerns. In Ethiopia and Kenya there were no conditions by subnational entities for fiscal transfers. In contrast, Mozambique, Uganda and Tanzania applied conditions to most of the transfers (Hobdari et al., 2018). In Ghana, while the constitution provides for fiscal decentralisation the process was found to have many legislative bottlenecks and budget reforms, which undermined the subnational entities autonomy.

Mogues and Caceres (2018) found that while the aggregate national budget variations were minor in Mozambique, public expenditure on agriculture varied quite significantly in the fiscal year. In particular, upward pronounced as well as downward adjustments were made to the agriculture budget cycle from the initial budget, revised budget and the actual expenditure. Of note was the agriculture budget execution rate which ranged from 62% to 76%. Lawson (2016) pointed out that the absence of clear and strict rules regarding budget reallocations reduced credibility of the institutional budget. The researchers noted that while agriculture and rural development expenditure was a priority in Mozambique during the investigation period, allocated funds did not all sit in the ministry responsible for agriculture and rural development. Some funds were allocated through the office of the Vice President and local government. At local level, classification of agriculture related funds were found to be blared into general services, which made it difficult to ascertain expenditure on agriculture related activities at district level. In this case, the priority classification of agriculture expenditure did not seem to be well captured to easily distinguish it as agriculture allocations and expenditures. The study found that there were major increases in agriculture allocations especially between 2011 and 2012 with one classification up by 13, 000%. This skewedness raised eyebrows on weather this increase was actually genuine or was a mere reclassification of certain services to boost levels of aggregate expenditure on the agriculture budget line so as to be seen to be meeting CAADP target as was found by Benin (2019) in the case of Ghana

In Uganda the largest share of the agriculture budget was spent on activities at local level (Kakembo, 2013). The share increased from 55% in 2007/8 to 59% in 2009/10 and by 2011/12 this was at 53%. The increases were due to the implementation of the National Agriculture Advisory Services (NAADS) program at local government level. This agrees with the FAO (2021) that Uganda had the highest R&D budget (0.7%) among the 13 countries analysed for agriculture expenditure trends. However, Kakembo (2013) observed that while the NAADS was managed at local level, fiscal transfers were conditional on programs from the Central Government through the agriculture Ministry and the NAADS secretariat whose administrative costs were observed to have increased very quickly especially in 2011/12. This study used secondary budget data from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2012). Aggregate expenditure on agriculture was observed to be lower often than that approved in the initial budget in most fiscal years, and agrees with the findings by Mogues et al., (2018) in Mozambique. By 2011, the global expenditure on agriculture and food R&D was merely 5% of world-wide investment in all forms of R&D (Pardey, Andrade & Liebenberg, 2016). This agrees with a study of 31 high income nations where the average national expenditure on agriculture R&D was found to have dropped from 9% from 1981-85, to 5.5% from 2009 to 2013 (Heisey & Fuglie, 2018).

2.7 Public Expenditure, Elections and Agriculture Service Delivery

There are a number of studies linking electoral impacts to public expenditure in agriculture (De Haan & Klomp, 2013; Poulton, 2014; Mogues & Erman, 2016). The investigations found evidence that electoral impacts were stronger on the current account in most cases. In countries with more voters in the agriculture sector, this may explain why more SSA governments were found to spend more on visible expenditure in agriculture, mostly salaries, wages, production and consumer subsidies.

In India, Cole (2008) found that government bank lending in agriculture tracks electoral cycles, with credit increasing by 5-10% in election years. The data was from the reserve bank of India from 1992 to 1999 for 412 districts in 19 states. The researcher used time series and cross sectional data and applied the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) for results. The study confirmed that this targeting did not occur in non-election years nor by private banks. It was concluded that these electoral impact credits negatively impacted repayment and the boom in credit did not measurably affect agriculture output.

Mogues and Rosario (2016) examined agriculture budgeting against the CAADP framework in Mozambique. Secondary data on expenditure trends against set policy priorities was analysed using a mixed methods approach. The study established that during election years expenditure increased in areas which were not traditional supporters of the incumbents and on projects with a short turn-around time. It was concluded that government, political parties and other institutions are not monolithic but are influenced by other interests within these institutions, which may seem coherent and drive what gets funded in agriculture. In another study, De Haan and Klomp (2013) analysed 70 democratic countries and determined that expenditure on agriculture increased before elections especially under a conservative government. It was observed that in theory, there should be more expenditure in agriculture in countries where majority voters are the rural poor.

In a case study on six African countries; Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Malawi, Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania. Poulton (2014), similarly established that in theory, democracy should encourage pro-poor agriculture policies as the majority voters remain rural and poor. Results showed that democratic pressure for pro-poor agriculture policies remained weak which may help explain the limited delivery on CAADP. It was also noted that there could be other exogenous factors that could positively influence agriculture investment as desire for re-election by incumbents. This was a comparative case study on agriculture expenditure.

In a related study in Uganda, Joughin and Kjaer (2015) found that political intervention in the agriculture sector was used for patronage and that competitive elections encouraged this patronage. Occurrence of elections was determined to justify expenditure on narrower interests as reward for political patronage. This finding agreed with opportunistic expenditure used for electoral influence as found by Vergne (2011) and Mogues and Rosario (2016). In fact, the researchers argued that regular elections encouraged further incumbency and justified long serving leadership even if they were not delivering on long term economic goals but as long as short term gains were made that impacted the majority voters. The Ideas (2018) and Moyo (2018) pointed out to voters being complicity by wanting immediate gratification, leading to large electoral impacts on public expenditure in agriculture. Unlike Vergne (2011) who argued that elections may weed out incompetent politicians, in the case of Uganda, Joughin and Kjaer (2015) concluded that elections gave credence to an almost dictatorial leadership that knew how to respond to groups with much electoral capital during elections. Our observation was that studies that linked election cycles, public expenditure and elections were limited to observance of fiscal variables and the behaviour of public expenditure in the short term. The studies did review expenditure shifts in agriculture coinciding with electoral cycles but the analysis did not account for actual expenditure on elections and how that related to agriculture expenditure levels and compositions. While Balamatsias (2018) found that democracy led to increased public expenditure, FAO (2021) raised an important question which was: what is the money spent on and how effective was it in reducing poverty in agriculture in rural areas of Africa?

Similar investigations in Zambia by Mason et.al (2011) found that the input subsidy was targeted at constituencies where the party in office had won elections. Secondary data was reviewed to examine the impact of the subsidy in agriculture service delivery. The study concluded that the FRA activities between 2003 and 2008 raised the mean maize price by 19%, and reduced price volatility by 36%. IAPRI (2015) also observed that the FRA plays a welfare role to ensure food security which is beneficial for a government to remain in office. The study found evidence that between 2003 and 2014, the nominal floor price for maize and quantities purchased spiked during election years. Mulungu and Chilundika (2016) investigated the output subsidy, which was crop procurement by the government and found that government pricing of the staple cereal, maize, was based on political considerations, purchase price and quantities produced. The influencing variable for the price was production and the consequential surplus. The study analysed the output subsidy before, during and after elections and concluded that a one percent increase in expected sales leads to a 0.5% increase in government procurement prices and a 1.7% increase in quantities purchased. In election years the government bought 1.5% more maize. The evidence seems to point to the fact that change of leadership had no impact on this trend. Since 2000, national maize consumption increased from 1.2 million tonnes to 2.7 million tonnes in 2015. Correlational analysis was used on secondary data.

2.8 Literature Discussion

The literature reviewed herein focused on studies on the variables; expenditure on elections and expenditure on agriculture service delivery. Firstly, the literature noted that public expenditure was a critical tool for economic growth, development and poverty reduction especially in developing countries. The literature also noted that sufficient expenditure on election delivery was an important cornerstone for good governance. In fact, the IDEA (2021) proposed that adequate public expenditure on election management must be defended by all as the alternative would be instability. The question on how electoral democracy and its costs contributed to the wellbeing of the majority in society was raised (Clark, 2019) but unfortunately, there was no robust evidence demonstrating the link with improved standards of living in African countries.

The main argument was that expenditure on elections was an investment in the administration and organisation of elections representing electoral governance. On the other hand, it was an investment in democratic stability representing good governance. The aim of both investments was to result in the wellbeing of the majority of the citizens in a democratic society. This was based on signalling theory which explains that voters by themselves would reveal preferential public expenditure. At the purest level this was the quickest way to attain development in the Weberian theory as alluded to in the literature review.

The evidence to the above was not very straight forward. Freedom House (2019) reported that regular elections alone were not sufficient to guarantee the quality of democracy. Clark (2019) also stated that large expenditure on elections was not equivalent to credible service delivery in elections. Deolalikar and Jha (2015) further observed that still electoral competition negatively impacted service delivery. In Pakistan, Khan (2021) did not find credible evidence that electoral and fiscal decentralisation significantly contributed to efficient service delivery either.

However, IIDEA (2017) cautioned against elections being viewed as a public expenditure based on voters as consumers and EMBs as merely providers of a service. It described cost of elections as a necessary investment (not an expense) which funded a central governing activity that ensured that 62% of the world population in democratic countries with regular elections continued to enjoy popular control over public decision making. The return on the election investment, according to this publication, could be measured through social stability. The logic was that elections were an avenue for replacement of unpopular and incompetent leaders thereby acting as a trade-off for peace against conflict (Lopez-Pintor & Fischer, 2005). FAO (2021) provided evidence that the majority of voters in African democratic countries were threatened by food insecurity. The World Bank Statistics (2021) on

Zambia revealed that since 1991 when the country returned to multi-party democracy and adopted a more liberal economic approach, it had become one of the countries with the highest inequality in the world recording poverty levels at over 65%, reaching 80% in rural areas.

This link between election expenditure as an investment in view of good governance falls short of linking election expenditure to commensurate service delivery, especially that targeted at the most vulnerable who are mostly in agriculture in Zambia. Recent studies on good governance indicators by Transparency International have revealed that many democratic countries across the globe, including in established democracies like the USA were declining. Observers have attributed this to extremely competitive partisan politics in the budget process and public expenditure allocations which has led to a growing socio-economic inequality (Moyo, 2018).

Additionally, the literature reviewed herein had a number of studies on the cost of politics or campaign finance and its impact on election integrity and service delivery. An indirect link was made between campaign finance and abuse of state resources thereby impacting general public expenditure (Hounkpe & Bucyana, 2014; Norris and Fennis, 2015; Ohman and Lintari, 2015; Kanyinga and Mboya, 2021; Ndamase, 2020). The studies did not demonstrate the levels of that abuse and its impact on public expenditure especially in relation to expenditure in agriculture and poverty reduction. It should be noted that there was an argument that the high levels of campaign finance in Africa is as a result of huge gaps in access to basic services (D'Ubino, 2021).

Further, the literature review illuminated an increase in expenditure on election administration in new democracies. One of the reasons for this was found to be the establishment of electoral organisations, mostly autonomous and permanent institutions, which managed elections (Lopez-Pintor and Fischer, 2005; James, 2020). There was also evidence that election costs were initially quite high in post conflict countries. There was no evidence detailing how this increased expenditure on election management bodies triggered any possible budget trade-offs, if at all, and by what magnitude, especially when election and non-election years were considered. Furthermore, it would have also been important to know how the trade-offs in the budgets, whenever election costs went up, impacted the actual composition of public expenditure on various agriculture service delivery variables. Mogues (2012) observed that public expenditure allocations were a result of tactical interactions among various public actors advancing their own interests, directed by the institutional setting in which they occurred. There were a number of other studies related to quantification of the behaviour of politicians as they budgeted and spent funds during electoral cycles. However, there was very limited data on understanding the value chain, so to speak, in terms of the intended outcome of expenditure on elections and voting, versus improved standards of living and poverty reduction. A quantitative capture of the relationship among the variables of interest was the intended goal of this research.

In Zambia, Chansa et al. (2019) revealed that while expenditure tracking did assist in monitoring expenditure in the health sector, it was not enough to guarantee proper budget execution. Enhanced transparency such as public expenditure publication in the media was found to help in the LAC countries. Clark (2019) and Montjoy (2010) also called for more transparency on election expenditure and recommended a global study on drivers of election costs. There were other studies that however showed that without compulsory voting laws, rising election costs may be difficult to manage and would lead to constant misallocations. These studies also observed that many voters registered to vote but never turned up on the voting day because they were not engaged on any election issue or because the environment made it difficult for them to visit the polling station on voting day (Hill, 2015; Moyo, 2018). It was argued that this fact alone could influence election outcome and ultimately impact fiscal policy, service delivery and the general governance environment. Further, Kosec and Wantchekon (2018) also observed that information alone was not enough for citizens to take action and make leaders accountable in terms of public expenditure on nationally agreed priorities. The so called second generation, social contract between elected leaders and voters to guarantee government accountability, in view of this research, was limited by the failure to also engage citizens on the actual monetary cost of their vote and what is sacrificed for that value.

