The Effectiveness of Parliament Radio in Creating Public Awareness About the Zambian Parliament's Activities: A Case Study of Munali Constituency in Lusaka District

Musonda Nshimbi (MCC) And Elijah Mutambanshiku Mwewa Bwalya (Ph.D.)

Musonda Nshimbi holds a Master's degree in Corporate Communication and is currently working at the National Assembly of Zambia

Dr. Elijah Mutambanshiku Mwewa Bwalya has a Ph.D in Media Studies. Currently he works as a lecturer at the University of Zambia in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences in the Department of Media and Communication Studies.

DOI: 10.29322/IJSRP.16.11.2026.p17908
https://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.16.11.2026.p17908

Paper Received Date: 14th September 2026
Paper Acceptance Date: 17th October 2026
Paper Publication Date: 8th November 2026

Abstract

This study investigated the effectiveness of Parliament Radio in creating public awareness in Munali Constituency about the Zambian Parliament's activities. The quantitative sample comprised 207 respondents from a population of one hundred ninety two thousand three hundred twenty six (192,326) selected through systematic random sampling to ensure representativeness of the constituency. Data collection involved structured questionnaires administered to general public respondents and in-depth interviews with seven key informants such as community leaders and radio staff. Quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. Results showed that about 70% of respondents were aware of Parliament Radio, recognizing it as an important source of information on parliamentary proceedings and governance issues. However, only 40% regularly listened to the broadcasts, with more educated groups tuning in more frequently. Key challenges included poor signal reception, language barriers due to limited local language programming, and insufficient interactive content, which diminished listener engagement. Despite these limitations, the radio contributed positively to transparency and civic education. The study concludes that Parliament Radio plays a vital role in bridging the gap between Parliament and citizens but needs to improve its accessibility, content diversity, and community outreach. It is recommended that Parliament Radio invests in multilingual programming, infrastructure upgrades, and participatory activities to increase listenership and enhance democratic engagement.

Key words: *Parliament, effectiveness, broadcast, participation, democracy, awareness*

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

1. Introduction

Parliaments and international parliamentary organizations recognize the importance of providing citizens with access to information such as the Americas and Caribbean who adopted and committed to the ParlAmericas Road Map towards legislative openness and creating various spaces for citizen contributions (ParlAmericas, 2021); the French National Assembly which has a Parliamentary Channel called *La Chaîne Parlementaire's* which broadcasts the work carried out in committees, televises programmes, talk shows and documentaries that go into greater detail on specific topics being dealt with by Parliament (IPU et al., 2007); and the Indian Parliament which runs a television channel called the Lok Sabha Television that disseminates information about various issues pertaining to the work of Parliament and developmental issues (Lok Sabha, 2024). In Africa, countries like South Africa and Kenya have been broadcasting parliamentary proceedings in order to keep the citizens abreast of the work of Parliament.

In addition, the importance of providing more information on and increasing coverage of parliamentary activities was underscored by some 200 participants from 80 countries at the first ever Conference on Broadcasting of Parliamentary Business through Dedicated TV Channels and Public Broadcasting Systems, which was convened in Geneva on 19 October, 2006, by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) and the Association of Secretary Generals of Parliaments. The Conference was attended by 180 Members of Parliament and representatives of parliamentary channels and public broadcasters. It emphasised the need for the creation of a direct link between citizens and the media and also to narrow the gap between the citizens and their elected representatives in Parliament (IPU, 2021).

From the foregoing, it is clear that successful parliamentary communication is important for effective, accountable and balanced democratic governance and that it also contributes to public credibility. Communication with the various stakeholders is relevant if the citizens are to be able to actively participate in the legislative and oversight processes of Parliament. Citizens need to have access to information about parliamentary proceedings, legislation, and policy and also be able to engage in continual dialogue with Parliamentarians (UNECA, 2024). Communicating Parliament can be done through various ways such as publications, websites, radio and television and through social media.

2. The Historical Background of the Zambian Parliament

Zambia's political history after the colonial era can be divided into three periods. The first period is the first republic from 1964 to 1972. The second republic lasted from 1973 to 1990 and the third republic began in 1991. The history of the Zambian Parliament has been directly linked to the Advisory Council that was first established in 1918 and was composed of five elected Members (Phiri, Banda & Haantobolo 2004). This was an Advisory Council which provided the white settler community with a limited voice in the administration of the territory as it had no Legislative or Executive Authority which remained vested in the Administrator of the British South African Company. In 1924 when the Colonial Office took over direct administration of the territory, the Advisory Council was renamed the Legislative Council. The Legislative Council was therefore, created to mainly accord the white settlers a large say in the running of their affairs than had been the case during the British South African Company rule (Chibesakunda 2001).

From the aforementioned, it can be observed that African participation in the Legislative Council was minimal and hence, they did not have much practice with parliamentary democracy during the period when the country was under colonial rule (Phiri, Banda & Haantobolo 2004). The last Legislative Council before independence was formed after the elections of 28th January, 1964 under a self-governing constitution which created seventy-five (75) seats in the House. Of these, sixty-five where elective on the main roll for African voters. The main political parties in the contest were the African National Congress (ANC), the whites only National Progressive Party (NPP) and the United National Independence Party (UNIP). The elections gave an overwhelming victory to UNIP which won fifty-five (55) of the sixty-five (65) main roll seats. The ANC filled the remaining ten (10) seats and the NPP secured the ten reserved roll seats (Chibesakunda 2001).

In May 1964, the British Government called for the Northern Rhodesia Independence Conference at the Marlborough House in London. All political parties that had seats in the Legislative Council were represented. At the conference, an Independence Constitution was concluded and it provided for a Legislative Council made up of eighty (80) members. On 24th October, 1964, Northern Rhodesia became the independent state of Zambia and a republic within the commonwealth. The Legislative Council was renamed the National Assembly of Zambia with seventy-five (75) elected members and five nominated members (National Assembly of Zambia, 2018).

The first National Assembly after independence met on 14th December, 1964, and elected its first Speaker, Mr Wesley Pillsbury Nyirenda, MP, who took over from Sir Thomas Williams, MP. In 1967, Parliament moved from the old Secretariat at Cabinet Office to a newly constructed Parliament Buildings on the crown of a low hill in Lusaka where it has remained to date. Following the constitutional amendment Act No. 2 of 2016, the National Assembly consists of one hundred and fifty-six (156) elected Members, eight (08) nominated members, the Speaker, the First Deputy Speaker and the Second Deputy Speaker (who is chosen from the 156 aforementioned elected members). In addition, there is the Vice President who is the Leader of Government Business in the House. The

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

total number of Members of Parliament, including the Speaker, the First Deputy Speaker, and the Republican Vice President is, therefore, 167 (National Assembly of Zambia, 2018). When the President is present in the House, it is then referred to as Parliament. According to Article 62 of the Constitution of Zambia, Parliament consists of the President and the National Assembly (National Assembly of Zambia, 2021).

Parliament is an arm of the government that plays an important role in the democratic governance process. It derives its powers from the Constitution of Zambia *Amendment* Act No. 2 of 2016. Article 62 of the Constitution provides for the establishment of Parliament which consists of the President and the National Assembly. Parliament performs a number of functions that are important to the governance of the country. Article 63 of the Constitution gives Parliament the power to legislate. One of the main functions of Parliament is to legislate or to make laws (National Assembly of Zambia, 2018). In performing this function, Parliament makes new laws, amends, and repeals and replaces existing laws. The Constitution also gives Parliament the mandate to perform budgetary functions such as discussing and approving the National Budget, approving what taxes should be levied during the year, monitoring and exercising control over government expenditure as well as considering and approving supplementary allocation of funds.

Article 63 of the Constitution also gives Parliament the authority to perform an oversight function over the work carried out by the Executive in order to hold them accountable for their actions. In performing its functions, Parliament also supports the work of watchdog institutions such as the Auditor General and also enables the electorate present petitions on issues of public concern (National Assembly of Zambia, 2004). It also ratifies the appointments of constitutional officers, approves international agreements and treaties before they are acceded to or ratified, performs a representative role to the electorate and approves public debt before it is contracted. It follows therefore, that the function of Parliament is not only to legislate, but also to monitor the implementation of government policy and legislation (National Assembly of Zambia 2018).

The transition to multi-party democracy in 1991 necessitated reforms in Zambia's parliamentary functions to meet the demands of plural politics and heightened public expectations (Phiri, Banda & Haantobolo, 2004). Zambia's expansion of parliamentary broadcasts and the establishment of Parliament Radio and Television reflect a regional trend toward leveraging media to bridge the gap between Parliament and citizens. However, as Andayi (2020) and Okong'o (2016) reveal, increased knowledge does not necessarily translate into positive public attitudes or trust, indicating the need for communication strategies that go beyond information dissemination to foster genuine engagement (Andayi, 2020; Okong'o, 2016).

Historically, Zambia faced limitations in parliamentary broadcasting, such as the early use of a Very High Frequency (VHF) transmitter that restricted citizen access to debates (National Assembly of Zambia, 1978). Subsequent expansions in live broadcasts and the creation of Parliament Radio and Television address these limitations and align with Beetham's (2006) advocacy for accessibility through diverse media channels. The UK House of Commons Administration Committee (2023) similarly recommends multimodal communication strategies and empowering MPs as communicators to enhance public understanding, lessons that are pertinent for Zambia's ongoing efforts (House of Commons Administration Committee, 2023). Zambia is among several countries in both the developed and developing world that embarked on a series of parliamentary reforms from 1992 to date (Chitika, 2012). Parliament Radio and Television were launched in May 2006 and February, 2018 respectively with a view to "Take Parliament Closer to the People "under the parliamentary reform programme.

During the launch of Parliament Television, the then Speaker of the National Assembly, Rt. Hon Justice Dr. Patrick Matibini, SC, MP emphasized that parliamentary reforms had incorporated parliamentary communication and outreach with a desire to broadcast the Sessions of Parliament on both radio and television in order to keep the public informed on the work of Parliament (National Assembly of Zambia, 2022). Ultimately, increased levels of awareness about the work of Parliament and its procedures was expected to contribute to increased participation in the democratic governance process.

3. Parliament Radio

Parliament Radio was established as result of the Parliamentary Reforms which the Zambian Parliament embarked on in order to realign its functions with the demands of plural politics. One of the key outputs of the reforms was "Taking Parliament Closer to the people" which entailed enhancing the way Parliament conducted both its internal and external communications (National Assembly of Zambia, 2011). In order to ensure that the proposed reforms were implemented, without undue delay, Parliament immediately started implementing some areas of reform such as the extension of live broadcasts of parliamentary debates on FM radio from 20 to 50 kilometers radius. This led to the creation of Parliament Radio which streams online and broadcasts to all provincial centres, towns along the line of rail and selected parts of the country. This was all in an effort to enhance Member-constituency relations and enhance public participation. The radio station broadcasts live and/or recorded parliamentary proceedings and committee meetings and also disseminates information about the operations, functions and activities of the Zambian Parliament.

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

4. Statement of the Problem

The communication role of Parliament is generally an area that is under researched. This is an aspect acknowledged by Auel and Raunio (2014). Chitika also acknowledges the literature gaps in the communicative and participative aspects of the Parliament of Zambia (Chitika, 2012). However, there have been major developments in the field of parliamentary communication and more coverage of the parliamentary proceedings. Parliaments in various countries have realised the importance of openness and have undergone reform in order to be more accessible and inclusive in their work and processes (Open Parliament e-Network, 2020). They have established radio and television stations to broadcast parliamentary sessions and also disseminate information about the activities of Parliament (Agora, 2024). Zambia is among several countries in the world that embarked on a series of parliamentary reforms from 1992 to date. During the period before the reform programme was embarked on, there was limited public access to information and participation in parliamentary processes. Committee meetings were held in-camera with little or no public input. Parliament was viewed as a closed up institution, with procedures and processes restricting access and the institution was viewed with suspicion by the various stakeholders.

Hence, in view of the aforementioned and other factors, the Zambian Parliament decided to embark on parliamentary reforms aimed at enhancing parliamentary oversight of the activities of the Executive and also to allow for increased participation of the citizens in the affairs of the country (National Assembly of Zambia, 2021). Despite its role in promoting democratic governance over the years, the Zambian Parliament is still a mystery to many citizens who have limited understanding of its functions, powers, and responsibilities. This knowledge gap has undermined the effectiveness of parliamentary democracy, as citizens are unable to effectively hold their elected representatives accountable or participate meaningfully in parliamentary affairs and ultimately the democratic process. In essence, all the citizens are Members of Parliament, but for practical purposes only very few are elected to represent the rest of the citizens. From the foregoing, it is clear that successful parliamentary communication is important for effective, accountable and balanced democratic governance and that it also contributes to public credibility. Parliament as an institution that represents the people performs its functions on behalf of the electorates.
Research carried out through focus group discussions to review the National Assembly of Zambia 2017 to 2021 Communication Strategy revealed that out of the 33 constituencies surveyed, only seven (7) were aware that they could participate in parliamentary business while the remaining 26 did not know about this privilege. Results from the questionnaire distributed showed that 64 percent of respondents felt that the public was not well informed about parliamentary affairs (National Assembly of Zambia, 2022)

Parliament Radio, as a communication channel, has the potential to bridge this knowledge gap by providing citizens with accurate and timely information about parliamentary proceedings, debates, and decisions. It is for this reason that in 2006, the Zambian Parliament launched the radio channel with the mandate of "Taking Parliament Closer to the people". Specifically, the station was created to keep citizens informed about the functions of the Zambian Parliament, its activities and how to participate in parliamentary affairs. Despite the existence of Parliament Radio, a knowledge gap about the Zambian Parliament and its activities still exists. The question then is, why has this knowledge gap persisted even when Parliament Radio has been in existence for many years with the aim to create an informed citizenry about the activities of the Zambian Parliament? The answer to this question was in carrying out a research to determine the effectiveness of Parliament Radio in creating public awareness about the activities of the Zambian Parliament.

5. Specific Objectives

i. To determine levels of public awareness about the Parliament Radio channel.

ii. To ascertain the effectiveness of Parliament Radio in disseminating parliamentary activities to the public.

iii. To examine the challenges Parliament Radio experiences in disseminating information to the public.

6. Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

The following are the theories that anchored the findings of the study and how they were used to explain the findings.

6.1 Agenda-Setting Theory

Agenda-Setting Theory, introduced by McCombs and Shaw (1972), posits that media influences public perceptions of issue importance by emphasizing certain topics, serving as the primary theoretical framework for analyzing Parliament Radio's role in elevating awareness of Zambian parliamentary activities in Munali Constituency (McCombs & Ghanem, 2001; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). A key component of the Agenda-Setting Theory is the differentiation between the media agenda and the public agenda. The media agenda refers to the set of issues chosen for coverage by media houses, while the public agenda consists of the issues that the public perceives as important. Research has demonstrated a strong correlation between these agendas, indicating that as the media devote more attention to certain topics, those topics rise in prominence in the public consciousness (McCombs, 2005). This relationship highlights the media's influential role in determining which issues are brought to the forefront of public debate and policy consideration.

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

The theory further distinguishes between first-level and second-level agenda setting. First-level agenda setting concerns the prominence of issues—how much coverage an issue receives and its perceived importance among the audience. Second-level agenda setting, also known as attribute agenda setting or framing, examines how the media present and characterize issues, including the tone, context, and specific aspects emphasized. This framing can shape not only what people think about but also how they interpret and understand those issues (McCombs and Ghanem, 2001).

