

1. **kennethross 10:34**

If the chameleon represents a flaw in Malawi's politics, which creature would represent the politics to which Malawians aspire?

Interesting question the patron-client political culture can in our view be represented by a hyena because of its opportunism and survivalism. Hyenas are often seen as opportunistic animals, surviving by scavenging and exploiting available resources rather than hunting independently. This reflects the client's dependence on the patron for survival and benefits, mirroring how clients in patronage systems rely on the dominant political figure for access to resources and protection. Hyena clans are strictly hierarchical, and subordinates follow the dominant alpha, echoing the loyalty expected in patron-client relations. The relationship is not equal but based on benefits in exchange for obedience and service.

2. **Richard Zidana 11:03**

I entirely agree with the paper's argument. As you indicated on an instance in which MCP officials questioned why the media is interested in their giving out handouts when all other parties are doing it, the practice has indeed become entrenched. Politicians have become averse to criticism and acceptance of responsibility/accountability for their decisions. If you accuse an official in the current government of corruption, the response will be the previous government was also/more corrupt than us. If you tell them they are failing to control government spending, you will be told the previous government was also spending. We are a nation of competing who is doing more damage rather than resolving issues. But hey, politicians come from our communities, they are part of us. They are a reflection of who Malawians are. Where do we end this cycle? Probably the big man type can be the only hope. Should our fate lie in experimenting leaders?

Good observation Richard, your words "Probably the big man type can be the only hope" has been said by many analysts. They have suggested that the Magufuli or Kagame type of approach might be ideal for Malawi. But we leave that to you to digest.

3. **Gabriel Vitumbiko Nyondo 10:58**

Thanks Prof and Maureen for such insightful and informative presentations.

However, from my knowledge, I think the politics of handouts has been perpetuated in Malawi because many of people who vote in our country do not understand the essence of voting hence majority think, if they have to vote for someone, then they have to benefit something first even without understanding what political actors would bring in terms of policy direction and change.

Would we consider putting a limit to those voting to the educated only as a way of changing our political culture? I hope we have had laws that stops things like handouts in politics, but we haven't had tangible enforcement to this far, what is your take?

Thanks Gabriel for this question and proposal: "putting a limit to those voting to the educated only". Actually there is a concept in politics known as epistocracy which argues that democracy has failed hence

only those who are educated or knowledgeable should be involved. We refer you to this paper: Kayuni, H and Jamali-Chikapa, T .2023. "Role of Epistocracy in Addressing the Democratic Shortfalls in the Post Truth Era: Some Insights from Malawi". *8th International Conference on Public Administration and Development Alternatives (IPADA), Holiday Inn, Sunnyside Park, Johannesburg, South Africa, 13th September 2023*