Studies on aggregate budget composition lacked functional analysis of expenditure on elections and agriculture and how the two related especially in election years. There was substantial data on trends in agriculture expenditure against targets such as the CAADP but there was no evidence of robust research and comparisons of election expenditure within or across countries.

A lot of studies on decentralisation encouraged election management devolvement to local levels too. On other hand, the evidence was that elections were mostly organised centrally with expenditure through the budget allocation to the national election body. In the UK and USA, local elections were funded by the local government even though sometimes grants were advanced to authorities with financial challenges. There was evidence too that at each local government election in the UK (James and Jervier, 2012) costs were found to have increased. The rising cost of elections in Africa was blamed for increased opportunity costs of public expenditure on other equally important expenditures and that the failure to explain the drivers of these costs was a threat to democracy itself (Lucas, 2015; Hounkpe et al. 2009, 2016; Clark, 2019; Straaten, 2019; James, 2020).

The evidence across the board was that decentralisation in agriculture was found to reduce expenditure in the sector (Glendenning & Babu, 2011; FAO, 2021). This could be due to the perceived confusion between the Central and Local government on which wing of government carried the responsibility for the agricultural development. This was even though in most studies the most decentralised sectors were agriculture, education and health. In contrast education and health always seemed to perform better. The paradox is that most agriculture in developing countries occurs in rural areas. These are the areas which require much attention in extension services for increased productivity. But most extension services were not treated as a critical component of agriculture transformation. The evidence for this was found in the expenditure composition and levels on R&D (Mink, 2016; FAO, 2021).

While the above studies are important, they do not sufficiently cover the expenditure relationship between two critical components of political economy especially in a democracy where the majority are rural poor like in Zambia. Political economy is the scale with which the functionality of good governance and wellbeing of the society can be measured. This is an aspect which seemed to be missing in the literature reviewed herein. The review of literature on cost of elections found that there were independent studies and not related to expenditure in other sectors. And even when election cost was investigated to emphasise opportunity cost, there were no detailed data on other expenditures to demonstrate the relationship with election expenditure. The literature on election management and on cost of elections generally agreed that global data was not sufficient on drivers of election costs. These studies recommended that more studies needed to be done to investigation ways to optimally fund elections with compromising delivery and at the same time without creating high budget trade-offs on other equally important expenditures.

Many International Organisations such as the World Bank, FAO and the AU all noted the high level of poverty in Africa. Agriculture on which the majority of the African citizens are dependent upon was identified as the key to rural transformation in Africa but they all bemoaned the low levels of public expenditure in the sector. The question that constantly arose during the literature review and begged an answer was whether expenditure on electoral bodies and in particular election expenditure had contributed to the low expenditure levels and slow pace of service delivery in the agriculture sector in

Africa and in Zambia in particular. This literature review was undertaken to identify studies that had investigated the relationship between expenditure levels on election management and expenditure on specific agricultural variables over time and what the outcomes were.

The review revealed that the way in which the politics, access rights and accountability happens is a critical determinant in service delivery success regarding expenditure on both elections and agriculture service delivery. Balamatsias (2018) concluded that though democracy leads to higher expenditure service delivery was better guaranteed in the more, wealthier nations. The study found that democracy had no effect on spending levels in the non-OECD sample.

The composition of expenditure on both elections and agriculture service delivery also raised important questions. The studies on cost of elections showed that even when technology had been used to reduce registration and voting costs, the bulk of the public expenditure on elections was related to staff payments especially in election years. There were also many instances when the difference between budget allocation and actual expenditure on elections was above 20% and in some cases this large variation occurred even in non-election years (Clark, 2019; EU, 2020; UK, 2020). This reflected lack of attention to opportunity costs and their long term impact on the budget process. In fact studies on the budget process in Africa by Africa Growth Initiative (Cole, 2021) provided evidence that many countries use the immediate past year estimates as the baseline for the current year budget. This risked budgeting based on wrong assumptions which may end up being the tradition and could over time, become a threat to the economy and ultimately democracy itself.

The budget composition and expenditure trends were also expected to be influenced by election signals. For example, in the literature reviewed herein, there were observations that it would be expected in poor agrarian countries that the budget would focus on increased spending on agriculture (Poulton, 2014; Anson & Mogues, 2016). However, the evidence showed that many African countries spent on average 6% of total spending on food and agriculture. In a study of 72 electoral bodies (James, 2020) the evidence showed that most countries spent less than 1% of public expenditure on management of elections. However, the study was limited to national EMBs and did not consider, expenditure on other election related activities through the police and army in some cases, use of state resources by incumbents, election related court cases, etc. The argument though was that in true values, 1% of public spending on elections is quite high even though it may only occur periodically when compared to expenditure on service delivery in agriculture. The literature showed examples of politically induced by-elections causing extra expenditure.

The situation is even more urgent when considered that during the last election in Zambia, only 7.2 million people, in a population of 18 million registered to vote in the 2021 general elections only 3.6 million actually turned up to vote. It is therefore pertinent for the study to establish this scenario impacted public expenditure in agriculture and macroeconomic stability. It may be argued that total expenditure on agriculture may also not be totally reflected by the agriculture budget as the case of Uganda (Kakembo, 2018) where some agriculture funds were allocated to the Ministry of local government and Ministry of Water Development. There were also direct releases by Donors to agriculture related projects (FAO, 2021). However, what came out prominent is that while the agriculture public expenditure levels have been erratic and in some countries even declining, the budgets for EMBs and costs of elections have been increasing at each election in a number of countries (Mohr et al, 2018; Mohr et al., 2018; Clark, 2019, 2020). The argument that election costs (expenditure when elections occur as the investment in peace) are not every day expenditures but targeted in the budget for a very specific service delivery in a democratic nation cannot hold in the face of high poverty levels and inequality. In fact, it would be expected that the same argument then may also be used to support targeted public expenditure in agriculture on R&D, viewed as the most effective way to increase productivity and agricultural growth, thereby increasing incomes and reducing poverty (buying peace). However, studies reviewed showed that even in the wealthy countries, R&D investment was on average 5%, way below the recommended 10%. This is despite government spending increasing globally from 29% in 2000 to 33% in 2019. In low income countries this increase has been driven by higher wages, social benefits and public investments. In Africa, investment in R&D was shown to be below 1% (FAO, 2021). Zouhar et al. (2021) and Clements et al. (2014, 2015) recommended reduction of non-productive subsidies that do not target the poor very well. In countries where the majority live in rural areas with poverty levels as high as 80%, like Zambia, it may be considered difficult to miss the targets in terms of subsidy beneficiaries. This therefore brings into perspective the necessity of a study on public expenditure on the functionality of election management and agriculture service delivery in providing profound understanding of the impact of sector associated expenditure against policy goals as a monitoring tool for budget execution. Especially that the review of literature herein did not find studies on how election expenditure levels related directly to expenditure levels in agriculture.

Most of the studies related to quantification of the behaviour of politicians as they budgeted and spent during electoral cycles. However, there was very limited data on understanding the value chain so to speak in terms of the intended outcome of expenditure on elections and voting versus good governance and poverty reduction. A quantitative capture of this among the variables of interest in this research was not clearly demonstrated in the literature.

2.9 Knowledge Gap

There was a general knowledge gap in the literature regarding long run data on functionality expenditure analysis on the variables of interest, public expenditure on elections and agriculture service delivery expenditure. The majority of studies on public expenditure were limited to budget and expenditure policies. Their evaluations were also based on individual sectors such as education, health, and agriculture. Empirical studies on importance of adequate expenditure levels in agriculture did not extend to comparisons with expenditure levels in other sectors to determine what impact that had on the sectors and the aggregate budget (Anson & Mogues, 2016; Mogues & Erman, 2016).

2.9.1 Evidence Gap

The objective of this study was to analyse expenditure shifts along the electoral cycle on public expenditure at the ECZ and its impact on agriculture service delivery components expenditure. The aim was to determine evidence of fiscal volatility induced by these shifts in elections and non-election years. We did not find any evidence of such analyses in the literature review. There was also no evidence of how expenditure shifts impacted service delivery components expenditure as an aggregate and as individual expenditure lines and impact on growth.

2.9.2 Methodological Gap

In the past many studies have linked electoral cycles and agriculture. Regression was the most common tool to compute fiscal variables and how they behaved before, during and after elections. In many of the studies, election year was used as a dummy variable to trace aggregate budget and allocation changes (Vergne, 2011: Ebeke & Olcer 2013; & Quaicoe, 2021) using the political budget cycle theory. In the last two decades the PBC used various predicators such as leadership, government type, level of economy, share of informed voters to analyse impact on fiscal variables along the electoral cycle. However, actual election expenditure was not considered as a possible cause of volatility even though accepted as a macroeconomic cost.

2.9.3 Theoretical Gap

We found no theoretical lens to explain how expectations on the burden placed on commensurate functioning of democracy between investments in electoral governance on one hand and expenditure on public goods and service impacting the majority in society.

2.9.4 Election Cost Data Gap

There were only two land mark studies which attempted to determine global costs of elections (Lopez-Pintor & Fischer, 2005; James, 2020). Mohr et al. (2018) analysed costs of local government elections in twenty six states in the USA. Clark (2019) bemoaned the lack of clear data on cost of elections and evidence on how electoral governance contributed to the wellbeing of the majority in society. This was a critical gap in the literature which also motivated this study especially in a country which had five presidential elections in one decade.

2.9.5 Literature Map

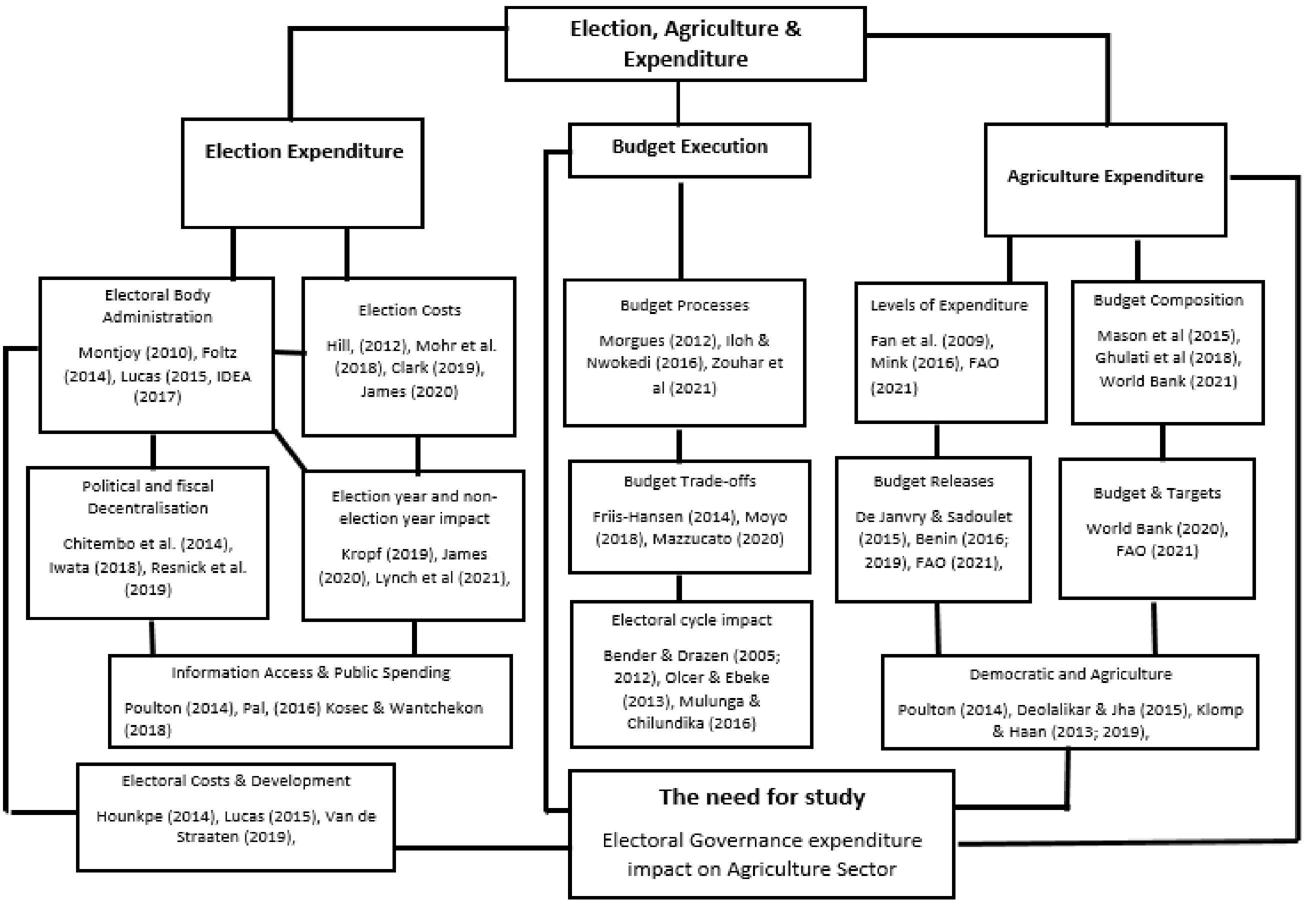

Figure 1: Literature Map

Source: Author's Construct, 2023

2.9.6 Chapter Summary

The above chapter reviewed various literature in relation to the expenditure relationship between elections and agriculture service delivery. In view of this, it cannot be emphasised that the knowledge gap was identified which brought to light the need for the current study.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

The main concepts in this research were: expenditure at the ECZ as the independent variable and expenditure on agriculture service delivery components as the dependent variable observed over time. The assumption was ECZ expenditure may have resulted in significant shifts in public expenditure. One of these shifts may have been steep increases in election expenditure in election years which may have led to fiscal volatility. These shocks may have impacted agriculture service delivery expenditure negatively in both the short and long runs. Election year was used as a dummy variable to represent the year of the national election. All other years, whether elections occurred such as by-election were referred to as non-election years.