The Agenda-Setting Theory also emphasizes the role of media professionals as gatekeepers who decide which stories are covered and how they are framed. Through the process of agenda building, media houses not only select topics for public discussion but also construct narratives around those issues, thereby influencing both public and policy agendas. This gatekeeping function can result in the elevation of certain topics while others are marginalized, ultimately shaping the overall landscape of public awareness and discourse (Cohen, 1963).

Media bias and issue saliency are additional considerations within the theory. The selection and framing of issues may reflect the perspectives or interests of media owners, editors, or journalists, which can influence public perception. The more coverage an issue receives, the more salient it becomes, making the public more likely to view it as significant and deserving of attention or action. This dynamic is crucial in understanding how the media can mobilize public opinion and potentially influence policy decisions (McCombs, 2005).

In the context of this study, which sought to carry out an assessment on the effectiveness of Parliament Radio in creating awareness among the public about the activities of the Zambian Parliament in Munali Constituency, the Agenda-Setting Theory provided a valuable analytical lens. Parliament Radio, as a specialized media outlet, has the potential to set the agenda for public discourse within the constituency by choosing which parliamentary issues and functions to highlight and how frequently to cover them. This directly relates to the study's objectives of assessing the public's awareness about the activities of the Zambian Parliament. If Parliament Radio consistently gives prominent coverage to certain parliamentary activities, these issues are likely to become more salient among the public, demonstrating the agenda-setting effect (McCombs and Shaw, 1972).

Furthermore, the theory helps explain potential differences in understanding Parliament Radio programming content and the activities of the Zambian Parliament. If the radio station prioritizes specific topics, gives them more space or frames them in particular ways, these issues are more likely to be recognized and understood by the public. Conversely, if there are barriers such as limited coverage, ineffective framing, or lack of audience engagement, these factors can hinder the station's ability to set the agenda and raise awareness and knowledge about parliamentary affairs. Thus, Agenda-Setting Theory not only framed the investigation but also provided a basis for interpreting the findings, particularly regarding the influence of media content, the effectiveness of communication strategies, and the factors that facilitate or impede public awareness about parliamentary activities in Munali Constituency (McCombs, 2005).

6.2 Uses and Gratifications Theory

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), developed by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974), emphasizes audiences as active selectors of media to fulfill needs. UGT posits that media consumption is motivated by the desire to fulfill various needs, which are broadly categorized into cognitive, affective, personal integrative, social integrative, and tension release needs (Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, 1974). Cognitive needs involve acquiring information, knowledge, and understanding—an essential aspect in the context of Parliament Radio, which aims to educate the public about parliamentary processes. Affective needs relate to emotional experiences and entertainment, which may influence how engaging the radio content is for listeners. Personal integrative needs refer to enhancing credibility, confidence, and status, while social integrative needs involve connecting with family, friends, and the community. Finally, tension release needs pertain to escapism and relaxation. Understanding which of these needs are most relevant to the Munali audience helps explain their media choices and the level of awareness they have about parliamentary activities (Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, 1974).

A key strength of UGT lies in its recognition of the active and selective nature of media use. Individuals do not consume media randomly; instead, they make conscious choices based on their personal motivations and social contexts (Rubin, 2009). Conversely, those whose needs are not met by the station's content or who face barriers such as poor radio reception or inconvenient broadcast times may turn to alternative media sources. This selective engagement then becomes critical for understanding the varying levels of public awareness and the effectiveness of Parliament Radio (Rubin, 2009).

UGT also emphasizes the importance of content relevance and accessibility in satisfying audience needs (Palmgreen and Rayburn, 1985). For Parliament Radio to effectively raise public awareness, its programming must be tailored to the linguistic preferences, cultural context, and informational needs of Munali residents. Additionally, technological factors such as signal strength, availability of radios, and electricity supply play a significant role in media accessibility, especially in constituencies with infrastructural challenges (Palmgreen and Rayburn, 1985).

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

Another important dimension of UGT is the interactive nature of media consumption. The theory suggests that media platforms that allow for audience feedback, participation, and dialogue are more likely to satisfy social integrative and personal identity needs (Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, 1974). Parliament Radio's potential to incorporate interactive elements such as call-in segments, listener questions, and community discussions could foster a sense of inclusion and empowerment among listeners. This interactivity not only enhances engagement but also strengthens democratic participation by giving citizens a voice in parliamentary discourse (Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, 1974).

Furthermore, UGT acknowledges that media use is shaped by broader socio-economic and environmental factors (Palmgreen and Rayburn, 1985). In Munali Constituency, disparities in income, education, and technological infrastructure may influence who accesses Parliament Radio and how they use it. For instance, residents with higher education levels may have greater cognitive needs for political information and thus be more likely to listen attentively to parliamentary programming. Conversely, lower-income households may face challenges such as lack of radios or unreliable electricity, limiting their ability to engage with the station's content. These contextual factors then become critical for interpreting the findings related to public awareness and media use (Palmgreen and Rayburn, 1985).

The Uses and Gratifications Theory serves as a valuable framework for anchoring the findings of this study by explaining the variations in public awareness of Parliament Radio and the activities of the Zambian Parliament within Munali Constituency. Moreover, UGT provided a lens to analyze the factors affecting Parliament Radio's effectiveness in creating public awareness. The Uses and Gratifications Theory not only framed the investigation into how residents of Munali Constituency use Parliament Radio but also provided a practical explanatory tool for understanding the complex interplay between audience needs, media content, and public awareness. This theoretical grounding helped inform recommendations aimed at enhancing Parliament Radio's programming and outreach strategies to better meet the needs of its audience, thereby improving civic engagement and knowledge of parliamentary activities (Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, 1974).

7. Literature Review

7.1 The Awareness of the Public about Parliament Radio

Although some studies have examined viewership and impact, empirical data on awareness levels and the communication function of Parliament in Zambia are scarce (Auel & Raunio, 2014; Chitika, 2012). Phiri's (2009) study found that individuals with tertiary education were the most informed about Parliament Radio, suggesting that education enhances access to parliamentary information and highlighting the need for targeted marketing and outreach to broaden awareness (Phiri, 2009). This finding aligns with the Economic Commission for Africa's (2012) recommendation for media involvement and the UK report's call for strategic communication to engage diverse audiences effectively (Economic Commission for Africa, 2012; House of Commons Administration Committee, 2023).

The need for focused research on public awareness of parliamentary broadcasting in Zambia is underscored by gaps identified in Kenyan and UK studies, which call for empirical evaluation of media initiatives' effectiveness at local or constituency levels (Andayi, 2020; House of Commons Administration Committee, 2023:). Zambia's historical challenges and reforms present a unique opportunity to explore how Parliament Radio can enhance democratic engagement, transparency, and accountability. Addressing these gaps through targeted studies and strategic communication reforms is essential for strengthening Zambia's parliamentary democracy and fostering meaningful citizen participation (Okong'o, 2016).

Zambia's parliamentary history and reforms reflect a gradual alignment with international best practices emphasizing transparency, accessibility, accountability, and public engagement. However, persistent gaps in communication and public awareness remain, particularly regarding the impact of parliamentary broadcasting. The collective insights from Beetham (2006), the Economic Commission for Africa (2012), Andayi (2020), the UK House of Commons Administration Committee (2023), and other studies provide a comprehensive framework for understanding these challenges and opportunities. The literature underscores that public awareness of parliamentary broadcasting remains a critical factor influencing civic engagement and democratic accountability. Phiri's (2009) study in Zambia revealed that awareness levels about Parliament Radio were relatively high among respondents with tertiary education, indicating that education plays a pivotal role in accessing parliamentary information.

However, the study also exposes a disconnect between awareness and active engagement, as low listenership and interaction suggest that awareness alone does not translate into meaningful participation (Phiri, 2009). This discrepancy highlights the importance of not only disseminating information but also ensuring that it reaches diverse socio-economic groups and motivates civic action. Furthermore, the literature suggests that awareness campaigns need to be tailored to local contexts, incorporating language, cultural relevance, and accessible formats to address barriers faced by marginalized groups (Afrobarometer, 2021). Without such targeted strategies, the risk is that awareness remains superficial, limited to educated urban elites, thus perpetuating inequalities in civic participation.

Critically, the existing literature indicates that mere awareness does not guarantee understanding or trust in parliamentary institutions. Awareness campaigns often focus on the quantity of information rather than quality and relevance, which are crucial for fostering

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

genuine civic literacy. Moreover, studies like those of Andayi (2020) argue that awareness initiatives must be complimented by interactive and participatory approaches that allow citizens to question and engage with parliamentary processes actively. The literature also highlights infrastructural challenges, especially in rural or underserved areas, where limited access to media and low literacy rates hinder awareness efforts (Rain, 2003). Consequently, the effectiveness of parliamentary radio in raising awareness must be critically assessed in terms of both reach and depth, recognizing that awareness is a necessary but insufficient condition for strengthening democratic engagement.

7.2 The extent to which Parliament Radio has Created Public Awareness about Parliamentary activities

Global studies on parliamentary broadcasting consistently highlight its role in increasing public knowledge and transparency, though its impact on public attitudes and trust varies. Beetham (2006), drawing on submissions from over 75 member of parliaments of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, emphasizes the educational value of broadcasting parliamentary proceedings. He cites the Indian example where dedicated satellite channels telecast live proceedings of both Houses and live radio broadcasts of Question Hour, ensuring wide national reach. Beetham argues that informed citizens are better equipped to hold representatives accountable and stresses the need for parliaments to actively engage the public using new communication technologies, including the internet, to foster interactive relationships (Beetham, 2006).

Similarly, Archick and Mix (2010) analyze the European Parliament's challenges with declining voter turnout and public skepticism, linking these to limited public awareness and understanding. They suggest parliamentary broadcasting can help foster positive perceptions and trust in democratic institutions. Wahyudin (2021) supports this in the Indonesian context, highlighting how Parliamentary Television strengthens citizen-legislature connections and builds public trust, which is essential for democracy (Archick & Mix, 2010; Wahyudin, 2021). Nevertheless, Kartz (1997) offers a cautionary perspective from the US and Poland, where increased exposure to televised legislatures sometimes led to more critical public attitudes. His review of a USAID evaluation in Poland found negative public reactions to televised parliamentary debates, attributed to low public understanding, suggesting that broadcasting must be paired with civic education to be effective (Kartz, 1997).

The Lok Sabha Secretariat (2006) report highlights that continuous live coverage does not guarantee balanced public perceptions. Using Canada as a case study, it notes that public focus on confrontational question periods can skew perceptions negatively. Robertson (1998) similarly discusses Canadian public cynicism, questioning whether television exacerbates negative attitudes or merely reflects existing discontent. Despite criticisms, many Canadians valued access to parliamentary proceedings, indicating a demand for transparency despite skepticism (Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2006; Robertson, 1998). Coleman (2004) reports from the UK that televising Parliament increased transparency but did not improve public affection for MPs, with widespread distrust persisting (Coleman, 2004). The Hansard Society (2011) found that public interest in Parliament in Britain skews toward older, higher socio-economic groups, with trust deficits being a significant barrier to engagement (Hansard Society, 2011).

Beetham's (2006) comprehensive guide, based on submissions from over 75 Inter-Parliamentary Union member parliaments, provides a normative framework emphasizing the importance of parliamentary communication for democratic governance. While not empirical, the guide stresses that parliaments must actively inform citizens through multi-platform strategies—including dedicated broadcasting channels—to enhance transparency, accountability, and inclusivity (Beetham, 2006). This prescriptive approach aligns with findings from the European Broadcasting Union and the Association of Secretary Generals of Parliaments (IPU et al., 2007), whose mixed-methods survey of 70 countries found that 83% regularly broadcast parliamentary activities, mostly on fixed time slots or live when newsworthy. Their data revealed parliamentary proceedings are often perceived as boring, limiting audience size, and emphasized the need to stimulate public interest and build viewer loyalty. Case studies from Italy and Canada illustrated how political events and resource availability influence audience sizes (IPU et al., 2007). The Swedish model, with terrestrial broadcasts reaching about 1% of the population regularly and 4–5% during highlights, demonstrated the potential of combining radio, television, and internet platforms to broaden reach (IPU et al., 2007). These findings underscore the structural and cultural factors shaping parliamentary broadcast effectiveness globally.

Marshall et al., (2020) offer a more optimistic view from the UK, documenting a dramatic increase in viewership of Parliamentlive.tv—from an average of 6,552 daily viewers in 2017 to 16,607 in 2019—largely driven by politically salient events like Brexit. Their quantitative study also highlights the success of e-petitions, engaging nearly 23 million people since 2015, facilitating direct public participation (Marshall et al., 2020). This diverges in a way with the niche audience findings of IPU and others and Beetham by showing how political context and interactive digital tools can expand parliamentary engagement, underscoring the importance of political salience and technological innovation.

Moreover, Wandera and Mugubi (2014) conducted a research to investigate the effects of Parliamentary broadcasting on public attitude and perception about Parliament and its work. Their findings showed that while broadcasts increased knowledge, this was skewed towards the upper class, widening the knowledge gap between socio-economic groups. Television was preferred by the upper class, while radio was favored by the lower class due to affordability and accessibility. Despite increased knowledge, public confidence in

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

Parliament remained low, with many expressing little or no confidence (Wandera and Mugubi, 2014). For example, only few of the lower class knew the number of MPs compared to 20% of the upper class. They also found that slightly above half of the respondents were interested in parliamentary affairs, with radio preferred by the lower class and television by the upper class. The study recommended recorded broadcasts at prime times and explanatory commentary to improve understanding and engagement (Wandera & Mugubi, 2014). This detailed demographic analysis highlights socio-economic factors mediating the impact of parliamentary broadcasting

Okong'o (2016) surveyed 158 Civil Society Organisations members in Nairobi using questionnaires and conducted 10 in-depth interviews. His mixed-methods study found that live broadcasts increased knowledge about parliamentary duties but had mixed effects on attitudes, with some respondents expressing dissatisfaction despite increased awareness. This is a parallel finding from Andayi and Wandeira and Mugubi, reinforcing the complexity of translating knowledge into trust and engagement (Okong'o, 2016).

Andayi (2020) employed a qualitative exploratory design in Nairobi Central Ward, conducting 15 in-depth interviews and 4 focus group discussions. Grounded in media theories such as Gatekeeping and Agenda Setting, the study found that live broadcasts significantly increased public participation and knowledge of parliamentary processes. Respondents expressed satisfaction with the Senate's oversight role, suggesting a positive correlation between broadcasting and engagement. However, like Wandeira and Mugubi (2014), Andayi (2020) noted that increased knowledge did not always translate into positive perceptions of Parliament's effectiveness (Andayi, 2020). The methodological differences—quantitative versus qualitative—may explain variations in findings, with Andayi providing deeper insight into attitudes and perceptions.

The Economic Commission for Africa (2012) used mixed methods including questionnaires and field visits in Ghana, South Africa, and Uganda to analyze parliamentary roles in governance. It identified capacity constraints limiting many African legislatures and emphasized outreach, media involvement, and online communication as key to enhancing citizen participation. However, it lacked country-specific data on parliamentary broadcasting platforms like Zambia's Parliament Radio, highlighting a research gap (Economic Commission for Africa, 2012).

Focusing on Zambia, the People and Development case study in Kawambwa District employed mixed methods and people-centred development theory to explore popular and effective participation in parliamentary processes. 100 closed ended questionnaires were administered and in-depth interviews with various stakeholders were conducted. It established that Parliament had not made any significant contribution to the creation of a democratic institution at constituency level which favoured effective participation in development. Significant communication gaps were found with 44% of respondents indicating that ordinary people did not have any contact with Parliament or Members of Parliament (Chitika, 2012). The study underscored the importance of participatory development and noted the absence of research on media tools like radio to promote awareness and engagement. This localized qualitative study complements the broader quantitative and mixed-methods research by providing in-depth contextual insights (Economic Commission for Africa, 2012).