The Political Budget Cycle (PBC) theory seems to have taken root as an explanation for development challenges in newly democratised developing countries (Rogoff and Sibert, 1988, 1990; Block, 2002, Shi and Svensson, 2003, 2006; Brender and Drazen, 2005, 2013; Vergne, 2011; Ebeke and Olcer, 2013; De Haan & Klomp, 2013; De Haan and Pin, 2020). The theory was analysed to determine its suitability for our study. We did consider that expenditure on any government programme was an opportunity cost on expenditure on another program. However, the aim of this study was to determine a relational trend and its' significance over the study period. In that case opportunity costs was only referenced to buttress the point on how commensurate was election expenditure in view of its signalling potential for critical service delivery.

3.1 Political Budget Cycle Theory

Many studies using the PBC theory examined secondary public expenditure data to explain electoral cycle impacts on fiscal variables. Shi and Svensson (2003) further noted that the most common empirical estimation in the initial studies had been parametric ordinary regression model as the test for electoral budget impacts on a panel of countries.

Rogoff and Sibert (1988) theorised electoral impacts based on asymmetric information theory. The model was based on unequal or lopsided information in a transaction between two parties. In this model, it was assumed that each incumbent and opponent political candidate had a competence level of high or low but only known to that politician. It was also assumed that voters made rational expectations based on observable current fiscal outcomes. To add to the adverse selection by voters, Rogoff (1990) further illustrated that the rational politicians signalled their competence by moving from capital investments to creating a *'boom'* just before elections through the current account.

Other writers observed that the signalling model was too presumptuous in arguing for competent politicians distorting the economy to create a pre-election *boom* and being the only ones who got re-elected. It was argued that the evidence had been very scanty (Shi & Svensson, 2006). A model was added based on moral hazard which observed that competence by politicians seeking re-election could not be easily observed by the electorate. Such hidden efforts may include clever accounting, secret borrowing, and lack of easy access to expenditure details, whose effect may be delayed until after elections and thereby contributing to voters perception of government competence (Persson and Tabellini, 2002; Shi and Svensson, 2003). The distinction with the adverse selection model above is that in the moral hazard scenario all governments were found to borrow excessively and incurred large deficits before elections. Shi and Svensson (2003) further noted that the most common empirical estimation initial studies had been parametric ordinary regression model as the test for electoral budget impacts on a panel of countries. However, the main debate was on the applicability of the model in different situations and where certain variables prolonged (Arellano and Bond, 1991). Earliest models on political budget cycles were done in the USA where Tufte (1978) found evidence of pre electoral opportunistic fiscal manipulation on government transfers.

As part of the modelling, various authors added possible conditions which allowed for the occurrence and size of the PBCs. Gonzalez (2002) noted that electoral cycles are dependent on the cost of removing a politician from office which he described as the *degree of democracy.* The costlier it was for voters to know the competence of the politician, the bigger the PBC. It was also observed that PBCs decreased where transparency increased. Shi and Svensson (2002) extended the moral hazard model by adding the institutional context in which electorate cycles occurred and how that impacted the size of the PBC. The model identified accrued private benefits by politicians and number of informed voters as the main drivers of PBCs.

Electoral rules and form of government were also found to influence PBCs. Persson and Tabellin (2002) examined a data set of 60 democratic economies from 1961 to 1998. Fixed estimates suggested that countries with majoritarian elections cut spending during elections as opposed to proportionate elections where welfare spending increased. The study confirmed that pre-election tax cuts was common in both presidential and parliamentary governments. The evidence also showed that postelection spending cuts and tax increases were prevalent under presidential governments. Shi and Svensson (2003) provided another angle, based on conditions viewed as encouraging PBCs. They investigated the causal relationship between the occurrence of elections and the large election year fiscal deficits. It was then confirmed that election cycles in countries with predetermined election cycles were large and that these were magnified in developing countries. Brender and Drazen (2003, 2005) pointed out that to be firm, empirical studies on the PBC needed to be based on democratic countries only as the source of electoral impacts were incumbents' efforts at re-election.

Vergne (2011) shifted from the traditional models of PBC in developing countries which had mostly focussed on the aggregate impact to the overall changes in the composition of public spending. There was evidence that election occurrence impacted allocation of public expenditure. The spending also shifted to visible current account expenditure such as wages and salaries. The research also concluded that these electoral cycles endured even when countries became more experienced at democracy. Vergne (2006, 2009, & 2011) noted that electoral impacts included targeted expenditure aimed at voter groups perceived to have much influence on other voters. Capital investments with much visibility were also considered for targeting groups with much electoral capital.

Haan and Klomp (2013) concluded that conditions for the strength of the PBC included the institutional quality, democracy levels, electoral rules and form of government, transparency in the political process, checks and balances and fiscal rules. While the other conditions had already been proposed by other writers, most models of PBCs were based on the presence or absence of fiscal rules to describe the political-economic state in what were once new democracies but have now become established after multiple national elections. This was especially the case in countries which attained democracy in the 1990s and went through the IMF-SAP

Klomp and Haan (2013) investigated PBCs in the agriculture sector and found that, it was also impacted by the government ideology. A panel of 70 democratic nations was examined between 1975 and 2009. Evidence found was that support for agriculture increased prior to elections and right wing governments redistributed more income to the sector than left wings. However, left wing government were found to spend more on social welfare in election years. In developed nations, partisan politics were more intense under the majoritarian electoral system and in developing countries under the proportional system.

Drazen and Brender (2011) also theorised on whether PBCs were only a pre- election phenomenon or did elections also trigger post-election impacts. The main aim of the study was to examine the relationship between timing of elections, elections and new leadership. The study empirically examined the effect of leadership changes on expenditure using a compiled data of 71 democracies from 1972 to 2009. It was observed that there were a lot of budget changes usually in the two years after elections, lasting even up to four years with change of leadership. This was attributed to the learning period after a change of office bearers. They also concluded that leadership changes resulted in greater budget composition changes in developed countries post elections.

A latest study was conducted by Bobbo and Bates (2022) to observe PBCs in 41 SSA countries from 1990 to 2015. The study used Ordinary Least Squares, fixed effects, random effects and generalised method of moment to study the sample. The results confirmed that PBCs were prevalent in the lead-up and during elections and took the form of increased government spending, declining tax revenues and worsening fiscal deficits. Bobbo and Bates (2022) also added another dimension to the PBC facets, ethnicity. It was observed that ethnicity fragmentation (tribalism) encouraged PBC. Drazen and Brender (2003, 2005) had pointed out that increased spending during election time may have been due to the fragile democracy in new democracies. However, Bobo and Bates established that even when democratic governance and regular elections have been established, by its nature, democracy raises another burden in countries with very distinct multiple ethnic groupings. Our assumption is that this may also increase the cost of election expenditure due to dispute resolution and voter education as the EMBs aim to provide credible elections in a divisive atmosphere. This could also explain the observations by Vergne (2011) and Haan and Klomp (2013), whose studies found that PBCs in SSA were not driven by political ideology. It could actually be that they are driven by ethnic and regional struggle for political power.

The leadership effect, electoral system and form of government on PBCs was well considered in the theoretical review (Drazen & Brender, 2013; Haan & Klomp, 2013). In addition, Accettura and Profeta (2021) analysed whether the gender component of leadership produced different PBC impacts. It was found that male candidates elected with a small margin against a female candidate were more likely to engage in strategic spending at pre-electoral and in electoral year compared to female candidates. Further, high deficit levels towards elections were generally observed among the male candidates.

Kosec and Wantchekon (2018) further provided conditions in which access to information by voters and policy makers could lead to action. They pointed out that the information had to be heard against all the other media noise and/or be easily accessible through other channels. Secondly, they argued that the recipient had to feel that they had the power to act on the information as well as that they could report or communicate it through clear channels for action by those in authority. The absence of these conditions could lead to what Poulton (2014) referred to as a weak democratic push to get things done.

Most studies on the PBC were based on the rational model and its various facets as well as the different conditions in which the PBCs occur. The focus of the studies was results of fiscal policy due to political incumbents' manipulation. Moyo (2018) advanced another argument concerning voters, and stated that the economic health of a nation was a direct result of the action taken by voters. This means that it was basically the voters' responsibility to understand the value of their vote. Moyo, like others, called for reform of electoral rules (Haan and Klomp, 2013) to better determine who got elected, by addressing low voter turnout through mandatory voting. The study also attributed PBCs on short-termism mostly due to short periods in between national elections which also directly impacted the macroeconomic health. It was emphasised that every vote costs actual money and voters needed to understand, literally the cost of voting against not voting. Hill (2014) observed that in the USA, it was those most vulnerable such as women with small children, the unemployed and the homeless who were most unlikely to turn up to vote. Once again this phenomenon is well captured by weak democratic push and may lead to increased PBCs and fiscal deficits due to low voter turn.

Mulungi and Chilundika (2016) found that welfare concerns influenced maize price setting in election-years in Zambia. Their study concluded that this had a negative impact on long term food security at household level. They found that at around election period government bought 1.5 times more maize and price was affected by 1.9 times. However, long run results found this budget manipulation to be retrogressive and impacted households negatively. In India, Dar et al. (2019) used weekly retail food prices of 16-essential commodities in 28-cities from 1993 to 2012, to investigate whether timing of elections impacted food prices. The suggestive evidence was that electoral cycle impacts were strongest when the centre aligned with local government elections, won with large majorities and when the market was unregulated. The researchers explained these finding, as partly due to collusion between incumbents and trade cartels. This evidence agrees with findings in Mozambique. Mogues and Rosario (2016) determined that electoral impacts led to much more visible spending in agriculture with shorter time lags to fruition. It was noted that allocation to and within agriculture was influenced by interest groups with electoral capital. Subsidies were also targeted in constituencies where the government had not done well in the past elections.

In Nigeria there was evidence that even after the budget had been approved and expenditure begun, there were frequent instances of allocation shifts. Olofinyibi and Mogues (2017) observed that even though the budget process was institutionalised, the way the laws were crafted left room for discretion over allocation shifts. Constitutional provisions were found to be ambiguous and non-binding. Studies by the IMF (2013) revealed that engagement on fiscal discipline mitigated against fiscal surprises. However, Quaicoe (2021) argued that fiscal surprise was only dampened by improved economic health. This agreed with Balamatsias (2018) who found that in non-OECD countries, regular elections did not translate into improved spending and service delivery. In wealthier countries, the larger the middle class the more economic voting occurred which led to better service delivery.

James (2020) also found steep increases in election expenditure in years of national elections. This related the theoretical arguments that election years had impact on fiscal variables beyond just the election calendar. The election calendar impacts were limited to opportunistic expenditure even in agriculture by incumbents seeking re-election. However, actual sharp increases in expenditure in election years as well as rising election costs over time were not found to have been analysed using the traditional PBC theory.

3.2 Opportunity Cost Theory

Lucas (2015) used opportunity cost neglect to explain that every government program has an opportunity cost. This cost required citizens to understand the sacrifices they would have to undergo for certain public expenditure preferences. In this case it includes immediate gratification at the expense of long term economic health (Moyo, 2018; IDEA, 2021). Lucas extended the opportunity cost theory by Haberler (1936), to explain importance of economic information for voters to appreciate impact of public expenditure decision after elections.

3.4 Theoretical Analysis

The Political Budget Cycle (PBC) theory has gone through multiple building blocks in explaining fiscal changes in democratic countries associated with occurrence of elections. The evidence was that these electoral effects occurred more in the lead up and during elections in developing countries where incumbents sought re-election, while in developed countries it was more after elections when a leadership change occurred. The theory also noted that election expenditure increased in democracies due to demand for more electoral and fiscal decentralisation. However, there was no clear evidence that the increase in expenditure did in fact, positively impact service delivery and long term fiscal stability.

There also appeared to be no clear evidence on analysis of actual election expenditure data and how that shifted in election and non-election years explained by the PBC theory, nor how that was mitigated against whatever shifts occurred in agriculture service delivery expenditure as a result of electoral impacts. Without this data, there may be no reconciliation between incumbents' desire for re-election and their support to agriculture in view of the assumption that elections act as a signalling channel for the majority preferences. The PBC theory analysis fell short of adding actual expenditure on electoral management as a fiscal variable, limiting itself so far to only the electoral calendar.

In Zambia, it would be expected that the majority would signal (through a vote as the proxy for election expenditure) on public expenditure preference in agriculture unless there was a weak democratic push due to interest groups (Vergne, 2011; Mogues & Rosario, 2016). But even so, it would be expected that electoral competition could trigger a positive response due to politicians desire to remain or enter office (Poulton, 2014). Unless there is an opportunistic cost elsewhere preventing this (Lukas, 2015, such as regular shocks from regular and fairly short electoral cycles in a small economy (Moyo, 2018), it is not clear why agriculture would not be prioritised. This is even more relevant in view of the SDGs. We are cognisant that there may be other factors such as economic shocks and low growth. But when even you look at priority spending hierarchy, the data showed that agriculture was not usually one of the top 3 in Africa, though referred to in many development plans as key to transformation and poverty reduction. With this, the calls were also getting louder about costs of elections diverting resources from development in Africa.

We adopted the PBC theoretical lens and adapted it in view of public sacrifices whenever election expenditure occurred without commensurate service delivery. We described it as the *functionality* *burden on democracy*. Actual election expenditure was added as the independent variable for our study while the electoral cycle, was the analysed time series with election as the dummy variable.

3.3 Conceptual Framework

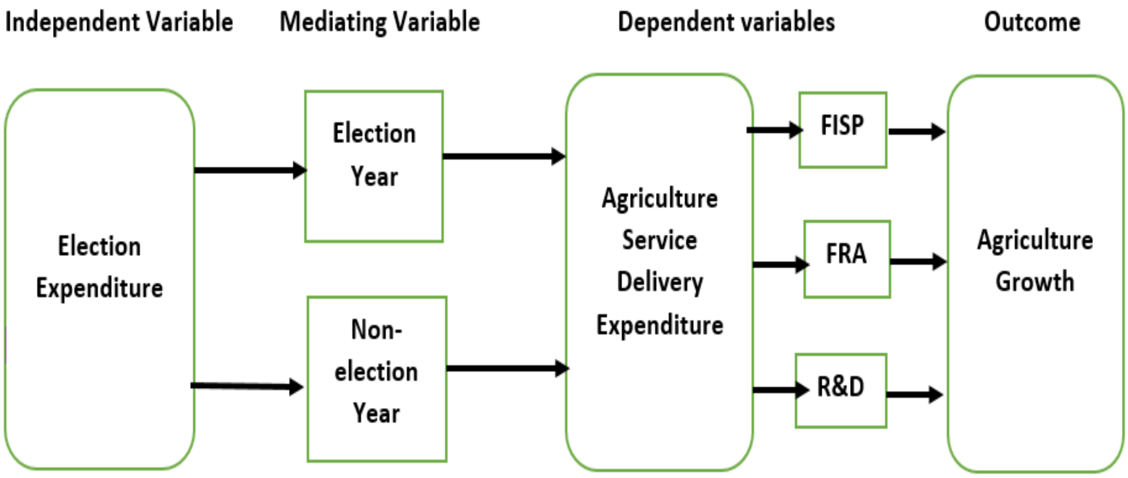

Figure 2: Conceptual framework; source: Author's Construct, 2023

3.3.1 Operationalization of Concepts

With the aid of the above conceptual framework the following were investigated; election management expenditure at the ECZ was assigned as the independent or predictor variable and positioned on the left side in the conceptual frame work. The election year is a dummy variable representing the year of the scheduled or general election in 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2021, and acted as the mediating variable. The other years were the non-election years even if elections known as by-elections occurred in those years.

The Ministry of Agriculture expenditure was investigated for changes in allocation and expenditure in election and non-election years. This helped to determine the relationship of the ECZ expenditure with agriculture expenditure and government policy commitments to the CAADP targets on expenditure and growth. Expenditure on agriculture service delivery components were also further analysed to determine the direction and magnitude of changes over the study period. These concepts were introduced first to describe how the service delivery components, individually changed over the study period and secondly to observe policy response to expenditure on investment in agriculture and its impact on growth as the literature suggests (Fan, Omilola & Lambert 2009; Mogues, 2012; FAO, 2021).

3.4 Summary

The PBC was selected as the overarching theory. The research added a new model by introducing a comparison of actual election expenditure as a variable to agriculture service delivery expenditure as another variable. This is different from the traditional observation of aggregate fiscal variables to explain the behaviour of politicians and mostly across a number of countries. This was an in depth one country investigation of the variables.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology used in the study. There were four variables of interest, namely: the expenditure by the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) which acted as a proxy for election expenditure. This is because election administration encompasses expenditure on staff recruitment, polling agents, voter registration, ballot paper printing, security, delimitation, among others (Mohr et al. 2018) and agriculture service delivery components of FISP, FRA and R&D. Expenditure at agriculture was analysed against expenditure at the ECZ and plotted against growth over the period. The election year was the dummy variable to allow for observations of expenditure changes in the variables whenever general elections occurred in 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2021. All other years even when elections, known as by-election occurred were non-election years. There were 22 observations from 2000 to 2021.

The study applied the post positivists as a world view (Burbles, 2002; Creswell, 2014). This was selected on the latitude provided to bring personal experience but control for a level of bias through a quantitative research approach.

4.1 Research Approach

The study was quantitative using descriptive correlational design (Creswell, 2014). Summary statistics, the measure of central tendencies and the measures of dispersion were applied to understand the features of the secondary data. Bar and Line graphs represented possible trends, seasonality or breaks in the variables under study. A multiple linear regression model was also used to describe the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The unit root test, using the Augmented Dickey-Fuller method was used to check for the stationarity of the time series variables. To investigate whether the variables in the study shared common trends, co-integration tests was used. The error terms of the model were tested for normality. This means that the auto correlation function of the error terms were computed to check for interdependence between the errors. Thereafter, covariance was computed for the relationship between the error terms and independent variables. Heteroscedasticity of the errors was calculated to establish if the variance of the error terms was constant. Secondary data was collected from the ECZ and MoA expenditure reports and the Yellow Book as approved by parliament. E-views 12 and Microsoft Excel 16 were used for analysis of data.

4.2 Regression Model

The regression model used in the study is represented by the following equation:

$$Y_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1t} + \beta_2 X_{2t} + \beta_3 X_{3t} + \cdots + \beta_k X_{kt} + \varepsilon_t \qquad (\mathbf{1})$$

The Y is the dependent variable, the $X_1, X_2, X_3, \cdots, X_k$ are the independent variables while the $\beta_0, \beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \cdots, \beta_k$ are the parameters of the model to be estimated and ε is the error term. The underlying assumptions of the model include; that the error terms are normally distributed with mean zero and constant variance (homoscedasticity), the independence of the independent variables in the model, the normality of the dependent variable around the mean, and the linearity of the parameters. The study used the Ordinary Least squares (OLS) estimation technique to estimate the parameters of the model. Detailed discussions about the linear regression models can be found in Gujarati & Potter (2008).

4.2.1 Model Specification

The investigation employed a three-variable regression model on the variables of interest, expenditure at the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ), Agriculture Service Delivery (ASD) expenditure, and the dummy variable, election n year (EY). The study hypothesized that the ASD depended on the ECZ and EY and thus took it as the dependent variable while the ECZ and the EY as the independent variables and suggested a regression model to explain their relationship. The regression model between the variables was specified as:

$$\boldsymbol{lnASD_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 lnECZ_t + \beta_2 EY_t + \epsilon_t} \qquad (\mathbf{2})$$

Where;

- β_0 is the constant value and β_1 and β_2 are elasticity coefficients of the independent variables to be estimated.
- $lnASD_t$ is the log of expenditure on Agriculture Service Delivery at time t.
- $lnECZ_t$ is the log of expenditure on elections at time t
- EY_t is election year defined as equal to 1 in the year of general elections and 0 otherwise at t.

- ϵ_t is the error term assumed to be normally, identically and independently distributed with mean zero and constant variance, i.e.;

$$\boldsymbol{\epsilon_t \sim N(0, \sigma^2).}$$

4.2.2 Model Estimation

Before the model estimation, Pre-Diagnostic Tests were carried out to examine for stationarity and long run relationship in the variables. Post Diagnostic tests were carried out to test for normality and constant variance in the errors terms. The autocorrelation function of the error terms was computed to check for autocorrelation in the residuals. Finally, the test for heteroscedasticity was carried out to check whether the variance of the error terms was constant or not.

4.2.3 Pre-Diagnostic Tests

The unit root was used to examine for stationarity and co-integration will be used to examine the long run relationship of the variables.

4.2.3.1 Unit Root Test for Stationarity

Stationarity of the variables is a requirement for meaningful regression estimates. Stationarity of the variables was tested using the Augmented Dickey Fuller test. The general form of the test is given as;

$$\Delta Y_t = \vartheta_0 + \tau_1 Y_{t-1} + \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mu_i \Delta Y_{t-i} + \delta t + \varepsilon_t \qquad (3)$$

Where Y_t is time series, ϑ_0 is constant, τ_1 is unit root, μ_i is the coefficient of lags, t is the linear trend,Δ is the difference operator, δ is the coefficient for the time-trend variable, and ε_t is the random error term. The ADF test also includes the extra lagged terms (Y_{t-i}) of the dependent variable in order to eliminate autocorrelation in the test equation. The rejection of the null hypothesis implies the variable is stationary. A detailed understanding of the unit root test using the ADF method can be found in Dickey and Fuller (1979 & 1981). Further reading on unit root can also be found in Gujarati & Potter (2008)

4.2.3.2 Co-Integration Test-Long run

The concept of co-integration was first coined by Granger (1981), Engle and Granger (1987), Engle and Yoo (1987) and Johansen (1988, 1991, and 1995). According to them, trended time series can potentially create major problems in empirical analysis due to spurious regressions. One of the ways of resolving this was to difference the time series successively until stationarity is attained. In this way the data may be used for empirical analysis. The drawback of this technique, however, is that not only does differencing affect the error process in the model, but also no longer gives a unique steady long run equilibrium state of the series. Thus differencing a time series multiple times leads to loss of degrees of freedom and important information contained in the series can be lost. Co-integration, therefore, becomes an overriding requirement for the economic model using time series for estimation in the long run.

Granger (1981) reasoned that if two stochastic variables y_t and x_t are nonstationary and there exist a long run relationship between them, then we can represent the error as a combination of two cumulated error processes;

$$\boldsymbol{\varepsilon_t = y_t - \emptyset_o - \varphi_1 x_t} \qquad (4)$$

Therefore, if y_t and x_t are non-stationery, then a linear combination of the two series, which was the $\boldsymbol{\varepsilon_t}$ was tested for stationarity [as an *I(0)* variable]. A linear combination of y_t and x_t was then taken from estimating equation (2) and taking the lagged residues from (4) and became the Error Correction Term (ECT).

Due to the few observations in this study, the co-integration (or ECT) was estimated using the Single Equation Error Correction Model (SEECM) to capture simultaneously the short and long run relationship between the series. The advantages of the SEECM is that it is purely based on OLS and it works best with small sample sizes and gave robust short and long run estimates. The SEECM is specified as;

$$\Delta \boldsymbol{Y_t = \partial_0 + \varphi_1} \Delta \boldsymbol{X_t} + \cdots + \boldsymbol{\varphi_i} \Delta \boldsymbol{X_t - \pi(y_{t-1} + \emptyset_o + \varphi_1 x_{t-1}) + \varepsilon_t} \qquad (5)$$

Where;

- $\boldsymbol{\pi}$ **,** is the Error Correction Term (ECT) and if the specification and approach was correct, it is expected to be significant, negative and stationary at level. The negative sign will inform the study that any short run disequilibrium is corrected at the speed $\boldsymbol{\pi}$ and its significance will imply that the variables exhibit a long run relationship. If found to be statistically insignificant, positive and nonstationary, the model estimation will be done in the short run.
- $\boldsymbol{\varphi_1 \Delta X_t + \cdots + \varphi_i \Delta X_t}$ **,** this term will capture all short run partial effects of a change in the independent variables.
- $\boldsymbol{y_{t-1} + \emptyset_o + \varphi_1 x_{t-1}}$ **, w**ill capture the long run effects which will be distributed over time at the rate of negative $\boldsymbol{\pi}$**.**

Detailed reading about co-integration can be found in Granger (1981), Engle and Granger (1987), Engle and Yoo (1987) and Johansen (1988, 1991, and 1995).

4.2.4 Post-Diagnostic Tests

The classical normal regression model assumption stipulates that before estimates can be rendered admissible, they must pass certain criteria. These criteria include but are not restricted to; normality of the error terms, autocorrelation tests and heteroscedasticity tests among others.