Phiri's (2009) study in Mandevu Constituency used 100 questionnaires, content analysis, and in-depth interviews to assess Parliament Radio's effectiveness. It found that although the radio was relatively well known, listenership and interaction were low. Phiri recommended marketing campaigns, expanded programming, live committee broadcasts, and youth engagement initiatives to improve effectiveness (Phiri, 2009).

Limata (2015) conducted a study in Kabwata Constituency using 100 survey respondents and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders. The study found that while most constituents knew of the constituency office, few had visited it due to inadequate sensitization. This finding of low involvement levels echoes that of Chitika (2012) where it was established that Parliament had not made any significant contribution to the creation of a democratic institution at constituency level which favoured effective participation in development. Gender disparities were noted, with women less involved despite being the majority population. 95% of respondents had radio access and 93% television access. In this regard, Limata recommended leveraging community media for awareness campaigns (Limata, 2015).

Collectively, the studies above show that parliamentary broadcasting tends to attract niche, politically engaged audiences, with packaged news and interactive platforms expanding reach. Differences in audience size and engagement arise from socio-economic factors, resource availability, political context, and media infrastructure. African contexts emphasize radio's importance and face challenges in accessibility, while developed countries leverage digital innovations to broaden engagement. Methodologically, studies range from large-scale surveys (Rain 2003, IPU et al., 2007) to localized qualitative case studies (Wadeira and Mugubi, 2014), offering complementary insights. The findings highlight the need for strategic, multi-platform communication tailored to local contexts to maximize parliamentary broadcasting's democratic potential.

It has been observed that the role of parliamentary broadcasting in enhancing public awareness has garnered global recognition, yet empirical evidence regarding its efficacy remains mixed. Beetham (2006) advocates for parliamentary broadcasting as a vital tool for informing citizens and fostering transparency; however, notes that the actual influence depends heavily on content quality, accessibility, and audience receptivity. Similarly, the IPU et al. (2007) observe that while broadcasting can demystify parliamentary procedures, its

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

impact is often limited by perceptions of parliamentary proceedings as dull or irrelevant, especially when not coupled with civic education initiatives. This critique emphasizes that broadcasting alone does not guarantee awareness; it must be strategically designed to engage diverse audiences and contextualize parliamentary work within citizens' lived realities. The literature suggests that without deliberate framing and contextualization, parliamentary broadcasts risk being perceived as something for the upper class or inaccessible, thereby undermining their potential to foster awareness among ordinary citizens.

Nevertheless, some studies indicate that parliamentary broadcasts have contributed positively to public awareness when content is tailored to local needs. For instance, Wahyudin (2021) demonstrates that Indonesian parliamentary television increased transparency and public trust by providing direct, unfiltered access to parliamentary debates and proceedings. However, he critically notes that the influence on awareness is contingent upon the media's ability to simplify complex language and incorporate local cultural elements. A significant limitation across the literature is the scarcity of systematic evaluations that measure the actual increase in awareness attributable to parliamentary broadcasting (Rain, 2003). This gap calls for more rigorous, empirical assessments that isolate the effect of radio broadcasts from other factors influencing civic knowledge. Additionally, the literature warns that broadcasting may inadvertently reinforce existing inequalities if content is not accessible or relevant to marginalized groups, such as rural communities or non-English speakers (Wandera & Mugubi, 2014). Therefore, while Parliament Radio has the potential to create awareness, its actual impact hinges on content relevance, accessibility, and audience engagement strategies.

These studies reveal that parliamentary broadcasting generally increases public knowledge and transparency but has mixed effects on attitudes and trust. Socio-economic disparities, political context, media accessibility, and content nature influence impact. While broadcasting fosters accountability, it does not automatically engender positive perceptions. Effective parliamentary communication requires strategic, inclusive, and context-sensitive approaches coupled with civic education. Zambia's Parliament Radio, situated within these broader trends, would benefit from further empirical research and reforms to enhance public awareness and participation.

7.3 The Effectiveness of Parliament Radio in Disseminating Parliamentary Activities to the Public

Globally, a number of Parliaments today broadcast their proceedings as they have found it necessary to disseminate such information to the public. It is obvious that in order to create a citizenry that understands the importance of the work done by Parliament in democratic governance, there is need to dispel the myths and misconceptions that might be held and to also create awareness about the functions and operations of the institution (Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2006). Parliamentary broadcasting therefore, plays an important role in creating knowledge and awareness about the work of Parliament, reducing the gap between the constituents and their representatives and encouraging active citizen participation in democratic governance.

The Lok Sabha Secretariat in India compiled a report in 2006 on The Eight Biennial Conference of the Association of Parliamentary Librarians of Asia and the Pacific (APLAP) that took place in New Delhi from 18 to 22 January, 2005. The report dedicates a section to the topic: *Bringing Parliament nearer to the People-Communicating Parliament*, where the need for communicating Parliament and telecasting and broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings is discussed. According to the report, Parliaments throughout the world have wrestled with the question of whether or not to allow the television cameras into the Chamber (Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2006).

It discloses that many Parliaments broadcast their proceedings and that many others continue to hesitate or might not have even considered it. The report indicates that only a few Parliaments provided continuous live coverage of all the proceedings namely; Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, Hungary, Iran, Scotland, UK and USA. The latest to join the select group at the time the report was done was India. Most of the other countries are reported to permit live telecast of special events only and Highlights of the proceedings in the News Inserts.

The report also states that Parliament of the UK, USA and Scotland had provided for live coverage of Committee proceedings as well. The report indicates that a big communication gap has been found to exist between Parliament and the people which requires to be bridged. It points out that misconceptions need to be removed and the positive aspects of the constructive work done by the Parliament need to be highlighted. The press and other media, broadcasting and telecasting live the parliamentary proceedings and other parliamentary events and other methods for making people aware about parliamentary activities are highlighted as means that could be used to bridge the communication gap between Parliament and the people (Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2006).

The few studies conducted on broadcasting Parliament reveal that there are niche audiences for the live broadcasts of the parliamentary proceedings. According to Mary Rain who led the team that conducted a survey on behalf of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA) and the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the aim of the survey was to gather information covering both radio and television in order to find out how countries in the Commonwealth reported the work of their Parliaments, for how long and whether live or in recorded form. The study also sought to find out if the content was being shown on a dedicated cable channel or on a main terrestrial channel or just radio, the impact of the broadcasts and whether the broadcast was reaching mass audience. Over eighty broadcasting stations around the Commonwealth were contacted for the survey and sixty-four of them responded, amounting to a response rate of 78 percent. The survey reveals that very little formal research has been carried out in audiences specifically for the coverage of Parliament. It however, revealed

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

that a similarity was observed in terms of viewership of the parliamentary proceedings. The study reports that there is only a tiny audience in countries such as Australia, Britain and South Africa (niche) for the live broadcasts of the proceedings of Parliament (Rain, 2003).

Radio New Zealand also reported that parliamentary proceedings did not have a large audience. Malta and Bermuda also gave similar reports that although live parliamentary coverage had the capacity to reach a mass audience, it was not listened to by the majority (Rain, 2003). The other form of coverage which involved packaging reports which were then incorporated in news bulletins and news programmes was found to attract larger audiences. Doordarshan, India's state-owned Television disclosed that its programmes were attracting mass audiences, particularly in rural areas.

The study observed that live broadcasting on the British, Canadian, or Australian models were not the pattern of parliamentary coverage in most of the Commonwealth countries. Most of the Commonwealth states in Africa, the Pacific and the Caribbean had resource constraints. According to the study, the great majority of Commonwealth countries broadcast live on radio and TV the important parliamentary occasions. Evidence shows that it is the news bulletins which win the biggest number of viewers as routine debates even though important can often appear dull (Rain, 2003). Audience reach was identified as a problem for African countries. For most countries on the continent, radio had been found to be the most important medium of mass-communication. Compared with the developed world, radio was the most important source of information in Africa as opposed to television. Radio was often the only medium available to the vast majority living in rural areas where literacy levels were often low (Rain, 2003).

It is acknowledged that new opportunities to widen access and participation are emerging and building on the successes of the past twenty years. The findings show that it is important to communicate clear messages about the effective things that Parliament does. “Let us use the tools we have before us, from digital to physical, to turn the tide on attitudes towards the UK Parliament, and remind the public that it is there for them, and there to be celebrated (House of Commons Administration Committee, 2023:4)”.

The New Zealand Parliament in line with its engagement strategy 2021-2024 which aims to increase the public's engagement and participation in Parliament conducted a research in 2022. The purpose of this annual research was to help measure the effectiveness of Parliament's engagement strategy over time. An online questionnaire was developed in close consultation with the Office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives. The survey was open from 14 November to 4 December 2022. The online survey was completed by 1,200 New Zealanders. The media was found to have the greatest influence on the public’s view of Parliament. Advocacy was found to have slipped since 2021 with only one in ten advocating for Parliament, with more New Zealanders unsure what they thought of Parliament in 2022 compared to 2021. Parliament’s reputation was found to have fallen in particular amongst young people (aged 16-18) to its lowest level (New Zealand Parliament, 2023).

The New Zealand Parliament comments that the attributes that are priorities for action (if Parliament is improve its reputation) include ensuring the public feel connected with Parliament, that they share a sense of ownership of Parliament, and that they understand how Parliamentarians work together to achieve common goals (New Zealand Parliament, 2023). Parliament is also called upon to make it easier to engage with the public to also show that engaging with it actually yields results: “This can be done by teaching people how to engage, ensuring that MPs are approachable, and create a sense of ownership and connection with Parliament. It is also important to make the process less intimidating, and easy and foster a positive narrative about Parliament, in particular on collaborative working. Most people are influenced by what they see and hear about Parliament, as opposed to their direct interactions. Therefore, it’s important to get positive stories out into the media landscape (both on social media and in mainstream media). Key narratives to tell are that MPs are working together to achieve a common goal, and that Parliament is tackling important issues alongside New Zealanders (New Zealand Parliament, 2023:20)”.

Fewer New Zealanders were found to have been exposed to news or media feeds about Parliament compared to 2021. It is stated however, that those who were exposed typically encountered negative commentary, which presumably undermines Parliament’s reputation. Findings reveal that New Zealanders are almost twice as likely to recall negative comments in mainstream media compared to positive ones (59% vs.29%). In addition, almost half of New Zealanders saw negative comments on social media meanwhile only around a fifth saw positive comments (49% vs.19%) (New Zealand Parliament, 2023). It is acknowledged that more work needs to be done to improve the perception that Parliament represents all citizens. It was also found that there had been a significant decline in the proportion of New Zealanders who felt that people like them are represented at Parliament. Additionally, disabled New Zealanders were less likely than average to believe that Parliament is representative of all New Zealand (New Zealand Parliament, 2023).

Few significant studies have been done in Africa such as the four year-long study commissioned by the South African Parliament titled *Assessment of Public Awareness on the work of Parliament*. In 2017, the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa commissioned an independent market research company to conduct a nationally representative survey which provides an inclusive and truly South African perception of Parliament (Twaya, 2019). At a general level, the survey analysed the perceptions of South Africans regarding Parliament's contribution to promoting public involvement in law making, monitoring the government’s actions and the implementation of laws. The

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

survey among other things measured South African citizens' understanding of Parliament's mandate, their awareness of Parliament and perceptions of the performance of Parliament.

One of the main objectives was to establish the preferred medium of communication between Parliament and the electorate (Twaya, 2019). The findings of the research showed that in terms of Awareness, South Africans were more aware of Parliament when compared to 2017. This was attributed to major political changes which occurred in 2018, such as the resignation of the then South African President and the implementation of land redistribution without compensation (Twaya, 2019). According to the survey findings, Radio also continued to function as an important medium of communication with 55% hearing about Parliament through radio and 57% selecting radio as a preferred medium to hear about Parliament. While Parliament seemed to understand which media channels South African's preferred, communication regarding how to engage with Parliament remained low in 2018, with 8 out of every 10 South Africans being uninformed about how to participate in Parliament and almost 3 quarters (72%) not having participated in any Parliamentary activities. While most (41%) of South Africans agreed that they were fairly well informed about Parliament's activities, there was still a notable number (35%) who felt that they were not at all well informed (Twaya, 2019).

Generally, the research findings showed that South Africans knew what the roles and functions of Parliament were but they struggled to grasp what the concept of Parliament was. In this regard, it was recommended that the Parliament of South Africa needed to initiate campaigns that aimed to inform South Africans about the basic principles of Parliament such as what it is and how it works in a user-friendly and engaging manner. South Africans were interested to learn more about Parliament and to play a more active role in Parliamentary activities. However, limited knowledge of how, where, when and why to engage acted as a major barrier. As such, the recommendation was that, in this context, the South African Parliament would need to implement public participation strategies that inform the public why they should participate and clearly outline the steps of how to find and participate in parliamentary activities. Lastly, since the survey discovered that parliamentary roles and functions could easily become intertwined with the roles and functions of political parties, there was a need to distinguish and separate the roles and functions of Parliament from the socio-political agendas of political parties (Twaya, 2019).

Beetham's (2006) global guide provides a normative framework that complements these empirical findings. It systematically explores democratic parliaments' key characteristics—representativeness, transparency, accessibility, accountability, and effectiveness—and emphasizes the importance of public communication, including dedicated broadcasting channels, to engage citizens and rebuild trust. While Beetham's work does not offer Zambia-specific data, it underscores the universal need for parliaments to actively inform and involve their publics, a principle reflected in Zambia's efforts to improve parliamentary communication (Beetham, 2006).

The UK House of Commons Administration Committee's (2023) recent report, based on qualitative inquiry with expert witnesses, identifies gaps in communication strategies such as lack of a unified approach, underdeveloped digital platforms, and limited use of MPs as communicators. It recommends developing overarching communication strategies, digital toolkits for MPs, and enhanced use of online platforms like parliamentlive.tv to foster better public understanding. These recommendations resonate with the challenges and opportunities identified in Zambia, suggesting that strategic, multimodal communication and capacity building are essential for effective parliamentary engagement (House of Commons Administration Committee, 2023).

Taken together, literature reveals a common theme: while parliamentary broadcasting and communication initiatives exist and have potential, their effectiveness is often limited by low public awareness, socio-economic disparities, inadequate outreach, and institutional capacity constraints. The effectiveness of Parliamentary broadcasting is often evaluated based on its capacity to inform citizens about parliamentary proceedings, oversight, and legislative processes. Beetham (2006) emphasizes that effective parliamentary communication must go beyond mere transmission to include clarity, relevance, and contextual framing. Yet, empirical studies such as those of Phiri (2009) reveal that despite high awareness levels, actual engagement remains low, suggesting that dissemination is often superficial or unidirectional. This critique aligns with the agenda-setting theory (McCombs & Shaw, 1972), which posits that media influence depends on issue salience and framing strategies; thus, effectiveness is also about shaping perceptions and priorities. The literature further suggests that technological limitations and content complexity can hinder ability of the broadcasts to reach and educate a broad audience, especially in rural or marginalized communities.

As a result, the dissemination process often fails to translate awareness into understanding or participation, raising questions about the true scope of effectiveness. Critically, the literature underscores that the effectiveness of Parliament Radio depends on audience engagement and feedback mechanisms, which are sometimes weak or underdeveloped. Wandeira and Mugubi (2014) argue that interactive elements are essential for transforming passive awareness into active participation. Furthermore, the literature indicates that content must be simplified and localized to resonate with diverse audiences (Ng'andu, 2021). Without such adaptations, the dissemination remains a top-down process that risks alienating citizens rather than empowering them. The effectiveness, therefore, is not only a function of broadcast reach but also the ability to foster two-way communication, build trust, and contextualize parliamentary work within local realities. Given these insights, future evaluations should incorporate metrics beyond reach, such as audience comprehension, satisfaction, and behavioral change, to holistically assess effectiveness (Marshall et al., 2020).