4.2.4.1 Test for Normality

The study used the histogram of error terms and the Jargue-Bera test to check for normality in the error terms.

4.2.4.2 Autocorrelation

The study computed the autocorrelation function for the error terms of the model using the Breusch-Godfrey (1978) serial Correlation Lagrange Multiplier test. It made use of the residuals from the model considered in the regression analysis to derive a test statistic. The null hypothesis was that there was no serial correlation of any order. When error terms of successful observations are inter-dependent, the time series is said to be auto-correlated.

According to Gujarati (2008) the autocorrelation assumptions state that;

$$covariance(\mu_i, \mu_j | x_i, x_j) = E(\mu_i, \mu_j) = 0 \qquad where\ i \neq j \quad \textbf{(6)}$$

And Co-variance indicates the relationship of 2 variables whenever one variable changes. If an increase in one variable results in an increase in another variable, both variables are said to have a positive covariance (Anderson et al. 2016). Details of the autocorrelation tests can be found in Anderson et al. (2016), Breusch-Godfrey (1978) and Gujarati (2008).

4.2.4.3 Heteroscedasticity

The study tested for heteroscedasticity in the error terms. Heteroscedasticity occurs when the variance of the error terms is not constant (Ghujarat & Potter, 2008). Heteroscedasticity leads to inefficient estimators regardless of other least squares properties holding. Therefore, testing for heteroscedasticity in the model was important. To carry out this task, White's General Heteroscedasticity Test (WGHT) was employed. The test is a statistical test that establishes whether the variance of the error terms in a regression model is constant: that is for homoscedasticity. Detailed reading on heteroscedasticity can be found in White, (1980), Ghujarat & Potter, (2008).

4.3 Summary

The chapter outlined the methodology that the study followed in answering the research questions. The chapter explained that the analysis was done in two parts; firstly, descriptive statistics were presented and analysed using line and bar graphs and measures of central tendency and then followed by inferential statistics. Multi Linear Regression used OLS to estimate coefficients. Pre diagnostics were unit root ADF tests, co-integration and constant variance of error terms. Post diagnostics included tests on normality, auto correlation and heteroscedasticity tests of error terms.

The next chapter presented the study findings based on the methodology presented.

CHAPTER FIVE: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings in response to the research questions of the study. The Inferential findings are focused on objective and question 3 to determine the significance of the relationship among the variables.

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 provides a summary of descriptive statistics of public expenditures from 2000 to 2021.

Table 2: Expenditure in millions of Kwacha (adjusted for inflation using 2010 Consumer Price Index)

Statistic	ECZ	MoA	ASD	FISP	FRA	R&D
Mean	1.943	13.540	16.032	8.334	7.695	0.004
Median	1.414	11.869	11.085	3.422	3.880	0.003
Maximum	5.495	30.037	76.210	66.623	56.115	0.015
Minimum	0.277	0.012	0.012	0.059	0.014	0.0000004
Std. Dev.	1.470	90.744	18.713	14.267	12.482	0.004
Coefficient of Deviation	0.76%	6.76%	1.17%	1.71%	1.62%	1%

Source: Authors Calculations/ZMW=Zambian Kwacha

Table 2 indicates that in the last two decades (2000-2021) expenditure on election administration in Zambia averaged ZMW 1.943 million in real values. Over the same period, the electoral body's highest expenditure was ZMW 5.495 million. The range between the highest and lowest expenditure was over ZMW 5 million.

Additionally, the aggregate agriculture service delivery (ASD) expenditure averaged about ZMW 16.032 million. The highest expenditure on ASD was ZMW76.210 million, with the largest release to the FISP at ZMW 66.623 million. Among the three ASD components, R&D had the lowest average expenditure at ZMW0.004 million with the maximum amount at ZMW 0.015 million.

Figures 3 shows the ECZ allocation and expenditure in real values over the study period. There appeared to be steep increases in expenditure in election years as observed in 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2021. The highest election yea expenditure, in real values, was in 2016 with the lowest in 2006. There were also very high figures in 2008 and 2015, the years of presidential by-elections. However the largest budget allocation appears to have been in 2006 where allocation was much higher than actual expenditure. There also appeared to be a comparatively higher expenditure trend in the year preceding the general election compared to other non-election years except for 2008 and 2015, the two years when presidential by-elections occurred. The period 2012 to 2014 also had comparatively higher expenditure compared to any other period in between general elections. In the same period, the year 2013 seemed to have the highest expenditure over the budgetary allocation.

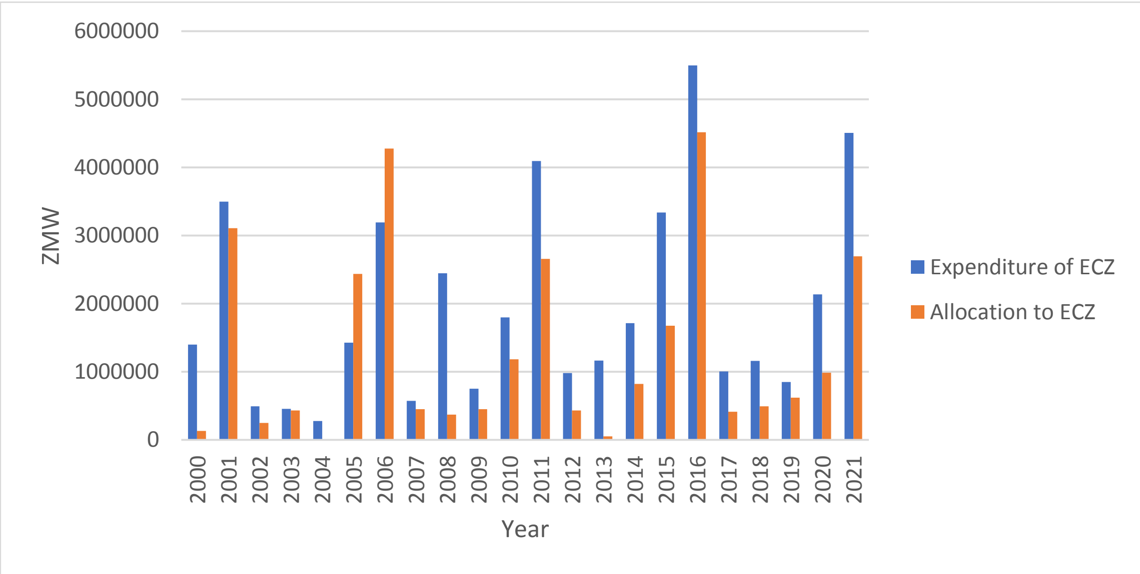

Figure 3: ECZ allocation vs. expenditure

Figure 4 represents expenditure on elections as a percentage of the national expenditure. As in figure 3, election years had the highest expenditure as a percentage of national expenditure. In 2001, 2006, 2011 and 2016, the expenditure percentage was close to 2% of national expenditure. Only in 2021 was it just below 1%. There was also a consistent increased expenditure percentage trend in the year before the general election years. In 2000, 2005 and 2010 this was about 1% of national expenditure. The study found an outlier election expenditure statistic for 2012, immediately post the general election in 2011, at over 4% of national expenditure, the highest in the whole period of study.

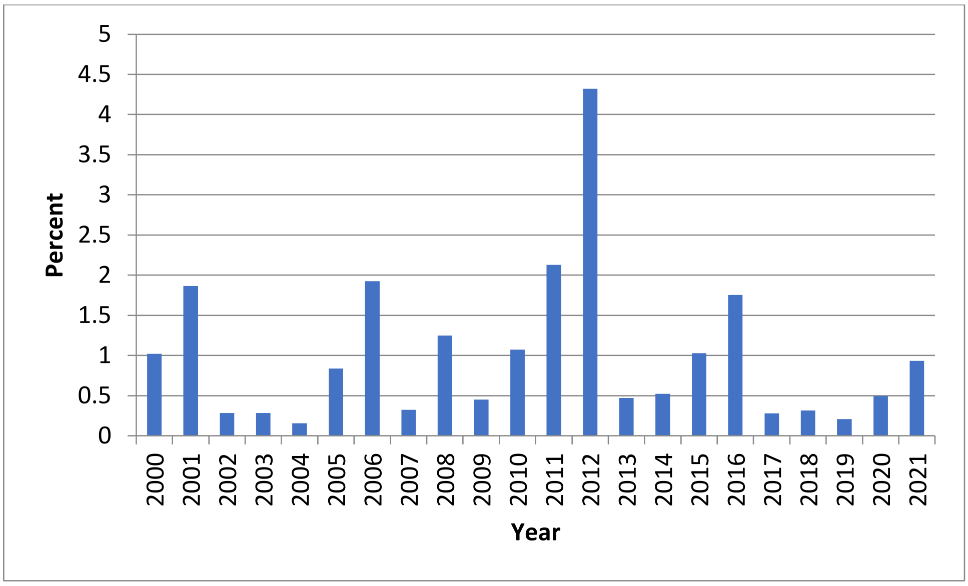

Figure 4: ECZ expenditure as percentage of national budget

Budget allocation and expenditure at the MoA is shown below in Figure 5 as a percentage of the national budget. The data indicates that over the study period, both the budget allocations and expenditure did not exceeded 10% of the national budget.

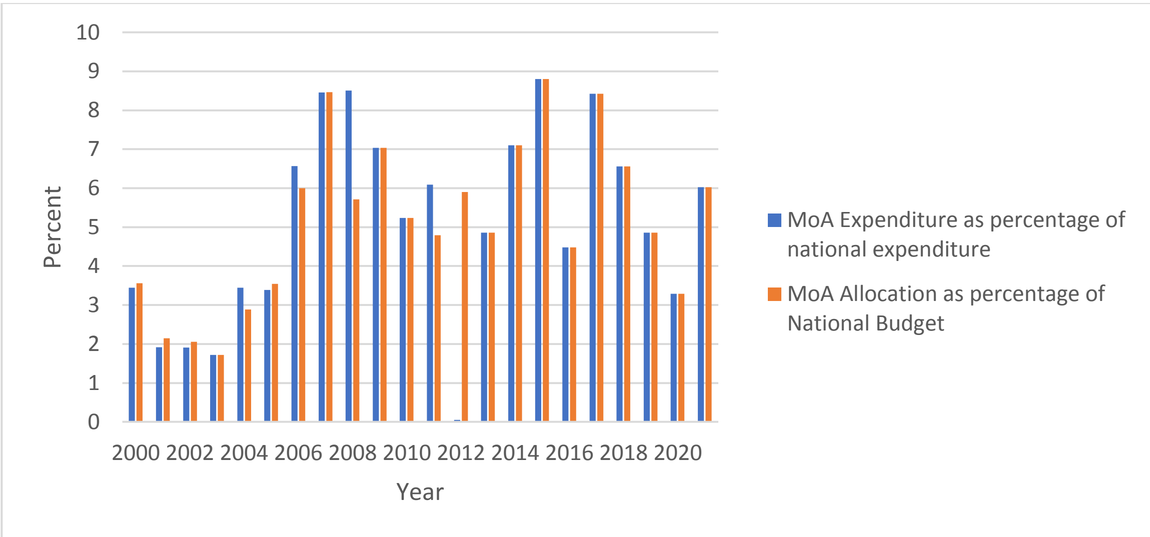

Figure 5: Ministry of Agriculture Allocation Vs.. Expenditure

In 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2005, allocations were higher than actual expenditure. In 2012 in particular there appears to have been negligible expenditure when compared to the allocation. The largest difference in favour of expenditure is 2008. In most years, allocation and expenditure were almost equal and this trend was more visible from 2014 to 2021. The MoA expenditure, appeared to have dropped from 2001 to 2003. Thereafter, expenditure rose until 2008. The peak expenditures were observed in 2007, 2008, 2015 and 2017 at just over 8% of national expenditure.

In election years, the lowest expenditure was in 2001 at just below 2% of national expenditure with the highest in 2006 at about 6.5%. The highest expenditure in a non-election year appeared to be in 2015 at about 8.8%. Generally allocation and expenditure at the MoA had an erratic trend of up and down especially after 2008.

Figure 6 depicts R&D expenditure as a percentage of the national budget. Over the 22 year period, expenditure on R&D appeared to not have reached 1%. The largest amount was expended in 2001, while 2010, 2011 and 2021 had almost nothing. There was negligible expenditure from 2016 to 2020. The expenditure trend appears to have been more consistent from 2000 to 2009 and from 2013 to 2015.

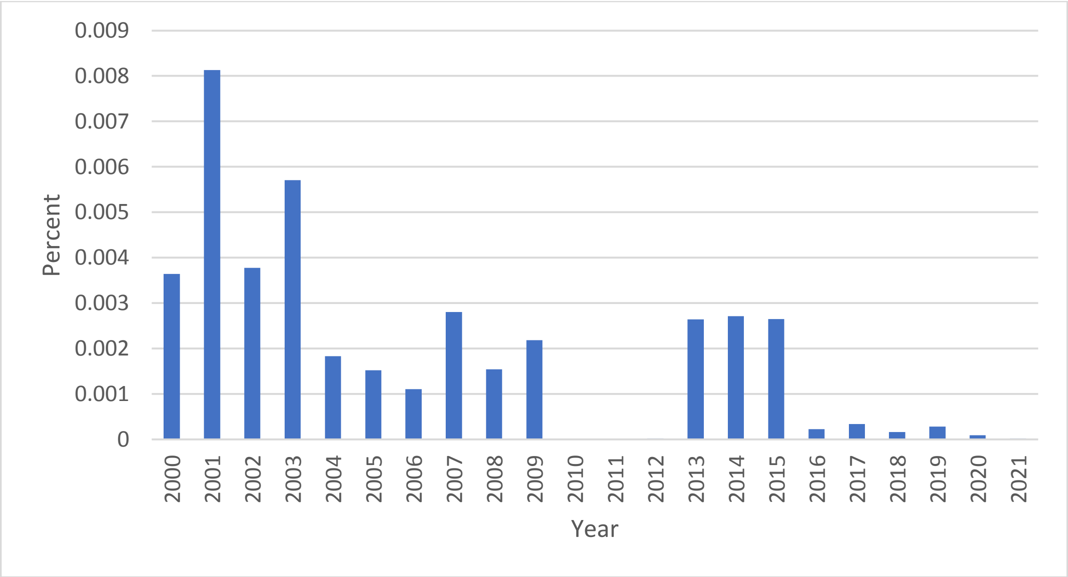

Figure 6: R&D expenditure as percentage of national expenditure

Figure 7 shows the expenditure trend on the three service delivery components. As correspondingly shown in figure 6, expenditure on R&D was almost negligible. Expenditure on the FISP and the FRA was highest in real terms in 2000 and 2001 respectively. The FRA also had notable increases in 2010 and 2011. After 2012, the FISP had an erratic trend of up and down, this was quite similar to the FRA. In 2000, 2009 and 2015, the years preceding the general elections, there were notable increases in FISP which reduced the following year. In contrast, except for 2015 and 2016, the FRA seemed to increase in expenditure in the general election year always above the preceding year.

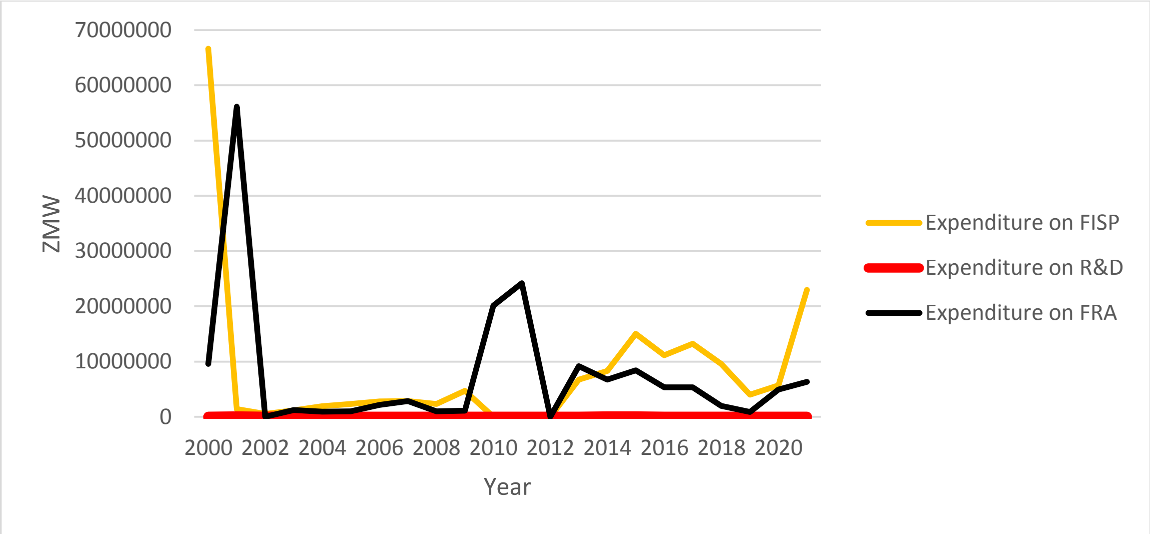

Figure 7: Expenditure on FISP, FRA and R&D

As per figure 8, agriculture growth had a downward trend over the period from 16.5% in 2000 to just below 3% in 2021. The high growth in 2000 and 2001 coincided with the highest ever expenditure levels in real terms on the FISP and FRA subsidies respectively. However, general expenditure on agriculture was one of the lowest in the same period. While 2014 and 2016 had lower expenditure compared to 2015 and 2017, more positive growth than the years after was observed. At first glance, the trend appears to be that when there were significant increases in expenditure at the ECZ, expenditure at the Ministry of agriculture went down over the period of study.

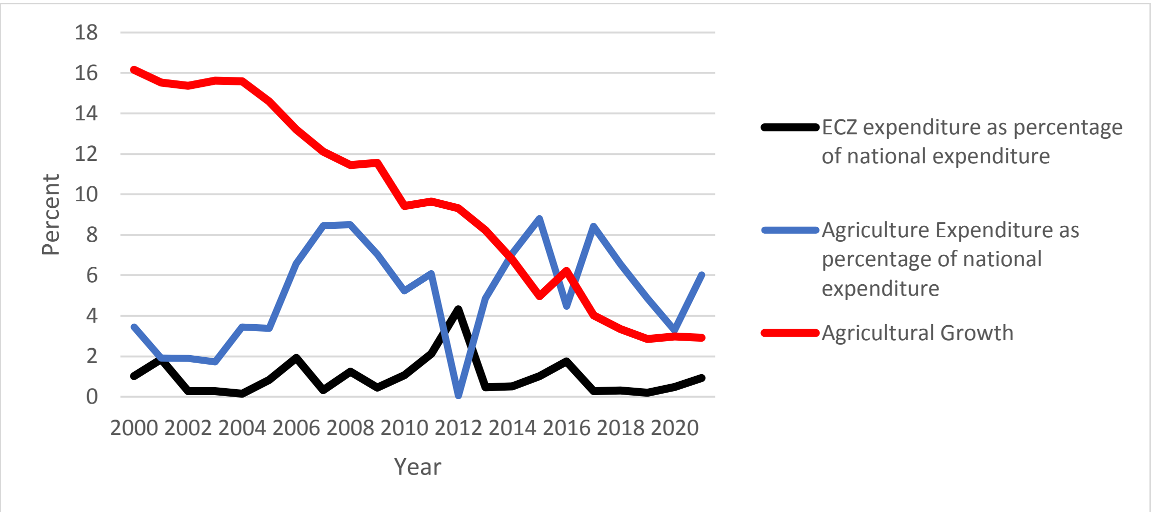

Figure 8: Agriculture Growth

5.2 Inferential Statistics

5.2.1 Unit Root tests

The Augmented Dickey Fuller test results are shown in table 3.

Table 3: Unit Root Results

Variable	At Level	At 1st Difference	Order of Integration	Conclusion
LASDE	0.0003***	0.0159**	I(0) I(1)	Stationary at level and 1st Difference
LECZE	0.9373	0.0000***	I(1)	Stationary at 1st Difference
$\boldsymbol{ECT_{t-1}}$	0.0000***	n/a	I(0)	Stationary at level

(*), (**), (***) implying significance at 10%, 5% and 1% respectively

The ADF results indicated that ASD expenditure was stationary at both level and 1st difference while ECZ expenditure was stationary at 1st difference. The Error Correction Term (ECT) was found to be stationary at level. This was consistent with the literature (Granger, 1981; Engle & Granger, 1987) on the value of the ECT and this revelation implied that the model estimation was done in both the short and long run.

5.2.2 Short run estimations

Table 4: Short Run results

Variable	Coefficient	Standard error	t-statistic	p-value
D(LECZE)	1.063874***	0.249919	4.256881	0.0005
EY	-0.077647	0.613871	-0.126487	0.9008
C	-0.100965	0.280062	-0.360511	0.7229
ECT(-1)	-1.139401***	0.218992	-5.202922	0.0001
	R-squared	0.694349	D-W	2.311654
	Adj. R squared	0.640411	Prob(F-statistic)	0.000123**

(*), (**), (***) implying significance at 10%, 5% and 1% respectively

In table 4, the model revealed that the R-squared was relatively high with a value of 0.694349. This value meant that about 69.4% of the variability in ASD expenditure was explained by the independent variables. The model also revealed that the Durbin-Watson (D-W) statistic was closer to 2 implying that collectively, autocorrelation was not a problem in the model. Lastly, the model was statistically significant at 5%.

Estimates from table 4 also indicated that, in the short run, expenditure by the ECZ, was statistically significant. The results showed that a 1% increase in expenditure at the ECZ resulted, on average, in a response of 1.064% in ASD expenditure. The impact of election year (EY) expenditure was found to be negative but statistically insignificant in influencing agriculture service delivery expenditure. The speed of correction in the short run disequilibrium (ECT(-1)) was found to be negative and statistically significant at 1%. The ECT implies that any short run disequilibrium will be corrected at a speed of

114% in the current period. This speed of adjustment is very fast implying a very fast convergence trend between election expenditure and expenditure on ASD.

5.2.3 Long run Results

The long run results are shown in table 5

Table 5: Long run results

Variable	Coefficient	Standard error	t-statistic	p-value
LECZ	1.038275**	0.452928	2.292362	0.0335
EY	-0.212409	0.861119	-0.246666	0.8078
C	1.227453	6.295065	0.194986	0.8475
	R-squared	0.320435	D-W	2.058343
	Adj. R-squared	0.248902	Prob(F-statistic)	0.025480**

(*), (**), (***) implying significance at 10%, 5% and 1% respectively

The model R-squared showed that about 32% of the variability in ASD expenditure was explained by the independent variables. However, due to the relationship between the R-squared and the F-statistic[5],

[5] The F test, which is a measure of the overall significance of the estimated regression, is also a test of significance of R^2. One should not be worried about finding a low but positive R^2; the results are still admissible if the F-statistic is statistically significant at the stated level of significance; See Gujarati & Potter (2008). *Basic Econometrics*. Mcgraw-Hill. pp. 237-246.

the overall model was statistically significant at 5%. Model autocorrelation was within acceptable means as shown by the Durbin-Watson statistic. Lastly, the model was statistically significant at 5%.

The long relationship revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between ECZ expenditure and ASD expenditure. A 1% increase in ECZ expenditure, increased ASD expenditure by 1.04% on average. The responsiveness of ASD to election expenditure was higher in the short run compared to long run. The impact of election year expenditure was negative but statistically insignificant at 5%.

5.2.4 Post Model Diagnostics

Model post diagnostic tests are shown in table 6. Results of the Jargue-Bera histogram normality test showed that the errors were normally distributed. This outcome was further buttressed by the P value which was greater than 5%. The Breusch-Godfrey serial correlation LM test results indicated that the errors were not serially correlated. See appendix for actual test results and normality chart.

Table 6: Post diagnostic tests

Test	Test Statistic	P-Value	Conclusion
Jargue-Bera Normality Test	3.290559	0.192959	Residues normally distributed
Breusch-Godfrey Serial correlation LM Test	1.229319	0.3172	No serial/ autocorrelation
Heteroscedasticity	0.238141	0.7904	No heteroscedasticity

Table 6 also showed that the error terms were homoscedastic meaning that the error terms had equal variances.

5.3 Summary of Results

The chapter presented the findings based on descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive results showed that in election years, the ECZ expenditure was about 1.7% of national spending, which begun increasing the year preceding the election. There were also steep increases in FISP and FRA expenditures coinciding with electoral cycles. However, expenditure on R&D was negligible. Inferential results revealed a significant and positive relationship between the ECZ expenditure and expenditure on ASD. The election year dummy variable was found to be insignificant.

The model estimation reliability was found to be significant base on the R-squared in the short run and the P-Value of the F-statistic in the long run. The validity of the results were tested using post-diagnostic tests. The residues were normally distributed, with no serial correlation. There was no heteroscedasticity in the error terms either.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.0 Introduction

The discussion was based on the results found after descriptive and inferential analysis.

6.1 Discussion on Descriptive Statistics Findings

The descriptive statistics provided information observed for variable characteristics and trends. Below is the discussion on the findings.