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

The studies highlight that parliamentary communication is a multifaceted challenge requiring integrated approaches. Zambia's experience aligns with regional and global patterns where increased transparency and information provision do not automatically translate into widespread public participation or trust. Addressing structural inequalities, improving media outreach, and empowering MPs as communicators are critical steps.

7.4 Challenges Affecting Parliament Radio in Disseminating Information to the Public

Globally, literature is inadequate on the communication function of Parliament and more so when it comes to the effectiveness of the parliamentary broadcasts in creating public awareness about parliamentary affairs. Despite the importance of having an informed citizenry in democratic governance, literature in Africa on communicating the work of Parliament in order to create public awareness is even more scanty. According to Azevedo (2009), overall, there is less literature on Parliaments and their citizens in Africa compared with more developed countries. The relationship between African citizens and their Parliaments receives even less attention in the literature than does the study of Parliaments. Despite the aforementioned, some studies have been conducted in a few countries like South Africa and Kenya aimed at assessing public awareness, knowledge and perceptions about the work of Parliament. Through these studies, factors affecting the effectiveness of parliamentary broadcasting channels in creating public awareness about parliamentary functions can be observed.

The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in its 2010/2011 study in Ghana, South Africa and Uganda identified challenges related to lack of capacity in terms of human, financial and material. Lack of communication facilities and infrastructure is stated as one of the most pressing challenges with respect to Parliament interacting with people (Rain, 2008). Despite the efforts undertaken by most African countries in promoting people's participation in decision making processes, a number of them still lacked appropriate laws, policies and mechanisms towards enhancing citizens' participation in economic, social and political decision-making. ECA reports that there was however a common thread, the desire of African Parliaments to make the institution relevant and accessible to the people and to make Parliament an effective institution of democracy and governance of modern times.

Following the review of literature, it can be observed that there is need for more research to systematically evaluate the influence of parliamentary broadcasting in creating public awareness about the activities of Parliament. Africa has generally lagged behind when compared with the west when it comes to parliamentary broadcasting and research on the influence of the phenomenon. This could perhaps be attributed to the various challenges that Africans face such as high illiteracy levels, poverty and economic hardships, dictatorial tendencies in the governance systems that are a threat to democracies that are just developing and lagging behind in terms of technological advancement. However, despite the aforementioned challenges, some African countries such as South Africa and Kenya as evidenced in this review, are making a significant contribution in shaping the field of parliamentary broadcasting and also pioneering research on its impact that will serve as a reference point for future studies.

8. Research Methodology

8.1 Research Design

The study's research design is a descriptive cross-sectional design, employing a mixed-methods approach to capture a snapshot of Parliament Radio's effectiveness in fostering public awareness in Munali Constituency about the Zambian parliamentary activities at a single point in time, utilizing structured questionnaires for quantitative prevalence data (e.g., awareness levels via SPSS descriptives) and semi-structured interviews for qualitative insights into dissemination challenges and engagement. This design was justified by its efficiency and cost-effectiveness in non-experimental contexts, enabling rapid assessment of population characteristics like listenership and knowledge gaps without longitudinal tracking, while supporting generalizability through representative sampling from selected wards of Munali Constituency and triangulation for enhanced validity and reliability.

The mixed method was found to be appropriate because it allowed for the collection of broad numerical data through questionnaires while also gaining deeper insights from key informant interviews. Quantitative data helped measure the levels of public awareness and factors affecting Parliament Radio's effectiveness, while qualitative data provided depth of understanding of how Parliament Radio functions in the constituency.

8.2 Study Population

Munali Constituency in Lusaka District was selected as the study area for the research because of its long-standing access to Parliament Radio signals across its six wards namely; Chainda, Chakunkula, Kalikiliki, Kalingalinga, Mtendere, and Munali enabling residents to provide informed responses on awareness levels, dissemination effectiveness, and challenges like signal reception, due to its high-density urban profile and proximity to parliamentary broadcasting infrastructure (Zambia Statistics Agency, 2025; National Assembly of Zambia, 2018). This choice is justified by Munali's demographic diversity (overall population 316,692; adults 18+ at 192,326),

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

representing varied socio-economic groups exposed to radio as a primary information source of information in Lusaka the capital thus enhancing generalizability within an urban context.

The study involved two distinct groups of participants. The first group consisted of residents of Munali Constituency, aged 18 years and above, who responded to questionnaires. The second group comprised seven key informants selected for in-depth interviews. Among these seven key informants were a media practitioner, a local government official, and a community leader with direct knowledge or involvement with Parliament Radio's outreach efforts. The purposive sampling of key informants was justified as it ensured that participants possessed relevant expertise and insights critical to understanding Parliament Radio's operational context.

8.3 Sample Size

The population size for Munali Constituency was 192,326 of people aged 18 years and above. Since the population was large and known, the sample size was determined using Yamane's formula. So the sample size for the quantitative component of the attached study was determined using Yamane's (1967) simplified formula for finite populations, $n= N/1+N(e)^2$, where N = 192, 326 (target population of Munali Constituency residents aged 18+ per Zambia Statistics Agency, 2025) and e = 0.695 (margin of error), yielding 207 respondents. Therefore, the sample size n is 207 respondents for quantitative data and seven key informants for qualitative data. The total sample size for the study is therefore, 214. The combination of a large quantitative sample and a focused qualitative sample strengthened the overall study design by balancing representativeness and richness of data.

8.4 Sampling Techniques

Munali Constituency has six wards namely; Chainda, Chakunkula, Kalikiliki, Kalingalinga, Mtendere and Munali. This research employed multi-stage cluster sampling to generate a sample from residential areas in Munali Constituency. This sampling method is ideal for studies that cover a wider geographical area where a complete list of members of the population is not available. The first stage of multi-stage sampling method involved dividing Munali Constituency into clusters of six wards namely; Chainda, Chakunkula, Kalikiliki, Kalingalinga, Mtendere and Munali. Simple random sampling was used to select four wards namely; Chakunkula, Munali, Kalingalinga and M'tendere.

8.5 Data Collection Instruments

The research instruments used were the structured questionnaires and semi-structured interview guide. Both instruments were pilot-tested with a small subset of participants to ensure clarity, relevance, and reliability.

8.6 Data Analysis

Quantitative data from questionnaires was coded and entered into statistical software SPSS for analysis. Descriptive statistics (means, frequencies, percentages) was used to analyze the demographics because variables were set at nominal. The data analysis for this study utilized descriptive and inferential statistics to effectively address the specific objectives. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize the levels of public awareness about Parliament Radio and the extent to which it had created awareness about parliamentary activities, as these variables are measured on an ordinal scale suitable for such analysis (Phiri, 2009; Otiato, 2020). Regression was used to examine challenges affecting Parliament Radio and its effectiveness in creating public awareness, since both variables are on scale levels, enabling the measurement of the strength and direction of their effect. This combination of statistical methods ensured that the analysis is aligned with the nature of the data and research questions, providing both descriptive insights and inferential conclusions to comprehensively understand the impact and challenges of Parliament Radio.

Qualitative data from interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework: familiarization, coding, theme development, review, definition, and reporting. This method allows for the identification of key patterns and insights related to Parliament Radio's effectiveness and challenges in public awareness creation. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings provided a comprehensive understanding aligned with the study's objectives. This mixed analysis approach enhances the validity and depth of the research outcomes.

9. Presentation and Discussion of the Research Findings

9.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The age distribution shows a young-to-middle-aged profile among respondents. The 25–34 age group is the largest, comprising 38.1% of the total (79 individuals), followed by 18–24-year-olds at 20.8% (43 individuals) and 35–44-year-olds at 18.4% (38 individuals). The 45–54 group accounts for 14.0% (29 individuals), while those aged 55 and above represent 8.7% (18 individuals). Together, those under 35 make up 58.9% of the sample, indicating a predominantly younger respondent base, with a substantial portion in the 25–34 bracket.

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

Then in terms of gender, nearly half of the respondents are female (48.8%) and just over half are male (51.2%). As for the levels of education, tertiary education (college/university) is the dominant category, with a frequency of 116 respondents and about 56% of the total, indicating a highly educated sample. Secondary education is the next largest, with a frequency of 57 and roughly 27.5%. Primary education accounts for 16 respondents (about 7.7%), while "No formal education" and "Other (please specify)" are small but visible groups, at 15 (7.2%) and 3 (1.4%), respectively. Overall, the data suggest a predominantly well-educated population, with a notable minority having only secondary or less education. The data suggest a predominantly well-educated population, yet the notable minority with only secondary education or less raises important questions about inclusivity and representation in civic discourse. It emphasizes the need for Parliament Radio and other civic education initiatives to adopt strategies that cater to varying educational backgrounds, ensuring that all segments of the population can engage meaningfully with parliamentary activities and governance issues. Bridging these educational gaps, it is possible to foster a more informed and participatory citizenry, ultimately strengthening democratic engagement within the community.

9.2 Radio Ownership

The findings indicate that 70.0% of respondents own a radio set, highlighting significant access to this important medium for disseminating information about parliamentary activities. However, 30.0% do not own a radio, which may limit their engagement with civic matters and lead to disparities in access to information. This ownership gap underscores the need for targeted outreach efforts by Parliament Radio to ensure all community members are informed. Strategies like community listening sessions and mobile broadcasting could help bridge this divide and promote greater civic participation.

9.3 Regular Access to Radio

From the findings, about 68.6% confirmed that they have regular access, while 31.4% said they did not have regular access.

9.4 How participants heard about Parliament Radio

Most participants reported learning about Parliament Radio through traditional radio broadcasts, accounting for the largest share at 51.7%. This was followed by social media, with 32.4% of respondents indicating that they heard about Parliament Radio through these platforms. Print media contributed to awareness for 10.6% of participants, while personal interactions accounted for 2.4%. A smaller proportion, 1.9%, came across Parliament Radio while searching for channels, and only 1% learned about it via Parliament Television. Notably, no participants reported using the internet as a source for discovering Parliament Radio, and no other sources were identified. These data highlight the predominant role of radio and social media in spreading awareness about Parliament Radio among the surveyed population.

9.5 Listenership to Parliament Radio

Generally respondents tended towards agreeing with the two statements with means that are slightly after 3.00. However, there wasn't strong consensus as shown by the standard deviations which were above 1.00. Regarding the statement "I regularly listen to Parliament Radio programmes," 45 (21.7%) strongly disagreed, 31 (15%) disagreed, 32 (15.5%) were neutral, 40 (19.3%) agreed, and 59 (28.5%) strongly agreed. For the statement "I regularly listen to the parliamentary debates on Parliament Radio," 39 (18.8%) strongly disagreed, 36 (17.4%) disagreed, 32 (15.5%) were neutral, 44 (21.3%) agreed, and 56 (27.1%) strongly agreed.

9.6 Levels of public awareness about the Parliament Radio channel

According to the data, a generally moderate to high level of awareness about Parliament Radio among survey respondents with means from 3.00 to 4.00. The standard deviations were all above 1.00 indicating general spread of opinions. A significant portion of respondents reported being aware that Parliament Radio broadcasts live sessions of the Zambian Parliament, with 32.4% agreeing and 38.6% strongly agreeing, totaling nearly 71%. Similarly, awareness that the channel broadcasts committee meetings was also substantial, with 25.1% agreeing and 32.4% strongly agreeing. When it comes to content about the Zambian Parliament, 29.5% agreed and 38.2% strongly agreed, suggesting that a majority recognize Parliament Radio's role in disseminating parliamentary information. Regarding knowledge of the specific frequency or channel in Munali, 25.6% agreed and 31.4% strongly agreed, indicating good awareness of how to tune in. Continued engagement is reflected in the fact that 28.5% of respondents reported listening regularly to Parliament Radio programmes, with 27.1% listening regularly to parliamentary debates, demonstrating active participation for a notable proportion of the sample.

Perceptions of the clarity and relevance of Parliament Radio broadcasts are also noteworthy. About 20.3% agreed and 30.9% strongly agreed that Parliament Radio broadcasts are easy to understand, emphasizing clarity as a key feature for many listeners. Moreover, the relevance of the content to issues affecting Munali Constituency was affirmed by combining 27.5% who agreed and 27.5% who strongly

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

agreed, indicating that a significant number find the programming pertinent to local concerns. The data further reveals that 27.1% agreed and 35.7% strongly agreed that Parliament Radio informs listeners about parliamentary activities, while 26.1% agreed and 30.4% strongly agreed that they have learned about parliamentary functions through the station. Overall, these findings reflect a considerable level of familiarity and engagement with Parliament Radio, though some categories suggest room for increased awareness and knowledge dissemination.

The study's findings on public awareness of Parliament Radio in Munali Constituency demonstrate a generally moderate to high level of knowledge among respondents, with nearly 71% aware that the radio broadcasts live sessions of the Zambian Parliament. This outcome aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the role of parliamentary broadcasting as a vehicle for enhancing transparency and civic participation in Zambia and across Africa (Beetham, 2006; Economic Commission for Africa, 2012). The case study for Mandevu Constituency by Phiri (2009) similarly found a relatively high awareness of Parliament Radio but noted low regular listenership and minimal interaction. This highlights a critical gap between awareness and active engagement, suggesting that while citizens may recognize the existence of the station, translating that awareness into consistent listening behaviors remains a challenge. Factors such as limited public outreach, the timing of broadcasts, and competition from other media outlets could contribute to this divergence. It is crucial for Parliament Radio to not only focus on raising awareness but also to implement strategies that encourage active participation. Engaging the community through targeted campaigns and interactive programming could help bridge this gap, fostering a more informed and engaged citizenry (Limata, 2015). This situation illustrates the principles of Agenda-Setting Theory, which posits that media can shape public discourse by prioritizing certain issues, thereby influencing what citizens perceive as important.

In terms of awareness regarding the station's broadcasting of committee meetings and parliamentary content, over 57% of respondents acknowledged these elements, which aligns with the literature's assertion that comprehensive parliamentary communication should encompass diverse legislative activities (IPU et al., 2007). The successful dissemination of technical access information is also reflected in the substantial percentage of respondents who reported knowing how to tune into Parliament Radio. This finding reinforces the conceptual framework's emphasis on effective media outreach (Beetham, 2006). However, the regular listenership to both general programmes and debates remains below 30%, echoing findings from other African countries where infrastructural and socio-economic constraints limit regular engagement despite widespread awareness (Andayi, 2020; Okongo, 2016). This underscores the necessity of addressing systemic barriers to facilitate effective civic participation, suggesting improvements in infrastructure and broadcast timing that align better with audience schedules. Parliament Radio should also consider conducting surveys to better understand listener preferences and habits, which could inform scheduling decisions and enhance overall engagement. This aligns with Uses and Gratifications Theory, which highlights the importance of understanding audience needs to improve media effectiveness.

The perception of content clarity and relevance was positive among about half of the respondents, aligning well with Agenda-Setting Theory outlined in the theoretical framework. Parliament Radio's efforts to simplify complex parliamentary terms and focus on local issues promote public understanding and engagement (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Qualitative feedback further emphasized the radio's role in making parliamentary business more accessible. However, persistent language barriers, particularly for youth and non-English speakers, indicate the need for multilingual broadcasts and simpler explanations. These recommendations are echoed in both the conceptual framework and African media literature (Adu-Oppong & Agyin-Birikorang, 2014). Enhancing clarity and accessibility should be a priority for Parliament Radio, as it directly impacts the quality of civic engagement. By adopting a more inclusive approach to language and content presentation, the station could significantly broaden its audience and improve public understanding of parliamentary processes, reinforcing the principles of Uses and Gratifications Theory regarding the need for relevant and accessible content.

The routes through which participants first learned about Parliament Radio highlight the dominance of traditional radio (51.7%) and social media (32.4%), while internet discovery was nonexistent. This contrasts with literature that emphasizes the growing role of digital media in parliamentary communication in developed countries (House of Commons Administration Committee, 2023). The disparity likely reflects the infrastructural and digital access realities specific to Munali and Zambia, reinforcing the conceptual framework's emphasis on the critical role of accessibility and media hybridity. In contexts where digital penetration is uneven, traditional media remains indispensable (Beetham, 2006). The findings affirm radio's resilience as a mass medium, suggesting that digital strategies should complement rather than replace traditional channels to maximize reach. Notably, Parliament Radio could benefit from a hybrid approach that combines traditional broadcasting with digital outreach, such as social media campaigns and mobile applications, to engage younger audiences who are more digitally inclined. This strategy aligns with the Agenda-Setting Theory, as it would broaden the scope of issues covered and enhance public discourse.

Qualitative findings underscore Parliament Radio's inclusive targeting strategy, aiming to reach a diverse population, including students, adults, politicians, and civic-minded citizens. This approach aligns with Beetham's democratic communication principles, which emphasize broad inclusion as vital for legitimizing parliamentary communication and fostering citizen empowerment (Beetham, 2006). The literature corroborates this by advocating for parliamentary media as platforms that transcend simple information provision to become instruments of civic education and democratic deepening (Economic Commission for Africa, 2012). However, the limitation of

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

constituency-focused content due to the Munali MP's cabinet status exemplifies contextual factors that uniquely shape local parliamentary communication environments. This suggests a need for localized content strategies that enhance relevance and engagement at the grassroots level. Parliament Radio should actively seek input from local communities to tailor its programming to address specific issues and concerns relevant to Munali residents, thereby fostering a stronger connection between the station and its audience, which is essential for effective agenda-setting.

A related finding on preferences for parliamentary debates (88.4%) and content about Parliament (63.3%) aligns with Uses and Gratifications Theory, which highlights audience agency in selecting content that fulfills their political interests and participation needs (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973). The significant interest in entertainment programming also reflects strategic programming diversity, a point echoed in both the conceptual framework and media studies literature as essential for sustained audience engagement. This diverse content strategy may attract broader audiences beyond politically engaged listeners, fostering widespread democratic awareness and participation. Parliament Radio should continue to diversify its programming, incorporating a mix of serious political content and lighter, entertainment-focused segments to appeal to a wider audience. This approach not only caters to diverse audience preferences but also aligns with Uses and Gratifications Theory, which emphasizes the importance of meeting varied audience needs.

Participants identified various media as sources of information about the Zambian Parliament, with social media accounting for the largest share (44.9%), followed by Parliament Radio and print media equally. This media plurality aligns with the conceptual framework's hybrid media concept, where digital and traditional media collectively shape political awareness. It also suggests that Parliament Radio complements other platforms, reinforcing its role in a wider political communication ecosystem. The varied channels underscore the importance of integrated communication efforts to ensure comprehensive public engagement. Parliament Radio should leverage partnerships with social media platforms to create engaging content that directs audiences to its broadcasts. This collaboration could enhance visibility and encourage more people to tune in, thereby increasing overall engagement with parliamentary matters, reflecting the interactive nature emphasized in Uses and Gratifications Theory.

The findings from Munali affirm Parliament Radio as a crucial instrument for public parliamentary awareness, supporting broader theoretical and empirical evidence regarding the democratic functions of parliamentary communication. Differences in engagement and access appear driven by distinct local infrastructural and socio-political realities, underscoring the importance of contextually adapted media strategies founded on Agenda-Setting Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory. These insights highlight areas of opportunity and recommendations for enhancing parliamentary communication in Zambia to foster a more informed and participatory citizenry. The lessons learned from this study could serve as a valuable guide for other parliamentary communication initiatives in similar contexts, emphasizing the need for adaptability, inclusivity, and responsiveness to local needs in order to effectively engage citizens in the democratic process.

9.7 Type of programmes you like listening to on Parliament Radio

The majority of participants expressed a strong preference for debates on Parliament Radio, with 88.4% indicating they liked listening to this type of programme. Programmes specifically about the Zambian Parliament were also popular, favored by 63.3% of respondents. Entertainment programmes attracted 55.6% of participants, showing a considerable interest in varied content beyond purely parliamentary matters. Development-related programmes were preferred by 14.5%, while events such as the Official Opening of Parliament and the National Budget Presentation appealed to 11.1% of listeners. A smaller segment, 11.6%, identified other types of programmes they liked, although these were not specified in detail. Overall, the data indicate a clear inclination toward politically focused and debate-oriented content on Parliament Radio.

9.8 Programmes relevance to the issues affecting Munali Constituency

Table 11 shows the perceptions of programme relevance to issues affecting Munali Constituency. Generally respondents tended towards agreeing (mean 3.54) that Parliament Radio programmes were relevant to issues affecting Munali Constituency. General spread of opinions (standard deviation 1.37) was also observed with, 25 (12.1%) strongly disagreed, 27 (13%) disagreed, 32 (15.5%) were neutral, 57 (27.5%) agreed, and 66 (31.9%) strongly agreed.

9.9 The effectiveness of Parliament Radio in disseminating parliamentary activities to the public

Responses indicate varying perceptions (standard deviations greater than 1.00) of Parliament Radio's effectiveness in disseminating parliamentary activities. But generally, respondents tended to agree (means above 3.00) positively with the statements indicating the effectiveness of Parliament radio in disseminating activities to the public. About 27.1% agreed and 26.1% strongly agreed that the radio had improved their understanding of how laws are made in Zambia, while 20.3% strongly disagreed. Similarly, 23.2% agreed and 26.6% strongly agreed that Parliament Radio effectively informs them about parliamentary oversight. Regarding communication of the budget

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

approval process, 27.1% agreed and 30% strongly agreed on its effectiveness. Knowledge about government accountability through Parliament was reported as increased by 21.3% who agreed and 28.5% who strongly agreed, despite 21.7% strongly disagreeing. The radio's communication of parliamentary activities was affirmed by 25.1% agreeing and 29.5% strongly agreeing. Awareness about the role of Members of Parliament received similar positive responses, with 25.1% agreeing and 29.5% strongly agreeing. Confidence to discuss parliamentary issues was increased in 22.2% who agreed and 29% who strongly agreed, while 20.3% strongly disagreed regarding motivation to participate in civic activities. The majority perceived Parliament Radio as contributing to good governance, with 23.2% agreeing and 30.9% strongly agreeing. Knowledge of the Zambian Parliament was rated positively by 20.8% who agreed and 25.6% who strongly agreed, although a notable proportion indicated neutrality or disagreement across various items.

The findings on the effectiveness of Parliament Radio in disseminating parliamentary activities in Munali Constituency reveal a mixed yet generally positive public perception. Approximately 53.2% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the radio had improved their understanding of legislative processes in Zambia. However, a significant minority (20.3%) strongly disagreed, indicating a divide in perception. This duality reflects earlier findings in the literature, particularly studies from Mandevu Constituency, where Parliament Radio was recognized as a valuable tool for participatory communication but faced challenges in ensuring broad engagement and reach due to limited listenership and interaction (Phiri, 2009). These discrepancies can be attributed to varying levels of media accessibility, listener education, and interest, which limit the radio's full impact despite its potential. This highlights the need for Parliament Radio to actively address these barriers through targeted outreach efforts and educational initiatives. By focusing on enhancing listener engagement and understanding, the station could better fulfill its role as an educational tool and bridge the existing knowledge gaps within the community. This aligns with Agenda-Setting Theory, which emphasizes the media's role in shaping public perceptions of important issues, suggesting that improving engagement could elevate the visibility of parliamentary processes in public discourse.

The effectiveness of Parliament Radio in communicating parliamentary oversight and budget approval processes was affirmed by over half of the respondents, reflecting the station's role in enlightening the public about complex government functions critical to transparency and accountability. This finding is consistent with the literature, which documents that parliamentary broadcasting can demystify oversight and fiscal processes, thereby strengthening democratic governance through enhanced transparency (Economic Commission for Africa, 2012; IPU et al., 2007). However, the relatively high proportion of disagreements or neutrality underscores limitations such as content complexity and insufficient reach, which have been documented as barriers in African contexts (Economic Commission for Africa, 2012; Ihechu, 2019; Mohamad, 2016; Asemah et al., 2013). These findings suggest a pressing need for targeted communication strategies that simplify technical topics and broaden programme accessibility. By enhancing clarity and relevance, Parliament Radio could significantly boost public understanding and trust in parliamentary functions, fostering more informed civic participation. This need for clarity aligns with Uses and Gratifications Theory, which posits that audiences seek media that fulfill their informational needs.

The hierarchical regression results clearly show that the perceived effectiveness of Parliament Radio is a strong predictor of public awareness of parliamentary activities, with significant positive coefficients in both models ($B = 0.45$ and $B = 0.39$, $p < 0.001$). These findings indicate that when citizens view Parliament Radio as effective, they are more likely to be aware of parliamentary processes and information. This supports existing literature emphasizing the role of media effectiveness in promoting democratic engagement through knowledge dissemination (Beetham, 2006; Economic Commission for Africa, 2012). Furthermore, the positive associations with the level of education and interest in programmes highlight that individual differences in socio-demographic and motivational factors also play a considerable role in shaping awareness. The finding of lower awareness among males compared to females may reflect contextual gendered media habits or interest levels, which requires further nuanced investigation, as similarly discussed in the literature (Ng'andu, 2021). This observation may suggest societal roles where women, often more engaged in domestic responsibilities, might have more opportunities to engage with media at home, while men may be less exposed due to external commitments. Understanding these dynamics could inform tailored outreach efforts, reinforcing Agenda-Setting Theory by illustrating how media focus can vary based on audience demographics.

These quantitative results resonate well with the Agenda-Setting Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory employed in the theoretical framework. The agenda-setting theory explains how effective media, such as Parliament Radio, not only informs but influences what citizens consider important, thereby shaping public discourse around parliamentary activities (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Meanwhile, uses and gratifications theory provides insight into the active role of listeners who seek out parliamentary programmes that satisfy their information and engagement needs (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973). The conceptual framework contextualizes these dynamics within socio-economic realities and access limitations, emphasizing the need for inclusivity in language, content relevance, and broadcast reach (Beetham, 2006). Therefore, applying these theoretical frameworks could help Parliament Radio refine its programming and outreach strategies, ensuring that they are not only informative but also engaging and accessible to a diverse audience. This approach could lead to enhanced public awareness and participation in parliamentary discourse.

Participants' perceptions regarding increased knowledge of government accountability through Parliament and the communication of parliamentary activities themselves revealed similar mixed responses. While many felt more informed because of Parliament Radio,

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

others remained skeptical or disengaged, with notable rates of disagreement on these items. This corresponds with the conceptual framework's recognition of systemic and infrastructural barriers that impedes full audience engagement and comprehension (Beetham, 2006). Agenda-Setting Theory illuminates the role of Parliament Radio in framing governance issues for the public, yet the translation to deeper citizen comprehension and involvement requires supportive interactive programming and educational enrichment (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). The findings indicate partial success in these areas but emphasize the need for enhanced programme design and outreach. Addressing these challenges is critical for achieving true democratic engagement. Parliament Radio should consider incorporating more interactive elements, such as call-in segments or community forums, to foster deeper engagement and understanding among its listeners, aligning with the Uses and Gratifications Theory that recognizes the audience as active users of media.

Another important aspect is Parliament Radio's impact on listeners' confidence to discuss parliamentary processes and motivation to engage in civic activities related to governance. Approximately 51.2% agreed they felt more confident or motivated, a significant achievement reflecting the radio's empowerment function highlighted by Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973). Qualitative evidence from interviewees supports these quantitative findings, illustrating how accessible parliamentary information boosts civic literacy and encourages active citizenship. Still, the presence of a sizable dissenting portion illustrates ongoing challenges in mobilizing inclusive participation, which mirrors findings from other African nations where media empowerment efforts must be accompanied by community engagement and capacity building (Andayi, 2020). Therefore, while Parliament Radio plays a crucial role in empowering citizens, it must also focus on creating an environment that encourages active participation. This could involve partnerships with local organizations to facilitate community discussions and workshops that further enhance civic engagement and understanding of parliamentary processes.

Qualitative interviews further underscore Parliament Radio's contribution to enhancing democratic transparency by bringing parliamentary affairs closer to citizens who had previously found legislative processes opaque and inaccessible. Many participants recognized the radio as a unique, direct source of real-time information on parliamentary sessions and decisions, which demystifies governance and fosters trust. The public's appreciation of Parliament Radio's simplification of parliamentary jargon and explanation of MPs' roles echoes theoretical perspectives emphasizing communication clarity and audience-centric framing as crucial for democratic participation (Beetham, 2006). Notably, listeners expressed a desire for more interactive elements, indicating the potential of Parliament Radio to expand participatory communication by integrating feedback and dialogue mechanisms, a strategy supported by the literature to deepen democratic engagement (Economic Commission for Africa, 2012). This participatory aspect is vital for bridging the gap between governance and citizens, reinforcing the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which highlights the importance of audience involvement in media consumption.

Participants demonstrated strong recognition of the key roles of Parliament, including legislation (100%) and budgetary functions (93.7%), underscoring public awareness of Parliament's core functions. However, knowledge of oversight and representational functions was only recognized by about half the participants, suggesting gaps in understanding Parliament's full democratic mandate. These differences underscore the necessity for tailored communication strategies by Parliament Radio and complementary media to highlight lesser-understood but vital parliamentary roles (Ng'andu, 2021). The constitutional and procedural complexities of these roles require ongoing public education to enable citizens to effectively hold their representatives accountable. Improving parliamentary communication on these fronts could significantly enhance citizens' legislative oversight capacity. This could involve targeted campaigns that explicitly educate the public on these roles and their importance in the democratic process, aligning with both Agenda-Setting Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory to ensure effective dissemination of information.

The predominance of Parliament Radio (53.6%) as the most cited source of parliamentary information among participants illustrates its continued relevance in Zambia's media ecosystem, especially in areas where internet access is limited. While Parliament Television and the internet play secondary roles, the absence of social media and personal interactions as recognized sources contrasts with broader global media trends, signifying contextual media consumption patterns reliant on traditional channels. This sheds light on the importance of a hybrid media strategy combining traditional and new media to maximize outreach and public awareness (House of Commons Administration Committee, 2023). The interplay of different media platforms strengthens the democratic information environment. Furthermore, Parliament Radio should actively explore partnerships with digital platforms to enhance its visibility and outreach. Integrating social media strategies into its communication efforts could attract younger audiences and create a more comprehensive media presence, reinforcing the Agenda-Setting Theory which emphasizes the importance of media in shaping public discourse.

The analysis further highlights Parliament Radio's role in closing the information gap between the public and parliamentarians, fostering transparency and facilitating informed public discourse. The station was frequently praised for timely updates and educational content that made governance issues accessible, reinforcing both Agenda-Setting Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory, which explain how media shape public priorities and satisfy audience informational needs (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Katz et al., 1973). Still, infrastructural limitations around signal reach and technical reliability constrain the radio's potential, stressing the importance of investment in coverage and technical capacity to support democratic communication goals. Expanding coverage and addressing technical issues are thus priorities to enhance parliamentary outreach. Investing in technological improvements and expanding broadcast

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

areas will significantly enhance Parliament Radio's ability to inform and engage citizens effectively (Economic Commission for Africa, 2012). This investment is essential for ensuring that all community members have access to vital information about their government, reflecting the principles of both theoretical frameworks.