6.1.1 Budget Allocation and Expenditure on Agriculture

In the findings, it was established that there was a small allocation mismatch with expenditure in 2000, 2001, 2002, and in 2005. This may have been due to demand and organisational challenges after introduction of two major programs, FISP and FRA. Similar findings were found by CABRI (2015) where most of the countries their sample experienced technical skill challenges in response to shifting public preferences. In another study in Latin America, Salazer et al. (2015) also noted policy setting and implementation challenges in support to agriculture in Guatemala and Columbia. The study also observed a consistent drop in expenditure from 2001 to 2003. This might have been due to lack of fiscal space because of debt repayment challenges as Zambia was part of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC, World Bank, 2000, 2002). The sharp and steady increases from 2004 to 2008 might be explained by new impetus when the FSP was changed to FISP and the number of farmer beneficiaries and supported crops increased. This period also coincided with HIPC relief in 2004/5. The explanation for the subsidy transformation and increased expenditure on the same could have also been due to the continental commitment via the CAADP targets initiated in 2003. It seemed though, that more often than not, allocation at the MoA matched expenditure which might have arisen from the fact that the major budget lines were for the FISP and the FRA. The similar allocation and expenditure trend was very visible from 2013 to 2021.This finding also agrees with FAO (2021) who found that the trend in most African countries were 100% releases for subsidy programmes.

In relation to the budget process, it may imply a copy and paste practice with the previous year's budget, being used always as the baseline (Cole, 2015) without much shift in staff employment and expansion of service delivery. Our view is that expenditure on other services in agriculture such as agriculture related infrastructure (like irrigation and dams) may have been provided through the ministries of Water Development and Sanitation and Local Government as well as direct donor funds to the projects. This was also similar to findings by FAO (2021) where about 35% of agriculture expenditure was found to be support by donors. The years 2007, 2008, 2015 and 2017 were peculiar as they had quite high agriculture expenditures. It can be established that for 2007 and 2008, this might have been a response to campaign promises after the 2006 general elections when the administration then, focused on agriculture as the avenue for diversification. De Haan and Klomp (2013) confirmed leadership ideology as a reason for possible support for agriculture in a study on conditioning of electoral impacts. During the years of heightened agriculture expenditure indicated above, Zambia had also returned to national planning with the 5th Development Plan (2006-2011) which prioritised agriculture as a key sector for economic diversification and rural development (MoFNDP, 2006). The country had also reached the HIPC completion point in 2005 (AfDB, 2005) resulting in debt relief.

In terms of overall reduced expenditure in the sector, IMF discussions from 2009 may have contributed following the world financial crisis of 2008.An expenditure study by FAO (2020) indicated reduced global expenditure in agriculture during this period too. The new administration, following 2011 general elections, completely scrapped the input and output subsidies in 2012, resulting in an extremely reduced MoA expenditure especially when you consider that the large chunk was spent on the two subsidy programs (Chapota and Sitko, IAPRI, 2015; MoA, 2021). The Farmers accused the government of "*farmer killer*" and called for the return of subsidies during the lead up to the 2015 presidential by-elections. This may have resulted in the steady increases witnessed with subsidy expenditure peaking in 2015 and 2017. However, another IMF engagement and increasing debt may have been the reason for yet another reduced expenditure trend from 2018 which seemed to have only been reversed in the general election year in 2021.

The whole period experienced expenditure levels in agriculture below the CAADP target of 10% of national expenditure. These were similar finds by others studies on African countries expenditure trends in the sector (Mink, 2016; FAO, 2021).

6.1.2 Election Allocation and Expenditure Changes from 2000-2021

The results showed that expenditure always surpassed allocation except in 2006 when allocation surpassed actual expenditure by almost a million Zambian Kwacha. Since 1964, 2001 was the first time the electoral body was housed independently and organised elections as a fully autonomous body. As such, the 2006 over budget case may have been a reaction to the expenditure challenges experienced by the ECZ in their first election management in 2001. The expenditure deficit experienced may have encouraged them to over allocate due to increased donor support resulting in less expenditure in 2006. Again this was similar to findings in budgeting challenges found by the CABRI (2015) which included donor interference. However, in some cases expenditure levels were much higher than allocation. A report by the UK Election Commission in 2014 reported adoption of the Maximum Recovery Account to address similar misallocation and withholding challenges. The large shifts in 2008 and 2015 may be explained by the Presidential by-elections due to the death of sitting Presidents. Hill (2012) and Hounkpe (2014) also found that number and type of elections contributed to increased costs. This may also explain the unprecedented increase between 2012 and 2014 which had an unprecedented number of parliamentary and local government by-elections as reported by the ECZ. There was also an increase in expenditure before every general election year which may account for spending on voter registration and education by the ECZ. Foltz (2014) and Mohr et al. (2018) found high costs in setting and wide up of election in the USA as well. From 2011 to 2021 registered voters had increased by 1,856,345.. Of course other factors maybe at play but when you consider that most budgets in Africa are based on past year baselines, this could have contributed to continued increase in budget allocation which could have created demand. As argued by other Scholars (Folz, 2014; James & Jervier, 2017; Mohr et al. 2018), election administration spending is important as it can influence capacity to deal with election result challenges, voter turnout levels and election equity, being the ease of access to voting stations for women, youths and the minority. The ECZ had become a fully-fledged institution during the period under study with increasing costs. By 2021, the polling stations had almost doubled from 6,456 to 12,152 (ECZ, 2021).

Disparities found in the allocation and expenditure levels may have also reflect perpetual conflicts between central government and the ECZ evidenced in studies by CABRI (2015) and James (2020). James found that the majority of the EMBs were funded directly by the central government who were guilty of not releasing all the allocated funds in some cases. As such, the ECZ may have been over budgeting with the knowledge that budget ceilings and other unforeseen budget reductions would ultimately bring their budget down. In the initial years, the high allocations by the ECZ may have been due to increased needs soon after independent set up in 2000 and donor support to strengthen democracy.

The study found that the 2021 general election was less expensive in real terms compared to the 2016 general election and yet it had more registered voters and 62% more polling stations (ECZ, 2021). This maybe because of what Hill (2012) called the extant model of election costs where she argued that economies of scale brought costs down. The study showed that on average, expenditure in election years was about 1.7% of national expenditure. This was above the results found by James (2020) in a study of 72 electoral bodies where he observed that most EMBS spent about 1% of national expenditure in election years. A possible explanation maybe policy shifts in accounting when the Zambian Kwacha was rebased, abolition of subsidies which may have provided liquidity to be diverted to more pre and electoral processes as well as unnecessary procurement at various levels of the electoral process. A presidential election had occurred in the preceding year and could have provided opportunity and impetus for continued unjustified activities through poor procurement. Oversight of two concurrent presidential elections may have proved to be a challenge for the ECZ management. However, the high costs could be economic related considering the power challenges the country experienced in 2014-2016 which put pressure on the kwacha due to power imports. This may have transferred to the ECZ who had to import a lot of items for the elections as well as power emergency facilities.

The year 2000, just before the general election in 2001, had the highest pre-election year expenditure with 1% of national spending. Even though 2008 was at just over 1.2% and 2015 at 1%, these may have been exacerbated by the unplanned Presidential by-elections. Over the period of study, the highest election expenditure as percentage of total national spending was at over 4% in 2012 .This might have been due to unprecedented number of parliamentary and local by-elections held that year. However, the large percentage increase might also have been facilitated by the abolition of input and output agriculture subsidies in 2012, which made up over 90% of the agriculture budget in 2010 and 2011 (MoA, 2011). This removal of subsidies may have created demand and facilitated an avenue for the unprecedented by-elections which many viewed as politically motivated. The following year in 2013, the government acquired the first Euro bond (GRZ, MoF, 2013) which may have also contributed to an atmosphere of high liquidity and thereby providing for a continued political push for further electoral nullifications and by-elections until 2016.

6.1.3 FISP, FRA and R&D Expenditure in Election and Non-Election years

Expenditure on R&D was almost negligible and research mostly on one crop, maize (MoA, 2019). The ‘political’ nature of the staple food and the desire to have drought resistant seeds in a country with extremely limited irrigation may be the reason for this occurrence. Many studies did find political influence in production and market pricing of maize in years of elections to support this position (Champita, 2016; Mulungu & Chilundika, 2016) However, over the period of study, general expenditure on R&D as extension services was almost zero in the period 2010 to 2012. This may reflect lack of commitment to investment and long-term planning in agriculture. Similar findings were also found by Ghulati (2018). In 2010 and 2011 the explanation might perhaps have been electoral impacts through the FRA due to unprecedented maize bumper harvest of over 2.7 million tonnes last achieved in 1974 (Post Harvest Policy Statement, MoA, 2011). Incumbents wish for re-election may have compelled government to procure beyond the agreed maize reserves of 500 thousand tonnes. In 2012, the newly elected administration scrapped all agriculture subsidies perhaps in an effort to accelerate smooth engagements on the Euro bonds which resulted in successful loans. Outside 2010 to 2012, the R&D expenditure was consistently low and did not meet the 1% CAADP target. This may have been due to lack of prioritisation of R&D and/or simply for the reason that the FISP and FRA are very visible interventions and directly benefit politicians and farmer interest groups (Vergne, 2009; Ebeke & olcer, 2013; Benin, 2016; Mogues & Rosario, 2016; Champita, 2016; Mogues et al. 2018). In this case, the study argues that R&D expenditure may have been impacted over the study period due to electoral cycles which resulted in a focus on subsidies and not investment. And this is against many agriculture experts' views who have pointed often, to investment in R&D as the most effective for agriculture transformation and poverty reduction in low income agrarian countries (Fan et al. 2009; Mink, 2016; Mellor, 2017; FAO, 2021). This is however inconsistent, despite the weak democratic push, with motivation incentive to have almost 'benevolent' democratic leaders who would view their desire for re-election as being aligned to the need for sustainability in agriculture growth. However, regular stiff electoral competitions may make this impossible as argued by Moyo (2018). And even after electoral decentralisation and consistent local elections, agriculture did not appear to have benefited from investments. This was in line with studies by Resnick (2019) Ghana where most extension expenditure was limited to staff wages and local politicians actively diverted local expenditure away from agriculture on projected with more visibility and faster turn around time.

The FISP expenditure seemed to only be consistent from 2013. In real terms expenditure was quite low except for 2000. The explanation for the period 2001 to 2009 may have been new policy setting challenges which resulted in the FSP into FISP. This was also the period for HIPC discussions and the 2008 financial crisis which initiated the IMF engagement. The Euro bond loans may have also assisted to create fiscal space for FISP and FRA expenditure from 2013. The trend over the period seemed to be that FISP increased in the year just before the election year. However, in real values these increases were quite small in the first decade of the study period and not much thereafter in the second decade. The sharp increase in 2000 could have been due to commitment to the new policy as earlier alluded to when the input subsidy was first initiated. The year 2021 also seemed to be an outlier as FISP expenditure was noticeably more than in the year before the general election, which was against the trend. This may have been due to prior budgeting by the administration in readiness for elections in 2021. In Zambia, the following year's budget is presented on the second Friday in October of the current year. The challenge though was that after a decade, the number of farmers demanding support had grown close to two million farmers because of program failure to wean off beneficiaries as suggested after three years. This may have been one of the main reasons for the loss the then administration suffered in 2021 considering the majority potential FISP beneficiaries were first time young voters who had constantly failed to get on the list of beneficiaries. And unfortunately, in real terms, FISP expenditure has not been anywhere near the initial levels of the year 2000 even with the attempt in 2021. The levels had in fact dwindled to a third of the original expenditure levels in real terms.

In 2001, there was a very high expenditure by the FRA. This may have been used to garner support for a protracted campaign by the then ruling party leadership, to change the constitution to allow for a third term presidential office. This was defeated in Parliament but not before the FRA expenditure may have been increased to woo voters. There was no return to those expenditure levels in the rest of the study period. An attempt was made in 2010 and 2011 but these were still far below the 2001 levels. Since then, the FRA expenditure has been at a minimum possibly due to reduced production because of the worst drought in 40 years in 2018 and 2019. Policy shifts may also contribute to the up and down trend depending on the availability of resources and political temperature in terms of food prices in the country.

6.1.4 Elections Expenditure, Agriculture Expenditure and Agricultural Growth

The findings revealed that agricultural growth was on a down ward trend. Theoretically, in a country with regular elections and a large population in agriculture, agriculture expenditure would be expected to be higher or at least to be close to the 10% CAADP commitment (Klomp & Haan, 2013; Poulton, 2014). However, we believe that lack of stringent budget rules may have allowed for discretionary change of use of even already budgeted funds in agriculture. Olofinyibi and Mogues (2017) found evidence of the same in Nigeria. In countries with a green revolution in Asia, governments expended 15% and above on agriculture for a green revolution (Fan et al. 2009). In Latin America, there was a huge and sustained commitment to extension services and research in Brazil, Chile and Argentina (Fan & Rao, 2003; Mink 2016) with a focus on a variety of crops and fruits. The study observed that while pronouncements were made on agriculture in Zambia, commitment to the policies was based on production levels and capacity by the government to provide production subsidies. Poulton (2014) refers to a weak democratic push by small scale farmers to compel policy makers to expend more where it matters most such as on R&D, irrigation and storage. However, it would have also been a case of instant gratification, where farmer leaders colluded with politicians on focus of fertiliser subsidies entrenching their power in the community as well. A similar study in India found such evidence in relation to retail prices of essential foods during elections. This may also be alluded to lack of actual budget performance information especially on a disaggregated level and how that met policy objectives. A study in Germany by Garcia and Hayo (2021) revealed that many voters, even in developed countries, were not conversant with fiscal policy and failed to appropriately signal their expenditure preferences during elections. The evidence postulates that this lack of information also applies to policy makers especially in democracies where governments may change often and new leaders have to begin to understand government expenditure policy (Drazen & Brenda, 2011; Kosec & Wantchekon, 2018; Moyo 2018). There are also electoral cycle impacts which may have led to budget manipulation resulting in volatility and deficits (Brender & Drazen, 2005; Vergne 20011). It may be for this reason that Moyo (2018) argued against short election cycles claiming that they cement political budget manipulation further since incumbents are always in campaign mode.