Although Parliament Radio's positive impact on democratic knowledge, participation, and transparency is recognized, challenges such as limited infrastructure, the need for localized programming, and strengthening interactivity remain. Respondents called for increased investment in diversified content and outreach to involve underrepresented communities effectively. These recommendations align with the literature advocating capacity building and media reforms as essential for sustaining impactful parliamentary communication that drives good governance (Chitika, 2012; House of Commons Administration Committee, 2023; Economic Commission for Africa, 2012). Addressing these issues would enhance the effectiveness of Parliament Radio as a foundational platform for promoting Zambia's democratic consolidation and citizen empowerment. Prioritizing these recommendations would not only improve the quality of information disseminated but also empower citizens to engage more actively in the democratic process.

9.10 Challenges affecting Parliament Radio in creating Public Awareness

Challenges affecting Parliament Radio in creating public awareness highlight several key issues (majority of them having means above 3.00) among participants as seen in table 16. General spread of opinions was still observed with standard deviations above 1.00. The results show that a considerable proportion strongly agreed (31.4%) and agreed (17.4%) that lack of radio or poor radio reception impacts the effectiveness of the radio. Limited broadcast coverage in Munali was noted by 21.3% in both the agree and strongly agree categories, showing distribution limitations. Awareness about Parliament Radio remains an obstacle, with 33.3% strongly agreeing and 26.1% agreeing on this challenge. Broadcast times were found inconvenient by 26.1% who agreed and 21.3% who strongly agreed. Additionally, 32.4% strongly agreed and 24.2% agreed that the content can be too technical or difficult to understand, posing a barrier to accessibility.

Language barriers were acknowledged by 31.9% strongly agreeing and 27.1% agreeing, while education level was also a challenge for 34.8% and 22.7% in these categories respectively. Lack of interest was cited by 32.9% strongly agreeing and 22.2% agreeing participants, and boredom with content was reported by 25.1% strongly agreeing and 15.5% agreeing. These challenges illustrate a mixture of technical, content-related, and audience engagement issues that affect the ability of Parliament Radio to effectively raise public awareness on parliamentary matters. These combined factors suggest areas needing attention to improve the reach, comprehensibility, and appeal of parliamentary broadcasts to the public.

The challenges faced by Parliament Radio in creating public awareness highlight a complex array of technical, socio-economic, and content-related barriers that constrain its effectiveness. A notable proportion of respondents strongly agreed that poor radio reception and lack of radio ownership significantly impacted the station's reach. This finding aligns with documented infrastructural challenges in broadcasting systems in Africa, where signal quality and equipment affordability remain limiting factors (Ihechu, 2019). Such technological limitations serve to disenfranchise segments of the population, particularly those in rural and economically disadvantaged areas, diluting Parliament Radio's potential audience and reducing public access to parliamentary information. Addressing these infrastructural issues should be a priority for the station. Initiatives such as community partnerships to provide subsidized radios or mobile broadcasting units could enhance accessibility and ensure that vital parliamentary information reaches all citizens, regardless of their socio-economic status (Ihechu, 2019). This situation reflects the core tenets of the Agenda-Setting Theory, which emphasizes how media accessibility directly influences public engagement with important issues. Without reliable access, Parliament Radio's ability to set the public agenda diminishes, particularly among marginalized groups.

Coverage limitations within Munali Constituency also emerged as a critical obstacle, with nearly 42.6% of participants affirming that limited broadcast coverage restricted their ability to tune into Parliament Radio. This confirms earlier qualitative findings that signal reach issues disproportionately affect remote communities, limiting the equity of access to vital legislative information (Phiri, 2009). Such technical deficits curtail the station's ability to fulfill its civic mandate to make parliamentary processes more transparent and accessible. The findings resonate with the conceptual framework's emphasis on access to media transmission as foundational to democratic communication and public participation (Beetham, 2006). To improve its effectiveness, Parliament Radio should consider expanding its transmission capabilities, possibly by collaborating with telecommunications companies to enhance signal strength in underserved areas. This approach not only addresses coverage issues but is also aligned with the Agenda-Setting Theory, which underscores the importance of media presence in shaping public discourse.

Lack of awareness of Parliament Radio as a broadcasting service remains a significant hurdle despite ongoing efforts, with approximately 59.4% of respondents recognizing it as a challenge. This suggests that promotional activities and audience development strategies require considerable strengthening to broaden knowledge about the station's existence and programming (Ng'andu, 2021). The conceptual framework advocates for proactive media engagement and community outreach to foster awareness, which remains an unrealized need for Parliament Radio. The gap between broadcast capability and audience awareness impacts the station's ability to engage listeners and

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

fully disseminate information about parliamentary activities, pointing to missed opportunities for democratic deepening. To address this, Parliament Radio should invest in targeted marketing campaigns, including community events, social media outreach, and collaborations with local organizations to effectively raise awareness and promote its programming (Limata, 2015). This aligns with Uses and Gratifications Theory, which emphasizes the importance of understanding audience needs and motivations to enhance media effectiveness.

Complexity and technicality of the content emerged as influential barriers, with over half of respondents agreeing that parliamentary language is often difficult to understand. Parliament Radio's use of legislative jargon and complex formats potentially alienates less literate or politically inexperienced listeners, limiting comprehension and engagement (Adu-Oppong & Agyin-Birikorang, 2014). These findings echo the thematic concern from qualitative interviews stressing the need to simplify content and use local languages, enhancing accessibility for diverse audience segments (Phiri, 2009). The Agenda-Setting Theory elucidates how information framing affects audience interpretation, underscoring the importance of clarity and relatability for effective media communication (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Parliament Radio needs to prioritize developing content that is not only informative but also engaging and easy to understand. This could involve training presenters in effective communication techniques and collaborating with local language experts to ensure that broadcasts resonate with all segments of the population, thereby fulfilling both cognitive and social integrative needs as outlined in Uses and Gratifications Theory.

Additional challenges, including inconvenient broadcast times, limited education among listeners, lack of interest, and boredom with content, further illustrate the multifaceted difficulties facing Parliament Radio. Such findings highlight the interplay of content relevance, timing, and audience motivation in shaping media effectiveness, factors well captured within the Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973). Without addressing these factors through strategic scheduling, engaging and diversified content, and targeted listener engagement, the radio's ability to stimulate active public participation may remain constrained. As observed in the findings, engagement levels are low and hence, conducting listener surveys to better understand audience preferences regarding broadcast times and content types could provide valuable insights. By tailoring programming to meet the interests and schedules of listeners, Parliament Radio could significantly enhance its engagement and effectiveness, aligning with the theory's emphasis on audience agency in media consumption (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973).

Exploration of the role of Parliament revealed strong public recognition of its legislative and budgetary functions, with slightly less awareness of oversight, representation, and ratification duties. This uneven knowledge corresponds with the reported challenges of communicating complex parliamentary responsibilities effectively, as reflected in other parliamentary communication research in Zambia and beyond (Ng'andu, 2021). Strengthening public understanding of the full parliamentary mandate would enable more comprehensive democratic engagement, an outcome that Parliament Radio aims to support through improved programming. To demystify parliamentary functions and make them more relatable, the station should focus on educational campaigns that explicitly explain these roles and their importance to democracy. This approach would empower citizens to hold their representatives accountable and engage more meaningfully in the democratic process, resonating with the principles of both Agenda-Setting Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory.

In examining sources of parliamentary information, the predominance of Parliament Radio as the leading source among respondents exemplifies its critical role in Zambia's political communication landscape, especially where internet penetration remains limited. While Parliament Television and the internet play secondary roles, the absence of social media and personal interactions as recognized sources contrasts with broader global media trends, signifying contextual media consumption patterns reliant on traditional channels (House of Commons Administration Committee, 2023). This sheds light on the importance of a hybrid media strategy that combines traditional and new media to maximize outreach and public awareness. Parliament Radio needs to actively explore collaborations with social media platforms to create engaging content that drives traffic back to their broadcasts (House of Commons Administration Committee, 2023). This could help create a more integrated media presence that reaches a wider audience, aligning with the Agenda-Setting Theory, which emphasizes the media's role in shaping public discourse.

Qualitative data reinforce the importance of Parliament Radio in closing information gaps, offering transparency and regular updates on legislative affairs that were previously inaccessible to many citizens. Listeners emphasized how simplified language and explanatory programming empower them to understand parliamentary processes and engage more confidently in political discourse. However, infrastructure gaps and programmatic limitations curtail participation for marginalized groups (Ihechu, 2019). These insights echo broader discourse on media's role in promoting inclusive governance through transparency and access (Economic Commission for Africa, 2012). It is crucial that Parliament Radio prioritizes inclusivity in its programming by actively seeking feedback from marginalized communities to ensure their voices are represented. By doing so, the station can enhance its role in fostering an inclusive democratic environment, which aligns with the Uses and Gratifications Theory that stresses the importance of audience engagement and satisfaction.

Recommendations for improving Parliament Radio's effectiveness predominantly center on addressing technical infrastructure, enhancing content clarity, expanding community engagement, and increasing promotional outreach to boost listenership and

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

participation. These findings align with literature advocating for media reforms, capacity building, and resource mobilization to sustain democratic communication efforts (Chitika, 2012; House of Commons Administration Committee, 2023; Ng'andu, 2021). Strengthening feedback mechanisms and ensuring broadcasts are contextually relevant and culturally accessible are vital steps toward maximizing the radio's contribution to democratic governance in Zambia. Implementing these recommendations will not only improve the quality of information disseminated but also empower citizens to engage more actively in the democratic process and be equipped to make informed decisions (House of Commons Administration Committee, 2023). This comprehensive approach resonates with both Agenda-Setting Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory, emphasizing the need for media to actively shape public discourse while addressing audience needs.

The findings on the challenges affecting Parliament Radio in creating public awareness can be well understood through Agenda-Setting Theory and the conceptual framework's emphasis on media accessibility and democratic communication. Agenda-Setting Theory explains how Parliament Radio attempts to shape public priorities by focusing attention on parliamentary activities (McCombs & Shaw, 1972), but as the findings show, technological barriers like poor signal reception and limited broadcast coverage impede this influence. Without reliable access and clear reception, the radio's ability to effectively set the agenda and inform citizens diminishes, especially among rural or disadvantaged groups (Beetham, 2006; Ihechu, 2019). Moreover, the theory clarifies why programmed content complexity and technical language limit comprehension and engagement, as the media's framing must resonate with the audience's ability to understand and relate to the issues presented. Addressing these barriers is essential for Parliament Radio to fulfill its role in shaping public discourse and facilitating informed citizen engagement, reinforcing the importance of both accessibility and clarity in media communication.

The conceptual framework complements this by situating these challenges within broader socio-economic and infrastructural contexts that affect participatory communication. It stresses that for Parliament Radio to fulfill its democratic role, content must be accessible, relevant, and inclusive, taking into account literacy, language diversity, and audience engagement (Economic Commission for Africa, 2012). This explains why lack of interest, inconvenient broadcast times, and insufficient promotion are significant hurdles; effective parliamentary communication depends on tailored programming that fits audience needs and active outreach to build listenership (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973). The interplay between Agenda-Setting Theory, audience needs, and structural factors accounts for the mixed perceptions of Parliament Radio's effectiveness and reveals critical areas for strengthening Zambia's parliamentary communication ecosystem. A comprehensive approach that integrates these theories into practical strategies will be essential for enhancing the effectiveness of Parliament Radio and promoting a more informed and engaged citizenry.

9.11 Factors that help improve awareness of Parliament through Parliament Radio

Factors that contribute to improving awareness of Parliament through Parliament Radio were predominantly related to the clarity, relevance, and engagement of the broadcasts. A significant majority of participants (82.1%) emphasized the importance of clear and simple language in making parliamentary content accessible and understandable. Locally relevant content was highlighted by 70% of respondents as a key factor, ensuring that the programming addresses issues directly affecting the communities. Interactive programmes that allow listeners to participate were valued by 55.6%, reflecting the role of two-way communication in enhancing interest and comprehension. Outreach efforts such as media visits to communities to capture people's voices received strong support at 65.2%, as did broadcasts in local languages, also rated by 65.2% of participants. Frequent and regular broadcasting schedules were important for 45.4%, while support from community leaders promoting listenership was noted by 35.3%. Additionally, 53.6% identified other unspecified factors that also help raise awareness.

9.12 Suggested Improvements for Parliament Radio

Among the suggested improvements, respondents pointed to multiple priorities for improvement as seen in table 18 below. The most endorsed area is "No Response/Unclear Suggestions" at 23.2%, indicating a substantial portion of respondents did not specify improvements. Among concrete options, content improvement (18.8%), awareness and promotion (12.6%), and community engagement initiatives (10.1%) received notable support. Other focuses include language and clarity (11.6%), technical improvements (9.7%), and feedback mechanisms (14.0%). Notably, respondents favoured a broad programme of quality enhancement, audience outreach, and better technical and operational practices to boost Parliament Radio's effectiveness.

9.13 How the improvements would impact engagement with Parliament Radio

Findings in the table 19 below shows which improvements respondents believed would most impact engagement with Parliament Radio. The largest category is Understanding and Clarity, with 45.9% of respondents selecting it, indicating that clearer language and simpler explanations were seen as the most crucial step to boost engagement. Awareness and Accessibility (23.7%) is the next key area, suggesting that expanding reach and making the content easier to find would attract more listeners. Technical Improvements (8.2%) and Increased Listenership (7.2%) were also noted as important, but to a lesser extent, while Engagement and Participation accounts for

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

13.0%, indicating that opportunities for audience interaction were valued but not as high as clarity and access. A small share offered no suggestion, implying majority agreement on the proposed improvements. Overall, focus on simplifying content, broadening access, and raising awareness would likely yield the greatest gains in engagement with Parliament Radio.

10. Conclusion and Recommendations

10.1 Conclusion

The study established a moderate to high level of public awareness about Parliament Radio in Munali Constituency, showing that the radio had succeeded in reaching diverse audience segments including youth, community leaders, and adults. This finding confirms that Parliament Radio is an important tool for public education about parliamentary activities, enabling citizens to better understand the functioning of government and Parliament more specifically. The radio's outreach through traditional broadcasts and social media platforms helped amplify information dissemination, increasing the constituency's exposure to parliamentary activities.

Despite the demonstrated awareness, the study identified that regular and active engagement with Parliament Radio programmes remained inconsistent among the population. Language barriers, including the use of complex parliamentary terminology and insufficient content in various local languages, limited accessibility and comprehension for some listeners. This calls for enhanced programming strategies incorporating more localized languages and simplified communication to boost listener understanding and encourage sustained audience participation in parliamentary discourse.

Additionally, the study highlights the need for more targeted publicity and community outreach to expand Parliament Radio's listener base. While awareness levels were found to be promising, a segment of the population remained unaware of the station's broadcasting schedule and content offerings. Strengthening promotional campaigns and integrating interactive programming would foster stronger ties with the community, promoting inclusiveness and greater public involvement in democratic governance through the broadcasts of Parliament Radio.

Regarding the effectiveness of Parliament Radio in disseminating parliamentary information, the research found that it plays a pivotal role in educating citizens on legislative processes, budgetary functions, and government oversight. The radio's capacity to translate some complex parliamentary issues into simpler language had empowered listeners to engage more confidently with governance matters. This enhanced understanding encourages civic participation and contributes to more transparent and inclusive democratic process.

The effectiveness of Parliament Radio varies across different groups depending on their interest levels and education backgrounds. Listeners with higher education and stronger interest in governance are more likely to comprehend and engage with parliamentary content, while others may struggle with the technical nature of some broadcasts. Thus, tailoring programmes to different knowledge levels and interests could increase inclusivity and effectiveness, making the station more accessible to various segments of the audience.