The evidence from the study showed an up and down trend on agriculture expenditure. However, the component on the major service delivery as indicated in the findings was quite erratic with no clear trend on expenditure levels. The expenditure over the period in real terms was quite low. High and consistent agriculture expenditure trend levels have been known to contribute significantly to agriculture growth (Akroyd & Smith, 2007; Fan et al. 2009; Benin, 2016; Mogues et al. 2018). In this case the oscillating ECZ and agriculture expenditure with a consistent low expenditure on services such as R&D may have caused the downward trend in agriculture growth over the study period.

However, this observation by no means should be taken as being against expenditure on elections. Elections are constitutional and a good barometer of the health of democracy. Nevertheless, good election delivery may not be enough until expenditure on elections actually means more than choosing leaders but results in improvement of life for the majority of citizens. High poverty levels in Zambia as reported by the World Bank are evidence of low growth in agriculture. Linking election expenditure to specific service delivery in a sector responsible for the wellbeing of most people may in fact be a mitigating factor for large electoral impacts and thereby the first step to correcting failure in the functioning *burden on democracy*.

There may be no alternative to democracy in Zambia currently making reduction of its shortcomings an imperative. Otherwise it may not be sustainable and may give rise to populist movements seen around the world and are a threat to the rule of law.

6.2 Discussion on Inferential Statistics Findings

This section will present a discussion on the statistical findings on the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

6.2.1 Relationship between Expenditure on Elections and Agriculture Service Delivery Expenditure

The R-squared in the Model revealed that expenditure by the ECZ and election year variable explained about 69.4% and 32% of the variability in ASD expenditure in the short and long run respectively. The results implied the models were a good fit. However, as mentioned by Gujarati & Potter (2008), one need not worry about the low R-squared in the long run. The results are still admissible if the p-value of the F-statistic is statistically significant at 5% due to the relationship that exists between R-squared and F-statistics. Secondly, the error correction term (ECT) was found negative (=-0.114) and statistically significant at 5% level of significance. The outcome informed the study that any short run deviation of the variables from their long run relationship was corrected at a speed of 114%. Such a quick rate of correction maybe evidence of oscillating convergence with dampening fluctuations (Narayan & Smyth, 2006). This revelation meant that whenever there was a shock to expenditure by the ECZ (as a result of by-election for example), expenditure by the ECZ may have gone above its long term average and began to reduce at a speed of 114% to restore it to its equilibrium. The occurrence could explain a strong correlation that exists between ASD expenditure and electoral cycles. This was the cornerstone of this research.

Table 4 and 5 model results indicated a strong and positive short run relationship between expenditure by the ECZ and ASD expenditure. In fact, ASD expenditure had a response rate of 1.0638% to a 1% increase in expenditure by the ECZ in the short run and a response rate of 1.038% in the long run. This revelation informed the study that expenditure on ASD is influenced by ECZ expenditure. The Agriculture Investment Plan (2014-2018) had called for major investments in the sector. The priority programmes for the investment were increased crop production, increased livestock production, increased aquaculture, market access and services development, food and nutrition security and disaster management, environment management, knowledge support and institutional strengthening. The largest of these was crop support on account of the FISP as stated in the investment report (P82). The second was food security and alluded to be based on the FRA procurement function. Knowledge support which included extension services and R&D put at 9% of total investment over the period. However, the evidence over the study period found that actual expenditure on this function was negligible and limited mostly to recruitment and wage expenditure of extension staff. It is this point that buttresses the findings in tables 4 and 5 on the strong and positive short ran relationship between the variables, a reflection of the cyclical fiscal shock on increased election expenditure and narrow spending in agriculture, influenced by both the PBC but also actual expenditure on elections. This last point was well reflected in descriptive statistics where whenever it appeared that whenever ECZ expenditure increased the MoA levels seemed to drop. The fact that the relationship was also quite significant in the long run, between the ECZ and ASD expenditures did not reflect actual commitment has impact on ASD seemed to have been reducing expenditure compared to expenditure in the short run though in both cases increases were minimal. However the impact of reduced increases over the long run may have been the cause of a downward trend in term of growth. Evidence of this was supported by Ebeke and Olcer (2013). They found deficit shifts of 1% in election years. However, reduction and resources mobilisation was not attained at the same levels after election.

6.2.2 ASD Expenditure and Election Years

Both in the long and short run, the impact of election year was negative but statistically insignificant. The insignificant relationship between actual election year expenditure and the ASD agrees with the literature which showed that election costs were usually on average around 1% of national expenditure and that in some cases costs reduced per/voter (Mohr et al., 2018). For example, the 2016 general election with less voters and polling stations was more expensive in real terms compared to the 2021 election. The other reason may be related to actual traditional electoral impacts as reflected in the short run results of ECZ expenditure impact on ASD expenditure. The relationship was quite significant reflecting increases in both election expenditure as well as ASD expenditure in the short run which may have discounted election year impact. This is because the election expenditure at the ECZ and on FISP began the year before with ECZ steeping in election year and often with increased expenditure on FRA.

The above fact also may explain the reducing effects in the long run as short run increases could have only be influenced by desire for re-election. The reduction in the long was again seen as possible lack of commitment to agriculture policy objectives. The lack of impact by election year expenditure may have also been due to limited election year observations in this study. However, it may also confirm Balamatsias that democracy increased expenditure in a democracy with a large middle class and as well as a large share of informed voter as provided for my Vergne (2011). The challenge everywhere was found to be difficulties in disaggregating economic and fiscal data in a way it may be easily understand by many later on made accessible. In this case election did not play their intended role of placing a burden on democracy to function with as little deviations as possible.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Conclusion

This research noted that while Zambia has been a democratic country for a long time, there has not been substantial democratic push to result in transformation in agriculture service delivery.

This research concluded that election administration and organisation has a cost. It also concluded that investment in agriculture was impacted by shocks from both election costs and budget manipulation related to election timing.

7.2 Summary of Findings

Both the descriptive and inferential statistics confirmed existence of a strong relationship between election expenditure and that of ASD. The evidence was that the ECZ expenditure impact was quite significant in the short run accounting for 69.4% of changes in the ASD expenditure. A 1% shift in the ECZ expenditure resulted in 1.064% and 1,038% change in expenditure on ASD in the short and long term respectively. These shifts were quite small. The speed of correction in any expenditure shocks in the short run was 114% reflecting a convergence trend between the variables. The relation between election year and ASD expenditures was however, insignificant.

7.3 Overall Conclusion

Dissatisfaction in democracies with huge inequality has already been seen around the world including in established nations. While the health of an economy plays a critical role in the capacity by any government to provide public goods and services, it remain imperative that fiscal prudence a critical issues in why there should be investment in electoral investment.

Our overall conclusion is that the policy commitments to the CAADP 10% public investment in agriculture and 1% specifically on R&D will not be met unless there is a critical democratic push and possibly ‘benevolent’ democrats.

7.4 Contribution to body of knowledge

This study provided a times series in depth quantitative analysis of public expenditure trends and relationship among the variables using OLS regression. Such long data is critical as part of evidence of long run data over time on outcome of the expenditure and its impacts on agriculture growth and poverty reduction. This was also supported by Ortiz-Spina and Poser (2021). This study will be expected to prompt further studies on public expenditure and provide insight on policy crafting to align expenditure, at both the ECZ and MoA to the wellbeing of majority Zambians.

7.5 Recommendations

7.5.1 Government recommendations (Finance and Agriculture)

Based on the findings, the study recommends that agreed policy objectives in agriculture and CAADP commitments must become a *national mission.* This would entail that agricultural goals are shared at all levels including households, schools, private sector, civil society and the media. It is true that the only way agriculture in low income countries can transform is if the highest office in the land was fully engaged. Consistency in agriculture investment policy will also be critical. We recommend a review of NAIP to learn lessons. This may assist with budget formulation and aligning of priority objectives to meet CAADP commitments by 2025 and SDGs by 2030. This study recommends a clear plan for agriculture development based on cost of other support sectors such as water, energy and other agriculture related infrastructure.

7.5.2 The ECZ

A policy on election expenditure is also recommended. In this way, government may have to look at acceptable election management cost caps without compromising election delivery. The global call has been for better election expenditure data management, enhanced use of technology, review of electoral laws, improved procurement regulations and standardised accounting. This is important for Zambia too, to avoid failure of the functionality *burden on democracy,* the burden to deliver critical services to the majority of citizens.

7.2.2 Recommendations for Further Research

There is need for a robust study on total election and agriculture expenditure from the return to plural politics in 1991 to date, to determine the actual impact of election expenditure on agriculture expenditure on one hand and the impact of agriculture expenditure composition on agriculture growth on the other hand. Investigations may have to include livestock, poultry, and fisheries, horticulture and other tree economies for a clear understanding of the relationship between election expenditure and investment in agriculture in Zambia. It is also our view that it is necessary for a comparison study to be done on agriculture expenditure trends against other sectors such as health, education, energy and even social welfare programs in view of policy objectives and budget performance. Further investigation on election data especially since 1991 and in what direction costs have been going, including variations between allocations and actual expenditure may also be necessary. The election expenditure impact on general public expenditure may be an opportunity for deeper understanding of how elections, beyond electoral cycle political manipulation, actually impact the fiscal space. A mixed methods approach may be best to understand further how the *functionality burden on democracy* occurs and maybe positively applied to avoid the burden leading only to regular elections without the expected commensurate social/economic development.

We also recommend a review of election and agriculture expenditure as a series, every 5 to 10 years. This may allow for quick evaluation of budget performance against national priorities which would include other sectors that may support both electoral governance and agriculture transformation.

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APPENDIX A

Normality test

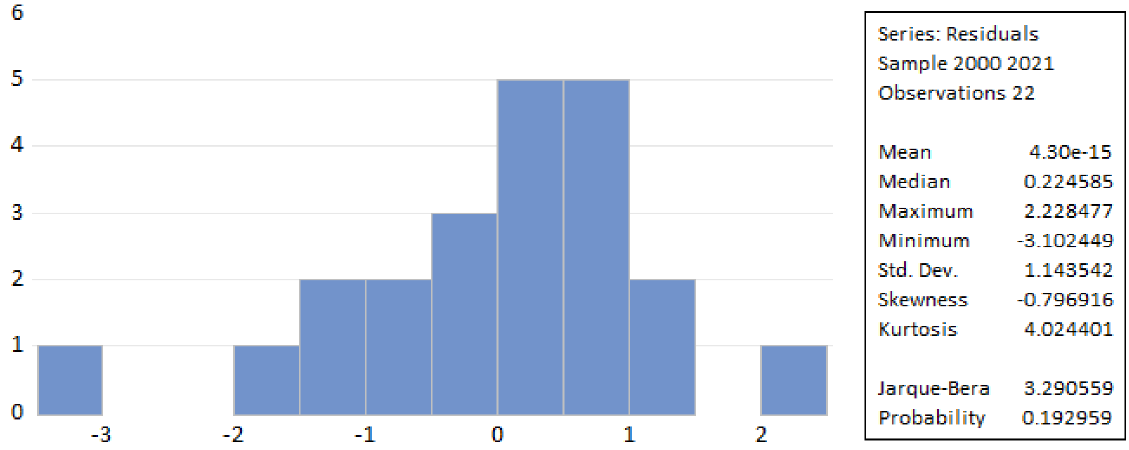

Figure 9: Normality Test

Auto-Correlation Tests

Table 7: Autocorrelation

Breusch-Godfrey Serial Correlation LM Test:
Null hypothesis: No serial correlation at up to 2 lags

F-statistic	1.229319	Prob. F(2,17)	0.3172
Obs*R-squared	2.779743	Prob. Chi-Square(2)	0.2491

Heteroscedasticity Test

Table 8: Heteroscedasticity Test

Heteroskedasticity Test: Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey
Null hypothesis: Homoskedasticity

F-statistic	0.238141	Prob. F(2,19)	0.7904
Obs*R-squared	0.537998	Prob. Chi-Square(2)	0.7641
Scaled explained SS	0.606809	Prob. Chi-Square(2)	0.7383