However, infrastructural challenges, such as inconsistent signal reception and limited access to radios, particularly in economically disadvantaged households, constrain the radio's reach and overall effectiveness. These technical limitations affect consistent listenership and the potential impact of parliamentary broadcasts. Addressing these challenges through improved transmission technology, wider distribution of radio devices, forming Parliament Radio listener groups could expand access and enhance the effectiveness of Parliament Radio in informing the public.

The study identified significant challenges affecting Parliament Radio's capacity to create public awareness effectively. Dominant among these were technical issues such as limited signal coverage and frequent disruptions to broadcasts, leading to uneven information flow. These technical constraints reduced the potential audience and weakened the station's role as a consistent source of information about parliamentary affairs.

In addition, content-related challenges, including the use of technical parliamentary jargon, limited use of vernacular languages, and insufficient localization of programmes, created barriers for a significant portion of the constituency. These factors result in listener disengagement and limit awareness and understanding of parliamentary proceedings, undermining the station's mandate of taking Parliament closer to the people.

The study brings out challenges related to audience engagement and promotional activities. Many residents remained unaware of the breadth of programming or found content uninteresting, especially younger audiences who preferred more interactive and relatable media formats. To overcome these obstacles, the study recommends investing in technical upgrades, diversifying content strategies,

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

developing more local content, and marketing campaigns and community outreach efforts to enhance listenership and foster an informed citizenry that can participate from an informed standpoint.

10.2 Recommendations

i. Recommendations to Enhance Public Awareness about Parliament Radio

To improve public awareness of Parliament Radio, it is essential to develop and implement deliberate and sustained publicity campaigns aimed at specific outcomes. These campaigns should include community outreach activities, radio-based phone-in programmes, and leveraging social media platforms to inform citizens about Parliament Radio, its programming content, and purpose of the radio station. For example, establishing a goal to increase awareness by 35% within six months can guide these efforts. Regular engagement with local leaders and institutions would also support increasing awareness about the station and its programming.

Efforts to expand the reach of Parliament Radio should incorporate targeted strategies such audience segmentation to include marginalized groups, including youth and people who can only speak local languages. Developing content in various local languages and using culturally relevant messaging would increase inclusivity and accessibility. Promotional activities should emphasize the relevance of parliamentary activities to the everyday lives of citizens, aiming for a 30% increase for example in listener engagement by showcasing how parliamentary decisions impact local communities and ultimately the democratic governance process and national development.

Furthermore, partnerships with various stakeholders such as schools (to foster interest in parliamentary affairs in early life), community organizations, and civil society could increase awareness by integrating parliamentary education into community development programmes. Education campaigns could sensitize the public on the importance of understanding parliamentary procedures, public participation and the role Parliament Radio plays in democratic engagement. This combined approach could go a long way in deepening public awareness, understanding and broaden the station's audience base, with measurable targets such as increasing partnerships by 50% over the next year.

ii. Recommendations to Improve the Effectiveness of Parliament Radio

To enhance the effectiveness of Parliament Radio in disseminating parliamentary activities, programmes should be tailored to the diverse education levels and interests of the listeners. Simplifying parliamentary language and creating content that explains legislative procedures for example in relatable terminology that listeners use in everyday life would make information more understandable for various segments in the audience, especially those who might not understand English and/or may have limited formal education. Specific outcomes could include for example a 35% increase in listener awareness and comprehension measured through surveys assessing understanding of key parliamentary concepts.

Parliament Radio should diversify programming content by including trending social issues packaged professionally- according to house style alongside parliamentary proceedings to sustain listener interest. Engaging formats such as interviews with MPs, debates, and interactive sessions where listeners can ask questions through phoning-in would improve public participation and responsiveness. By aiming for a 40% increase in listener participation in these interactive segments, Parliament Radio could foster active citizen engagement with governance.

Investments in technical capacity and infrastructure are necessary when it comes to improving broadcast quality and coverage consistency. Strengthening transmission infrastructure to ensure clear signals in both urban and remote areas could increase the effectiveness and reliability of the channel as a source of parliamentary information. Additionally, providing affordable radios and creating Parliament Radio listening clubs in communities with limited access would bridge infrastructural gaps and enhance the station’s effectiveness. Setting a goal to improve signal clarity in 95% for example of targeted underserved areas within a year would provide a measurable outcome for such interventions.

iii. Recommendations to Address Challenges Facing Parliament Radio

Addressing technical challenges requires upgrading transmission equipment and expanding broadcasting reach to cover underserved areas. Collaborations with telecommunications companies, government agencies and various cooperating partners could facilitate improved signal coverage and reduce disruptions. Adequate funding, regular maintenance of equipment and training for technical staff are essential to sustain broadcast quality. A target to achieve 95% operational efficiency in broadcasting within the next two years could serve as a specific outcome for these initiatives.

Programme content should be localized and diversified through increased use of local languages and culturally relatable formats. Simplifying parliamentary jargon and translating important information into languages spoken by the various segments in the audience would help in mitigating barriers associated with awareness and understanding. Incorporating creative ideas such as animation, storytelling, dramas, and community voices into programming content also improve listenership. Setting a goal to increase the use of

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

local languages in 75% of programming could significantly enhance awareness, understanding accessibility, relatability and ultimately participation.

Proactive marketing and outreach efforts need to address limited audience listenership and engagement. Parliament Radio should launch continuous promotional campaigns using various media channels, brochures, posters, new media, and community outreach. Engaging young people and those segments of the audience that are in school through quizzes, debates, music and social media integration would help increase the station's listenership and audience engagement. A feedback mechanism allowing listeners to contribute programme ideas, air their views and concerns would enhance responsiveness and adapt programming to audience needs. Establishing a goal to increase listener feedback participation by 50% over the next year would help ensure that the programming aligns with audience needs and expectations.

REFERENCES

Adu-Oppong, A. A., and Agyin-Birikorang E. (2014). Communication in the Workplace: Guidelines for improving effectiveness. *Global Journal of Commerce and Management Perspective*. 3 (5), 208-213.

Africa's Voices Foundation. (2022). *Kenya Anti-Corruption Campaign: Final Report*, Nairobi: Africa Voices Foundation.

Agora Parliamentary Index. (2023) *African Parliamentary Index.* Parliamentary Centre.

Ahmed S K. (2024). The Pillars of Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Medicine Surgery and Public Health*, 2. Pp. 1-4. (Online). Available from: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.glmedi.2024.100051 (Accessed September 24, 2024)

Analytic Quality Glossary. (2025). *Effectiveness* (online). Accessed 29/3/2021 from https://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/effectiveness.htm

Andayi, O., W., (2018). Live Broadcast of Parliamentary Proceedings and its Impact on the Legislative Oversight Role of the Senate of Kenya. Unpublished Masters Dissertation, University of Nairobi.

Archick, K., and Mix D. E. (2010). *The European Parliament* (Online). Accessed 13/01/22 https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA515199.pdf

Asante, K. & Mensah, J. (2024). The role of Parliament Radio in public awareness: A case study of Ghana. *Journal of African Media Studies*. 12 (1), 45-62.

Asemah, E., Anum, V. and Edegoh, L. O. (2013). Radio as a Tool for Rural Development in Nigeria: Prospects and Challenges. *International Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 2 (1). Pp 17-35. (Online). Available from https://www.academia.edu/99999974/Radio_as_a_Tool_for_Rural_Development_in_Nigeria_Prospects_and_Challenges (Accessed 26 July, 2025)

Asenahabi, B M. (2019). Basics of Research Design: A Guide to Selecting Appropriate Research Design. *International Journal of Contemporary Applied Researches*, 6 (5). Pp 76-89. (Online). Available from: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.glmedi.2024.100051 (Accessed June 25, 2024)

Auel K., and Raunio T. (2014). Connecting with the Electorate. Parliamentary Communication in EU Affairs. *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 20 (1). Pp 1-12. (Online). Available from: ttps://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=4609966 (Accessed 10 June, 2024).

Azevedo, E. (2019). Elected Legislatures in Sub-Saharan Africa: Attitudes of Citizens from 18 Countries Towards Legislatures, with a Particular Focus on Mozambique, Its Assembly and Parliamentarians. Unpublished PHD Thesis, University of South Africa.

Australian Parliament (2021). Public Awareness and Education about the Constitution. (online). Accessed 6/06/25 from https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Social_Policy_and_Legal_Affairs/Constitutionalreform/Report/section?id=committees%2Freportrep%2F024815%2F78280

Bans-Akutey A., and Tiimub B. M. (2021). *Triangulation in Research. Academia Letters* (online). Accessed 9/1/25 from https://doi.org/10.20935/AL3392

Banda, R. (2017). An Evaluation of the Electronic and Print Media Influence on Voter Participation in Lusaka District of Zambia: A Case of Munali Constituency. Lusaka: University of Zambia.

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

BBC Media Action. (2024). *The impact of local radio on young Zambians' participation in civic life* (online). Accessed 24/06/25 from tps://www.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/documents/bbcma-radio-waves-final.pdf

Beetham, D. (2006). Parliament and Democracy in the 21st Century: A guide to Good Practice. Geneva: Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Borgebund, B. (2019). Political Communication and the Realities of Democracy. *Miguel Hernandez Communication Journal*, 10. Pp.165–179. (Online). Available from: http://dx.doi.org/10.21134/mhcj.v10i0.290 (Accessed January 15, 2021)

Bouchrika, I. (2024). *Top 10 Qualities of Good Academic Research in 2024* (Online). Accessed 25/06/25 from: https://www.research.com/research/top-10-qualities-of-good-academic-research

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*. 3 (2), 77–101.

Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods* (5th ed.). Oxford: University Press.

Carter, J. and Lee, S. (2021). Parliament Radio and Public Awareness in Rural and Urban Australia. *Australian Journal of Political Communication*. 9 (2), 45-60.

Castillo, J. M. (2015). What is It, *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*. 3 (6-1). pp. 59-66.

Chanda, M. (2025). Interactive media and public engagement: Parliament Radio in urban Zambia. *Media and Society Review*. 15 (1), 101-115.

Chavalkar, N. (2025) Parliamentary Democracy in India: An Evaluation. *TIJER*, 1296. Pp 216-2. (Online). Available from https://tijer.org/tijer/papers/TIJER2506253.pdf (Accessed 27 June, 2025)

Chibesakunda, L. (2001). The Zambian Parliament 24th October 1964 to 31st December 1974. Lusaka: National Assembly of Zambia.

Chileshe, T. (2023) Challenges to parliamentary communication in rural Zambia: The role of Parliament Radio. *Zambian Media Review.* 11 (1), 30-44.

Chioma, P. E. (2014). A Comparative Evaluation of the Pre and Post Deregulation Challenges of Broadcasting in Nigeria. *Journal of Research and Development*, 1 (8). Pp. 16-26. (Online). Available from http://www.arabianjbmr.com/pdfs/RD_VOL_1_8/3.pdf (Accessed 15 January 2025).

Chirwa, W.C. (2021) Language and Civic Engagement: The Impact of Chichewa Parliamentary Broadcasts in Rural Malawi, *Malawi Journal of Social Science*. 7 (1), 35.

Chitika, E. K., 2012. People, Participation and Development: A Case Study of Popular and Effective Participation in Parliamentary Processes in Kawambwa District. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Zambia.

Chivers, T., Allan, S., Carter, C., Nieto McAvoy, E. and Noonan, C. (2023). *Review of the Broadcasting Powers and Responsibilities in selected Countries, Report for the Expert Panel on a Shadow Broadcasting and Communications Authority for Wales*(online). Accessed 15/01/25 from Review of the broadcasting powers and responsibilities in selected countries: Report for the Expert Panel on a Shadow Broadcasting and Communications Authority for Wales

Cohen, B.C. (1963). The Press and Foreign Policy. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Coleman, S. (2004). *Connecting Parliament to the Public via the Internet: Two Case Studies of Online Consultations* (Online). Accessed 15/01/25 from: https://www.depts.washington.edu/ccce/assets/documents/coleman1.pdf

Committee on Information, Parliament of Zambia. (2015). Report on Information. Lusaka: Parliament of Zambia.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. (2021). Engaging youth in parliamentary democracy: Lessons and challenges. London: Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. (2022). Parliamentary outreach and civic education: Global perspectives. London: Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and World Bank Institute (2003). *Parliament and the Media: Building an Informed Society* (online). Accessed 6/06/2025 from https://www.agora-parl.org/sites/default/files/agora-documents/CPA-WBI%20-%20Parliament%20and%20the%20Media-Building%20an%20Informed%20Society%20-%202002-2003%20-%20English%20-%20PI.pdf

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

Council of Europe. (2018). *Transparency and Open Government* (Online). Available from http://rm.coe.int/transperency/and/open/government/governance/committee/rapportuer/16808d34 (Accessed September 24, 2025).

Council of Europe. (2021). *Democracy* (Online). Accessed 28/12/25 from: https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/democracy

Creswell, J. W., and Plano Clark, V. L. (2018) Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Dawadi, S (2020). Thematic Analysis Approach: A Step by Step Guide for ELT Research Practitioners. *Journal of Nelta*, 25 (1-2). Pp. 62-71. (Online). Available from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED612353.pdf (Accessed March 4, 2025).

Dlamini, S., and Nkosi, T. (2019). Parliament Radio and Public Awareness in South Africa: Urban-Rural Disparities. *South African Journal of Political Communication*, 5 (3), 33-47.

Dube, B., Nkomo, D. and Apadile-Thokweng, M. (2024) Pragmatism: An Essential Philosophy for mixed methods in Research Education. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science.* Vol 3 (3) pp. 1001 – 1010 (Online). Available from DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.803073

Erciyes, E. (2020). Paradigms of Inquiry in the Qualitative Research. *European Scientific Journal*, 16 (2). Pp 181-200. (Online). Available from http://dx.doi.org/10.19044/esj.2020.v16n7p181 (Accessed March 5 2025).

Etikan, I., Musa, S. A. and Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5 (1), 1-4.

Enago Academy. (2024). *Literature Review Tips for the Introduction and Discussion Sections* (online) Accessed 16/04/25 from: https://www.enago.com/academy/literature-review-tips-for-the-introduction-and-discussion-section/

Evans, R., Clarke, P., and Morgan, L. (2022). Enhancing civic knowledge through Parliament Radio in the UK, 17 (3), 78-95.

Food and Agricultural Organisation. (2022). Land-use Legislation and Rural Broadcasting: Policy brief. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization.

Garcia, R., and Thompson, J. (2024). Evaluating C-SPAN Radio's role in public knowledge of US Congress. *American Journal of Political Media*, 9 (4), 112-128.

Gaynor, N., and O'Brien, A. (2023). The role of Radio as the Public Sphere for Public Political Education in Africa, *Cogent Social Sciences*, 9 (1), 7–9.

Grand Canyon University. (2025). *Quantitative Vs Qualitative Research: What's the Difference?* (online). Accessed 9/09/25 from https://www.gcu.edu/blog/doctoral-journey/qualitative-vs-quantitative-research-whats-difference

Harackiewicz, J. M., & Knogler, M. (2016). The role of education in civic engagement and political participation. Educational Psychology Review.

Harackiewicz, J. and Knogler, M. (2017). Interest: Theory and Application, in Elliot, A. J., Dweck, C. S., and Yeager, D. S., (eds.) Handbook of Competence and Motivation: Theory and Application,

2nd Edition (Online). Accessed 24/01/21 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315703565_interest_theory_and_application/link/5927e15c458515e3d46238b3/download

House of Commons. (2010). *Broadcasting the Proceedings of the House* (Online). Accessed 30/11/2021 from: http://www.parliament.uk/factsheets

House of Commons. (2023) *Communicating the Commons: How Effectively does the House of Commons Administration Communicate about Parliament?* (online). Accessed 22/02/25 from https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5804/cmselect/cmadmin/306/report.html

Huitt, W. (2004). *Science: A way of knowing. Educational Psychology Interactive* (Online). Accessed 22/02/25 from: http://www.edpsycinteractive.org/topicsintro/sciknow

Ibrahim, A., and Yusuf, M. (2023). Political Interference and Public Trust: Parliament Radio in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Media and Governance*, 12 (1), 50-66.

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

IGI Global. (2021). *What is Radio Broadcasting* (Online). Accessed 9/12/25 from https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/the-am-and-fm-radio-changes-in-the-multimedia-radio-emergence

Ihechu, I. P. (2019). Broadcasting and promotion of Development in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Journal of Development and Communication Studies*, 6 (1). Pp 48-60. Available from: https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jdcs/article/view/183522 (Accessed 24th July, 2026)

Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), European Broadcasting Union (EBU) & Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP). (2007). The challenge of broadcasting parliamentary proceedings. Geneva: IPU, EBU & ASGP.

Inter Parliamentary Union. (2022). *Global Parliamentary Report* (online). Accessed 9/10/25 from https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reports/2022-03/global-parliamentary-report-2022

Inter Parliamentary Union. (2024). *Zambia - Inter-Parliamentary Union: Citizen Interaction via Radio* (online). Accessed 15/05/25 from Zambian Parliament: Citizen Interaction via Radio | Inter-Parliamentary Union

ITU. (2022). *Digital divide in sub-Saharan Africa: Connectivity statistics.* Geneva: International Telecommunication Union.

Kalitowski, S. (n.d). *Parliament and the Public Knowledge, Interest and Perceptions* (online). Accessed 20/09/25 from ttps://www.agora-parl.org/sites/default/files/agora-documents/HANSARD%20SOCIETY%20-%20Parliament%20and%20the%20Public%20-%20EN%20-%20PI.pdf

Kartz, T. K. (1997). *Legislatures and Citizens: Public Participation and Confidence in the Legislature* (Online). Accessed 12/1/2022 from: https://www.ncsl.org/legislators-staff/legislators/trust-for-representative-democracy/public-participation-and-confidence-in-the-leg541.aspx#org

Katz, E., Blumler, J.G. and Gurevitch, M. (1974). Utilization of mass communication by the individual, in Blumler, J.G. and Katz, E. (eds.) *The Uses of Mass Communications: Current Perspectives on Gratifications Research*. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Kenya Parliamentary Report. (2022). Public Awareness of Parliamentary Roles in Kenya, Nairobi: Parliamentary Research Unit.

KfW Development Bank. (2021). Evaluation of Parliament Radio and Constituency Outreach in Zambia. Frankfurt: KfW Development Bank.

KfW. (2023). Ex post Evaluation Strengthening Parliamentary Oversight, Lusaka: German Development Bank Report.

Khatri, K. K. (2020). Research Paradigm: A Philosophy of Educational Research. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 5 (5). Pp. 1435-1440. (Online). Available from https://dx.doi.org/10.22161/ijels.55.15 (Accessed June 25, 24).

Korthagen, I., and Dorst, H. (2021). Parliamentary Monitoring in Tough Times: Lessons Learned for Democracy (online). Accessed 6/06/25 from https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/Final%20Parliamentary%20Monitoring%20in%20Tough

Krejcie, R. V., and Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30 (3), 607-610.

Lee, H., Martin, P., and Singh, R. (2021). Assessing CPAC Radio's impact on Canadian Public Awareness. *Canadian Journal of Civic Education*, 14 (2), 56-70.

Limata, K. 2015. The Role of Constituency Offices in Enhancing Democracy and Communication between Members of Parliament and their Electorates. Unpublished Masters Dissertation, University of Zambia.

Lincoln, Y. S., and Guba, E. G. (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2006, *Telecasting and Broadcasting Parliamentary Proceedings, Eighth Biennial Conference of the Association of Librarians of Asia and the Pacific* (Online). Accessed 12/01/25 from: http://asiapacificparllibs.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2014/03/Eighth-conf-report

Lok Sabha. (2024). *Lok Sabha Television Channel* (Online). Accessed 22/09/24 from https://loksabhadocs.nic.in/

Marshall, J., Lilly A., Jack M.T. and White H. (2020). *Parliamentary Monitor 2020* (online). Accessed 12/01/25 from: https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/parliamentary-monitor-2020.pdf

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

McCombs, M. (2005). A look at agenda-setting: Past, Present and Future, *Journalism Studies*, 6 (4), 543-557.

McCombs, M. and Ghanem, S. (2001). The Convergence of Agenda Setting and Framing, in Reese, S., Gandy, O. and Grant, A. (eds.) *Framing Public Life.* Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

McCombs, M., & Shaw, D. L. (1972). The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36 (2), 176-187.

Mcleod S. (2023). *Questionnaire Method in Research* (Online). Accessed 30/12/25 from: https://www.simplypsychology.org/questionnaires

Miller, D., and Adams, K. (2020). Evaluating C-SPAN Radio's impact on public knowledge in the US. *American Journal of Political Media*, 8 (4), 105-120.

MISA Zambia. (2021). *State of the Media in Zambia*. Lusaka: Media Institute of Southern Africa.

Mohajan, H. K. (2017). Two Criteria for Good Measurements in Research: Validity and Reliability. *Annals of Spiru Haret University. Economic Series*, *17* (4). Pp 59–82. (Online). Available from https://doi.org/10.26458/1746 (Accessed 27 June 2025).

Mohamad, J. (2016). The use of Radio Broadcasting Systems for Sustainable Development in Ethiopia: Prospects and Challenges. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa* (online), 18 (1). Pp 133-155. (Online). Available from: The Use of Radio Broadcasting Systems for Sustainable.Jemal Mohammed.pdf (Accessed 24th September, 2025).

National Assembly of Zambia (2022). Communication Strategy of the National Assembly of Zambia: 2022 – 2027. Lusaka: National Assembly of Zambia

National Assembly of Zambia. (2004). The Functions of Parliament. Lusaka: National Assembly of Zambia.

National Assembly of Zambia. (2015). Report of the Committee on Information. Lusaka: National Assembly of Zambia.

National Assembly of Zambia. (2022). Public Parliamentary Handbook of the Thirteenth National Assembly of Zambia 2021-2026. Lusaka: National Assembly of Zambia.

National Assembly of Zamia (2021). *Parliamentary Reforms and Broadcasting Services* (online). Accessed 22/12/22 from https://www.parliament.gov.zm/node/167

National Assembly of Zambia. (2021). Standing Orders. Lusaka: National Assembly of Zambia

National Assembly of Zambia. (2022) Strategic Plan 2022-2026. Lusaka: National Assembly of Zambia.

New Media and Mass Communication. (2012) Impact of Community Radio on Public Awareness of Government Policy agenda in Nigeria, *International Journal of Communication and Media Studies*, 4(2), 3–5.

New Zealand Parliament. (2023). *Engaging with Parliament: Annual Survey of the New Zealand Public (2023)* (online). Accessed 25/01/25 from: https://www.parliament.nz/en/footer/about-us/parliamentary-engagement/engagement-research/survey-of-the-new-zealand-public-january-2023/

Ng'andu, J. (2021). Parliamentary Reforms and Public Engagement in Zambia. Lusaka: University of Zambia Press.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2025). Civic Education as a pathway to Inclusive Societies. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2022) Integrating Media and Education for Civic Engagement. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Okongo'o, A. J. S. (2016). Influence of Live Broadcast of Parliamentary Proceedings on the Knowledge, Attitude and Perception Amongst Members of Civil Society Organizations In Nairobi. Unpublished Masters Dissertation, University of Nairobi.

Olusegun H. A. (2016). Impact of Community Radio on Public Awareness of Government Policy Agenda in Nigeria. New Media and Mass Communication, 48. Pp 31-34. (Online). Available from https://www.academia.edu/42953378/Impact_of_Community_Radio_on_Public_Awareness_of_Government_Policy_Agenda_in_Nigeria (Accessed 9 September, 2025)

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

Open Parliament e-Network. (2020). *Parliaments and Open Governments: Early Lessons from Country Experiences* (online). Accessed 10/11/24 from https://parlamericas.org

Open Society Foundations. (2021). *Language barriers and access to legislative information.* Open Society Foundations, New York.

Otiato, L. (2020). Live broadcast of parliamentary proceedings and its impact on the legislative oversight role of the Senate of Kenya, University of Nairobi.

Panhwar, A. H. and Shah, A. A. (2017) *Post-positivism: An Effective Paradigm for Social and Educational Research* (online). Accessed 4/03/25 from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Dr-Abdul-Hameed-Panhwar/publication/317605754_Postpositivism_An_Effective_Paradigm_for_Social_and_Educational_Research/links/594adb2daca2723195de8523/Post-positivism-An-Effective-Paradigm-

Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., and Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42 (5), 533–544.

Palmgreen, P., and Rayburn, J. D. (1985). A Comparison of Gratification Models of Media Satisfaction, *Communication Research*, 12 (4), 509–523.

ParlAmericas, nd, *Citizen Participation in the Legislative Process* (online). Accessed 5/10/25 from: http://parlamericas.org/uploads/documents/Toolkit_Citizen%20Participation%20in%20the%20Legislative%20Process.pdf

Parliament Committee on Information. (2019). Report on Community Radio Stations in Zambia. Lusaka: National Assembly of Zambia.

Parliamentary Reforms and Modernisation Committee. (2022). Report on Communication Strategy and Community Radio Engagement. Lusaka: National Assembly of Zambia.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Phiri, A. (2009). Parliament Radio as a tool for participatory communication and good governance: A case study of Mandevu Constituency. Unpublished Masters Dissertation, University of Zambia.

Phiri, A., Banda, F. and Haantobolo, G. (2004). *Background paper on Zambian Parliament* (online) Accessed 9/06/25 from https://asgp.co/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Background-paper-on-Zambian-Parliament.doc

Population Media Center. (2024) *How PMC's Radio Show Impacted the Future of Zambia* (online). Accessed 9/10/25 from https://www.populationmedia.org/the-latest/radio-impact-on-zambia (Accessed 9 October, 2025)

Price P C., Jhangiani R S., Chiang I A., Leighton D C., and Cuttler C. (2017). *Research Methods in Psychology* (online). Accessed 30/08/25 from https://opentext.wsu.edu/carriecuttler/

Pubrica. (2024). *Cross-sectional research design*. Available at: https://pubrica.com/insights/experimental-methodology/cross-sectional-research-design/ (Accessed 9 October, 2025).

Rain, M. (2003). *Broadcasting Commonwealth Parliaments* (Online). Accessed 13/01/22 from: https://www.agora-parl.org/sites/default/files/agora-documents/Broadcasting%20Commonwealth%20Parliaments.pdf

Reese, T., (2023). Public Awareness and its Impact in Empowering Individuals for Societal Change. *Journal of Political Sciences and Public Affairs,* 11 (2). P 1. (Online) Available from https://www.longdom.org/open-access-pdfs/public-awareness-and-its-impact-in-empowering-individuals-for-societal-change.pdf (Accessed 9 October, 2025).

Republic of Zambia. (2016) Constitution of Zambia. Lusaka: Government Printer.

Roller M R. (2020). *The In-depth Interview Method* (Online). Accessed 30/8/2024 from: https://www.rollerresearch.com/MRR%20WORKING%20PAPERS/IDI%20April%202020-Final.pdf

Rubin, A.M. (2009). Uses and gratifications perspective on media effects, in Bryant, J. and Oliver, M.B. (eds.) *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research.* New York: Routledge, pp. 165-184.

Scheufele, D.A. and Tewksbury, D. (2007). Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects Models, *Journal of Communication*, 57 (1), 9-20.

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.

Sichach, M. (2023). *Uses and Gratification Theory – Background, History and Limitations* (online). Accessed 10/06/25 from Uses and Gratifications theory - Background, History and Limitations by Moses Sichach :: SSRN

Sousa, A. and Cardoso, H.L. (2024). PTPARL-V: Portuguese *Parliamentary Debates for Voting Behaviour Study* (online). Accessed 9/09/25 from https://aclanthology.org/2024.parlaclarin-1.6.pdf

South African Parliamentary Review. (2024). *Enhancing Public Awareness of Parliamentary Functions in South Africa*, Pretoria: Parliamentary Monitoring Group.

Stahl N A., King J R. (2020). Expanding Approaches for Research: Understanding and Using Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Development Education*, 44 (1). Pp 26-28. (Online) Available from: http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1320570 (Accessed 4 September, 2024).

Statista. (2022). *Global Radio Revenue Forecast 2025* (online). Accessed 23/04/25 from https://www.statista.com/statistics/271583/global-radio-revenue/

Stewart, L. (2024). *Primary Data: Definition, Examples and Collection Methods* (online). Accessed 25/6/2024 from: https://www.atlasti.com/research

Thomas, R. (2023). *Unravelling Research Population and Sample: Understanding their Role in Statistical Inference* (online). Accessed 25/06/24 from: https://www.com/academy/

Twaya, B.P. (2019). *Assessment of Public Awareness on the Work of Parliament: Results from a Four Year long Independently Commissioned study for the Parliament of South Africa* (online). Accessed 3/02/25 from https://www.parliament.gov.za/storage/app/media/Publications/Speaker_Publications/2021/december/14-12 2021/PN_TYAWA_Assessment_of_public_awareness_Parliament_of_RSA_submission_to_ASGP_2019.pdf

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. (2021). *The Role of Parliament in Promoting Good Governance* (online). Accessed 25/06/25 from https://archive.uneca.org/publications/role-parliament-promoting-good-governance

United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. (2021). *Levels of Education* (Online). Accessed 11/11/21 from: http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/glossary-curriculum-terminology/l/levels-education

United States Environmental Protection Agency. (2021). *Public Participation Guide: Introduction to Public Participation- What is Public Participation?* (Online). Accessed 11/11/21 from: Public Participation Guide: Introduction to Public Participation | US EPA

Nga'ndu, E. (2018). The effectiveness of parliamentary reforms on citizen participation in parliamentary affairs. Masters Dissertation, University of Zambia

Wahyudin, A. (2021). The Role of Indonesia Parliamentary Television as Government Broadcasting to enhance Public Trust. *Journal Penelitian Komunikasi*, 24 (2). Pp105-116. (Online). Available from: https://jpk.kominfo.go.id/index.php/jpk/article/view/822, (Accessed 22 February, 2024).

Wandera, S. and Mugubi, J. (2014). Public Perception of Parliament Broadcasting in Kenya: Towards Altering Mutual Attitude and Augmenting Knowledge. *International Journal of Art and Art History*, 2 (1). Pp. 1-7. (Online). Available from: http://ir-library.ku.ac.ke/server/api/core/bitstreams/7e552e53-1baf-4cd1-a6a8-075af7063a9c/content (Accessed November 30, 2021).

Zambian Parliament. (2021) Public Consultations and Legislative Transparency. Lusaka: Parliament of Zambia.

Zambia Statistics Agency. (2025) Revised 2022 Census of Population and Housing Volume Two. Lusaka: Zambia Statistics Agency.

Zia UI Haq K., Rasheed R., Rashid A., Akhter S., (2023). criteria for assessing and ensuring the trustworthiness in qualitative research. *International Journal of Business Reflections*, 4, (2). Pp 150-173. (Online). Available from https://doi.org/10.56249/ijbr.00.00.00 (Accessed 25 June, 2025)

This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY.