Politics of Party Systems and Electoral Behaviour in South Africa: A Diagnosis

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Abstract: In politics, the assumption is that voters rationally, choose parties that best represent their interest or policy preferences; particularly in a multiparty system. Characterized by one dominant party, South Africa's political environment is often heated up owing to the politics behind the party system thus casting doubt on its ability to maintain a sustainable political system. Using interpretive method, the paper concludes that South Africa's goal of national integration where justice, equity and the rule of law operate may be place on the slaughter slab of a few political actors, if the nitty-gritty of the country's democratic consolidation, is not address adequately in a holistic approach by the government and leaders of the respective political parties.

Keywords: democracy; electoral system; elections; behavior; responsiveness

1. Introduction

To achieve a noble and ideal state where no man is oppressed, an egalitarian society, a desired nation, a true free state where all the races (Black, White, Indian and Colored) will have equal access to political power, where justice, equity and the rule of law operate and to leave a good legacy for future generation, the political land scape must accommodate and operate a political system that engenders socio-political and economic development.

South Africa until 1994 was under detestable apartheid rule for decades. The country however came under inclusive democratic rule on the heels of a long and exhausting liberation struggle led by the ANC who produced the first South African black leader, Nelson Mandela. This system brought peace and democratic security to the country. By interpretation according to Johnson (2003), the

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democratic state is seen as the only legitimate expression of the interests of the whole nation, becoming coterminous with the national interest or the public will.

South Africa's contemporary political land scape like other multi ethnic countries in Africa reflects both, the cultural diversity of the populace as well as the complexity of the socio-economic and historical relations of the people. The post-apartheid South Africa could be seen as an experimentation of forging a new political entity. The Apartheid era institutionalized and legally entrenched separation of South African society into two racially defined, unfriendly and contrasting polities. Debatably, this is still hideously obvious considering the socio-economic inequalities evident in South African society.

The challenge of the new South Africa; scholars believe extends far beyond the conciliatory efforts of, particularly, the transition-period leaders of the African National Congress (ANC), into the critical need to address the continuing effects of Apartheid laws, growing poverty, inadequate education, and a lack of delivery on basic services to the majority of the country's populace.

On the ground for legitimate rule; in every electoral democracy, political parties remain integral to the political system with great potentials to educating the populace on their democratic rights which account for why accountability of the political office holders to the electorate is significantly important if the nation must move forward. Party politics if one could generalize it, means the activities of political parties in a democratic system constitutionally seeking to take control of political offices through constitutionally laid down electoral principles.

South Africa no doubt is an emerging power in the world and a force to be reckoned with in Africa; owing to its economic and political clout within Southern African Development Community. SADC is an inter-governmental organization with its headquarter in Gaborone (Botswana). Objectively, SADC aimed at promoting socio-economic cooperation and integration as well as political and security cooperation among its 15 member states, while complementing the role of the African Union in Africa and particularly in the region. But one fundamental factor that would determine its (South Africa) stand among committee of nations is the stability of its political system which either makes or mars its economic development. In essence the place of party politics in the Republic may likely dictates what the Republic gets or gives out socially, politically and economically.

Presumably, the prime requirement of an electoral system with principled and disciplined political parties is providing an enabling environment for the citizens to

elect their legislative members and in many cases, the head of state. There is more to it than just that, however with a number of important socio-economic factors coming into play. This is because the role of political institutions is often downplayed, it must be acknowledged that political parties plays an important role in any politically freedom loving state, both as manifestations and instruments of political development.

South Africa no doubt operates a multiparty democracy but the question that needed to be answer is how much of the populace understood and benefit from the workings of the political system? Does it matter if the system delivers a legislature whose member is dominated by one political party and whose behaviours often heat up the system? How much choice of candidates do voters have? Does it matter if citizens vote for any particular candidate from a particular political party based on colour, ethnic or race? On the whole what is required of the system to ensure a broad base political system that will orchestrate an all-round socio-political and economic development? These questions form the basis of this paper. Using interpretive approach, the work is structured as follows: section two explains the method use in this work, the third section explain models of politics, while the following section look at the conceptualization of politics, followed by section five which explained party system in South Africa, while section six concludes the work.

Objective of the Study

Objectively, this study used interpretative method of research to analyse party politics and the electoral behaviour in South Africa questioning the organization of political parties and its suitability for South Africa's goal of national integration.

2. Method of Research

In research, there are some underlying philosophical suppositions that establish valid research and which research method is suitable for knowledge development in a given study. In order to establish some assumptions, this work used interpretive approach thus given this work greater scope to address questions around the trajectories of politics of party systems and electoral behaviours in South Africa. Interpretive research methods adopt the position that our knowledge of reality, including the domain of human action, is a social construction by human

actors. It assume that people create and associate their own subjective and intersubjective meanings as they interact with the world around them; with the goal being to document and interpret as fully as possible the totality of whatever is being studied in particular contexts from the people's viewpoint or frame of reference (Walsham, 1993, Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991; Leininger, 1985). Therefore, the reason for which this study adopts interpretative method is to enable a critical analysis and understanding of the South Africa's political environment and the process whereby politics influences and is influenced by the same political environment.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Models of Politics

In politics, the assumption is that voters rationally, choose parties that best represent their interest or policy predilections. In turn political parties, choose policies that attract the largest possible number of voters. This can be explained from the four spatial – proximity; directional; discounting and compensational – voting model elucidated by scholars. Explaining proximity voting model, Downs (1957) opines that voters evaluate a party on the basis of the party's proximity between the party's probable policy platform and their personal preferences. Therefore, the closer a party's policy position to the voter's policy preferences, the higher the propensity of the voter's utility from voting for this party.

While explaining directional voting model, Rabinowitz & Macdonald (1989) argued that political competition is based on the directions of policy movement. In essence, voters and parties choose between two opposing alternatives of a neutral point. This is defined as the center of the policy space (Meyer & Muller, 2014). What this translates to mean is that voters choose the party with the most passionate position on their desired side and by implication; parties choose the most appropriate policy platforms that fall within the acceptable range.

Presenting discounting model, Grofman (1985) explain that voters do not only consider the parties' proposed policies but also how successful potential officeholders are likely to be in implementing changes from the present existing state of affairs in the direction that suit them (voters). Adding to these theories, Kedar (2005) put forward compensational voting model arguing that voters use counterfactual thinking when choosing which party to vote for. For that reason,

voters hypothetically, compare the actual policy outcome with the one that would occur if the respective party had not been present. This is most likely to occur in multiparty systems where policy decisions result from inter-party bargaining. It is against this background that the following section looks at party system and elections in South Africa.

3.2. Understanding Politics

Discussing, the concept of majority rule, Gardner (1999) once complained that it is remarkable that so little of the literature in democratic theory attends to the question of what politics is about. Yet any evaluation of majority rule as a decision-making mechanism must surely be parasitic on a view of politics, or we are without criteria to judge its success or failure. This statement can be applied not just to discussion of majority rule in a democratic state, but also to the discourse vis-à-vis most institutions of democratic government, including political parties. Taking up this assertion, we'll definitely ask what politics is for, the purposes it ought to serve.

As identified by scholars, there are two distinct political thoughts venerable and mostly incompatible models of politics. The first model believe that the purpose of politics is to identify and achieve the common good (socially, politically and economically) of society. Politics, on this view, is therefore the forum in which truth emerges and is applied for the benefit of all. It is also seen as the arena where political actors are expected to behave virtuously, and where virtue is measured in part by the willingness to value the good of all ahead of personal interests and to act accordingly. The second model of politics which is found virtually in all political thought is the model of interest pluralism. This is the notion that politics consists of a competitive struggle among political groups and individuals comprising society for control over governmental power (Gardner, 1999: 8-9). Here the common good emerges through the political negotiations and adjustments that occur when all political actors treat politics as a forum for the pursuit of personal interest.

Therefore, the conceptualization of politics is very important to the understanding of party politics. Defining politics no doubt is a great task; this is because there isn't one validly accepted definition but a wide range of definitions, thus making its conceptualization very ambiguous. What this means is that the term has a variety of acceptable connotations. Where the natural sciences have a uniform technical vocabulary, adequate and precise terminologies with words of recognized meaning,

politics doesn't have it. On the other hand, if political scientist speaks of socialism, conservatism, liberalism, politics, then everyone of his audience places on those his own personal interpretation, they have different opinions and therefore, it is difficult to achieve agreement between them (Modebadze, 2010). One would therefore conclude that the definition of politics varies based on the opinion of different people from time to time even from place to place. For example, the way people in the arena of business and commercial affairs would define politics would be different from how a scientist will see it, hence the reason why it is seen as the exercise of power by those in political offices. It is the means by which the objectively knowable common good is revealed to members of the society (Gardner, 1999).

Without any point of contradiction people are social beings as well as members of society. In order to survive and achieve a better society – politically, socially and economically – they have to co-operate and work together. When this is done it means there is a need to make decisions which may be political or economic depending on the type of problem that arises and about how such problems that arise by working should be solved, or how the resources available to the group are to be shared. The study of how such decisions are made can be termed as politics. Politics one would agree arises from certain basic facts of human existence and experience; that people generally choose to live together and that they differ in many ways in their thinking and opinion as to how the community/state should be organized and the nature of the decisions it makes.

This gives credence to the assertion that Politics is exciting because people disagree; about how they should live. Who should get what? How should power – political and other resources be distributed? Should society be based on cooperation or conflict? How should collective decisions be made? Who should have a say? How much influence should each person have? Thus it is nothing less than the activity through which human beings attempt to improve their lives and create the "Good Society" (Heywood, 2007, p. 1) However; the disagreement that lies at the heart of politics often makes it conflictual in practice. People disagree about what it is that makes social interaction "political", whether it is where it takes place – within government, the state or the public sphere generally – or the kind of activity it involves – peacefully resolving socio-political and economic conflict or exercising control over less powerful groups.

To Crick (as cited in Heywood, 2007) politics is the activity by which differing interests within a given unit of rule are conciliated by giving them a share in power in proportion to their importance to the welfare and the survival of the whole community. Expansively, politics is the activity through which people make, preserve and amend the general rules under which they live or put as the study of this activity. This has made it to be intimately linked to the occurrences of conflict and cooperation. On the one hand, the existence of rival political opinions and opposing interests no doubts guarantees disagreement about the rules under which people live. Politics is defined in such different ways: which means there is no acceptable universal definition of politics. Politics has also been defined as the exercise of political power, the art of government, the making of collective decisions, the allocation of scarce – socio-political and economic – resources, the practice of deception and manipulation etc. thus making politics to be treated as an essentially contested concept. As an art of government, politics involves the various processes through which government responds to pressures/demands from the larger society, in particular by allocating resources, benefits, rewards or even penalties. Therefore politics is what takes place within a political entity, a system of social organization centered on the machinery of government.

Another conception of politics is that it has to do with the administration of public affairs which in other words, set the distinction between the political and the non-political life. Aristotle (384-322 BC) once declared that 'man is by nature a political animal'. By implication, it is only within a political community that human beings can live the good life; hence politics is an ethical activity concerned with creating a just and egalitarian society.

Politics has been conceptualized as relating to the way in which it is conducted as a means of resolving socio-political and possibly economic conflicts, what this imply is that it involves compromise, reconciliation and negotiation by the parties involved in conflicts instead of using force. For example, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) set up by the post-apartheid ANC lead government under late Nelson Mandela in South Africa was regarded as a political solution to a problem which implies peaceful reconciliatory debates as opposed to the use of violence. This is why politics is portrayed as the solution to the problem of order which chooses conciliation rather than violence and compulsion.

One view of politics by scholars is the fact that politics is seen as a political phenomenon that works in all social activities as well as in every facets of human

existence (Leftwich, 2004). What this translates to mean is that politics cannot be confined to a particular sphere of human existence; it cannot be limited to governance alone rather it extends to other areas of life. Politics has been understood differently by different political thinkers and within different political traditions, hence the difficulty in defining politics based on the contradiction between the broad and the narrow conceptions of politics.

Modebadze (2010), comments that politics is difficult to define because of the contradiction between the broad and the narrow conceptions of politics. According to the narrow conception of politics only politicians are involved in politics. In essence politics is strictly associated with politicians and the machinery of government. Thus making politics to often been portrayed as an essentially state-bound activity. He maintains that most people are considered to be outside politics because they are not involved in decision-making process. However critics of the narrow view of politics define it in broader terms. They argue that politics exists within and outside the institutional precincts of the modern state. They believe that politics in not just confined to the actions of government but also takes place in every corner of human existence. Political theorists however disagree about whether the term politics should be defined narrowly or broadly. The reason one will figure out is that the definition of politics changes as time passes and societies develop, hence the lack of consensus on the meaning of politics.

4. Party System in South Africa

The domain of political parties in South Africa since 1994 has undergone amazing transformation having embraced inclusive democratic governance. The demise of the obnoxious apartheid system witnessed the emergence of multiparty system and democracy in South Africa. Fobih, (2011), opined that, political parties are some of the inevitable aspects of democracy, so democracy is unthinkable without parties. Therefore, party system is one of the essential tools for the sustainability of democratic politics.

In both advanced and emerging democracies political parties constitute an integral part of contemporary democratic practice. Political participation in every democratic system covers significant range of political activities which can either be individual or undertaken in the context of a group. Therefore, the central actors in every democratic system are political parties; upon which, the principle of representation in a democratic system hinges. This representation can be

effectively effected by the election of representatives (Yolanda, 2011). This therefore point to the fact that political parties are necessary in a democratic system even though there are other socio-economic institutions through which people can be effectively represented.

The primary goal of every political party is to gain control of government machinery; which is why political party is seen as a group of people with more or less the same political ideology constitutionally organized for the primary purpose of gaining control of governance through elections. The first democratic election in South Africa (1994) witnessed the incorporation of people who had hitherto been sidelined and till date political parties in the country has been in the fore front of educating the people politically as well as reaching out to younger generations, "the born free" who are of voting age through their youth movements; popular among them is the ANC Youth League.

The competition for representation in the parliament between political parties makes every political landscape rough but very interesting as it affects their relationship as well as various government institutions. For example, the political environment in South Africa has been politically heated up with the emergence of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) in the current political dispensation. The presence of the seemingly radicalized political party, EFF, and a vibrant first black leader of whites' dominated political party, the Democratic Alliance (DA) in the parliament have escalated demands for accountability, causing the ANC to appear as losing absolute control of the parliamentary business. This complex relationship between and among political parties is very important to how political systems work in practice. This network of relationships among political parties in a state is called party system; distinguished by the number of political parties in the system (Yolanda, 2011).

Practically, in every democracy, the best way of identifying types of party system is basically through the numbers of political parties jostling for a place at the parliament. However, the size and the number of political parties in a state determine the performance of political parties at any election. Therefore, the vote garnered by political parties in elections which translates to the number of seats they get in the parliament reflects their performances.

Explaining further, Caramani (2008) opines that the electoral system through which votes are translated into seats in the parliament is a significant variable to consider. This is because the majority voting systems (first-past-the-post-systems)

favours the evolution of a two-party system whereas a proportional voting system is more likely to favour a multi-party system. However, there is no distinct connection between electoral and party systems. Of importance is the relevance of political parties to the formation of governments, whether they have the political clout to win in an election as well as their relationship with one another, whether it is characterized by conflicts or cooperation.

Political parties can be classified according to a number of different criteria; which are their level of organization, their socio-political targets, the social classes they want to represent and approach, or their positioning towards the political system. Some political parties can also be classified by their names, which often express the socio-political and economic objectives they want to be identified with. For example the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) believes in the liberation of the poor South Africans. By their names, parties demonstrate how they want to be perceived, and that means how they want to be classified. Hence, the assertion that political party rests on their belief that parties are the vehicles by which self-interested groups and individuals factions, coordinated and pressed their efforts to articulate their ideologies.

The existence of a multi-party system depends on several different factors; political traditions, the development of political institutions, the socio-economic and political circumstances, and the importance of regional cleavages, as well as racial conditions. However, the system of government influences the development of parties and party systems in so far as a parliamentary system offers more influence for political parties because the government emerges directly from the parliament, which is dominated by the parties (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011, p. 199). As the case in South Africa the government emerges unswervingly from the parliament.

From the foregoing it is evident that the South African political system; coming from apartheid – divided along racial configuration with black majority – is characterized by multiparty democracy. In this system there are a number of political parties where it may be difficult for one party to win the majority seats in the parliament and since it is difficult to win an absolute majority it is therefore imperative for the largest political party to form a coalition in order for them to govern the country. However the case is different in South Africa where the political land scape was shaped by the apartheid era and the believe that the liberation of black South Africans hinges on the vociferous role played by the African National Congress during apartheid era, hence, its dominance of South

Africa's political terrain since 1994. Like every liberation movement in Africa, the ANC according to the principle of democratic centralism, has since 1994 hegemonically, remained the repository of decisions, policy-making and appointments and invariably restricted ordinary members and citizens from participating in decision-making beyond voting every five years (Gumede, 2017).

This corroborates Rabinowitz & Macdonald's directional voting model; where voters choose the party with the most passionate position on their desired side and in return parties choose the most appropriate policy platforms that fall within the acceptable range for the voters (1989). This model rests on Downs' proximity voting model, where the proximity of party's policy position to the voter's policy preferences determines the predilection of voter's voting for the party. Owing to the type of legitimacy the ANC has through its historic role in the liberation struggle and with its passionate position to the course of black South Africans the party has since 1994, successfully, dominate the South African political land scape.

By definition dominant party system is a system where one political party has consistently in at last three elections been elected into office as well as gain absolute majority of seats in the parliament. Dominant party system is categorized as a system in which despite the multi-party situation, only one party is so dominant that it directs the political system and is firmly in control of state power over a fairly long duration of time that even opposition parties make little if any dent on the political hegemony of a dominant ruling party (Matlosa & Karume, 2004). This however does not mean that other political parties are not allowed to participate in a free and fair election but one political fact is that "party rotation in government does not occur" Yolanda, 2011, p. 207). That ANC (African National Congress) again secured the majority of the total vote cast in 2014 election is a confirmation of its dominance of South Africa's political system. Though there is a growing decline in its electoral success; as evident in the 2016 local government elections where the party lost the control of the country's capital and a metro named after late Nelson Mandela (ANC most famous son) to the DA, with the help of the EFF and other smaller parties. The smaller political parties only participate in governance through representation in the parliament owned to proportional representation system.

Table 1 showing the dominance of ANC in South African political system since 1994.

POLITICAL PARTIES	1994 %	1999 %	2004 %	2009 %	2014 %
African National Congress	62.65	66.35	69.68	65.90	62.15
Democratic Alliance	-	9.56	12.37	16.66	22.23
Economic Freedom Fighters	-	-	-	-	6.35
Inkatha Freedom Party	10.54	8.58	6.97	4.55	2.40
National Freedom Party	-	-	-	-	1.57
United Democratic Movement	-	3.42	2.28	0.85	1.00
VryheidrsFront Plus	2.17	0.08	0.89	0.83	0.90
Congress of the People	-	-	-	7.42	0.67
African Christian Democratic Party	0.45	1.43	1.60	0.81	0.57
African Independent Congress	-	-	-	-	0.53
AgangSouth Africa	-	-	-	-	0.28
Pan Africanist Congress of Azania	1.25	0.71	0.73	0.27	0.12
African Peoples Convention	-	-	-	0.20	0.17
AlJama-ah	-	-	-	0.15	0.14
United Christian Democratic Party	-	0.79	0.75	0.37	0.12
Minority Front	0.07	0.30	0.35	0.25	0.12
Azanian People's Organization	-	0.17	0.27	0.22	0.11
Bushbuukridge Resident Association	-	-	-	-	0.08
Independent Civic Organization of South Africa	-	-	-	-	0.08
Patriotic Alliance	-	-	-	-	0.07
Workers and Socialist Party	-	-	-	-	0.05
Ubuntu Party	-	-	-	-	0.04
Front Nasionaal/Front	-	-	-	-	0.03

National					
Kingdom Governance Movement	-	-	-	-	0.03
First Nation Liberation Alliance	-	-	-	-	0.02
Keep It Straight and Simple					0.02
Pan Africanist Movement	-	-	-	-	0.02
United Congress	-	-	-	-	0.02
Peoples Alliance	-	-	-	-	0.01

Source: IEC, 2014 election reports and IEC Election Archive

Considering the above table, there are some features of South African electoral system that worth mentioning. Of importance is the voting pattern of South Africans. It is obvious that racism remains a key challenge to consolidation and sustainability of democracy in South Africa. The South African population understandably, is extremely divided regarding the party they intends voting for, who leads the party and what they think about other political parties owing to the political history of the country, hence, the contention that black voters will always vote for parties led by their fellow black man/woman, the same thing applicable to the white voters.

In essence identity politics has been a powerful force in South Africa, 95% of ANC supporters are black voters, while the DA though with a black leader, debatably, has its support base from the whites and coloured voters, with whites making up 56% of the party's support base and coloured 25% (Mitchey, 2014). Though the DA in 2014 general election and 2016 local government election, gain some sort of support from the blacks to a few points to its black vote; but to break the identity bonds between black South Africans and the ANC has been a herculean task, hence, the relevance of directional voting model. The reason has been that most black South Africans still regard the ANC as the party that delivered them to freedom, and consider the DA complicit in the country's racist past. For black South African voters, the DA is a symbol of white privilege, and the party's platform of non-racialism is but suspicious electioneering, thus justifying, South African voting decisions on the basis of individuals' sense of legacy and identity. However, scholars has come to the conclusion that though the DA and the EFF may not have the political clout to win national election but they play an important role in the sustainability of South Africa's socio-political and economic future.

71

Generally, it's been argued that it is possible for a state where one political party featured dominantly, as the case in South Africa; to be regarded as un-conducive for a healthy democratic system based on the fact that it may be difficult to differentiate between party interests and state interests owing to lack of office rotation. It can also be argued that the dominance of one political party may become problematic when the party sees less of the need to respond to public opinion owing to the fact that the party is assured of being reelected (Yolanda, 2011, pp. 184-212). Another argument put forward is that dominant party is likely going to hinder democratic development on the ground that it may limit the responsiveness and the accountability of political office holders who feels threatened by the fact that they may likely loose in next poll if found wanting (Welsh, 1994). By implication an extension of tenure in office may likely lead to complacency and corruption.

The unfolding socio-political and economic event within the South Africa's political circle with regards to "state capture" is evidence that corruption has gained ground owing to the dominance of one party. Fazekas & Tóth (2014, pp. 3-5) conceive state capture as a distinct network structure in which corrupt actors cluster around certain state organs and functions at the heart of which some members of the business and/or political elite appropriate some parts or functions of the state and use its resources to the benefit of the group and to the detriment of the public good. Fundamentally, state capture has become the pedestal for poor performance of governance, an aberration to transparent and responsive governance to people. The captured economy is therefore trapped in a vicious circle in which the policy and institutional reforms necessary to improve governance are undermined by collusion between powerful firms and state officials who reap substantially from the continuation of weak governance.

Considering the historical and ideological disposition of ANC (African National Congress) a dominant political party in South Africa, the party must function within the purview of the democratic system in as much as the party's dominance was won within the rules and regulations that guide democratic system, though dependent on how strong, effective and independent such a system is. In other words an institutionalized political system backed with politically literate citizen may likely put a restraint on the party's attempt to strong-arm the political system to its advantage.

The plural oddity of South African polity has since asserted itself in the party domain. At least in the last two decades of democratic governance, most parties have performed the role of opposition parties at different levels and at different periods. Relatively the working of parties over the last 20 years can be described as one of partial success. In essence contrasting picture of partial success, serious shortcomings and huge challenges has in no measure generates mixed or contradictory feelings in the polity. While one would argue that the success gives some socio-political and economic satisfaction, the shortcomings cause uneasiness. It should be noted that the inadequacies are as a result of the gap between what the party leaders profess and practice between the expectations of people for more service delivery and the inability of parties to deliver; between the leadership styles and the larger dynamics of democracy.

On the whole what is required of the system to ensure a broad base political system that will orchestrate an all-round political development? The achievement of Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) winning 6.5% as a new entrant in national politics speaks volumes about the need for alternative political space that's within the traditions of congress that voters like to support when angry with the ANC (Mitchey, 2014). It should be noted that the existentiality of political opposition within a political system presents alternatives to the governing party and allows society to question the actions and choices of government. It may as well act as effective check on the possibility of regression towards abuse of power by the party in government.

A basic assumption in democracies is the periodic change of government; majority parties are not there permanently and smaller parties are not forever doomed to opposition benches (Yolanda, 2011, p. 118). In human relationship, opposition one would say is tantamount to true friendship. It is often said that the man who tells you that you have a stinking rear is your friend. He is only drawing attention to your bodily filth and asking you to do something about it. He is better than a sycophant who says you can always come out of the sewage tank and smell of roses.

Opposition parties have therefore been and still are the established political ingredient of all democracies. Its (opposition party) policies and plans which is sometimes based on specific socio-political and economic values would at one time or the other remind the ruling party that other value preferences also prevail in the society, shaping the opinion of the members of the public. Apart from representing

the interest of their supporters, opposition parties participates in law making, they provide their own plans which are based on specific values and shaping public opinion/behaviour as well as serve as watchdogs over the government. One unfortunate political implication of the dominance of one party in South Africa is the weakening of opposition parties evidence by their poor electoral performance (for example Inkatha Freedom Party's performance has plummeted from 10.54% it garnered in 1994 to 2.4% in 2014) hence the question of their viability; they seems to have become a toothless political institutions that cannot offer a potential alternative in governance.

This however does not mean that opposition parties are not active. Relatively opposition parties in South Africa have been very active in checkmating the excesses of the ruling party. For example the Democratic Alliance (DA) in the parliament introduced the Wasteful Expenditure Monitor as a means of measuring African National Congress (ANC) government fruitless and wasteful expenditure of tax payer's money and to demonstrate how often the needs of the ANC elite are put before the needs of ordinary South Africans (Mail & Guardian, 2009).

Although South Africa has made significant progress in its democracy and developing its party system since 1994 with black majority, some major democratic deficits still remain in the institutionalization of democracy and the party system. These constitute the nitty-gritty of the country's democratic consolidation, yet to be addressed adequately in a holistic approach by the government and leaders of the respective political parties. By democratic consolidation we mean under a given political and economic conditions a particular system of institutions becomes the only political game; when no one/parties can imagine acting outside of the democratic institutions, what all the losers want to do is try again within the same political institution under which they have just lost (Hyug Baeg Im., 1996).

However, it becomes difficult to refer to a political system as democratic when the elected representatives are not accountable for their actions and do not keep their campaign promises to the state/constituencies/ward after being elected, but behave on behalf of their political bosses (patrons) thus jeopardizing the collective rational choice that is the core of democracy. Fundamentally, where patron–client relationship in politics has become the order of the day, besides corruption, personalism and favouritism, the emergence of a sustainable democratic system would be very hard to come by.

Thus confirming two political thoughts that have dominated the conceptions of politics; where one sees it as an avenue for the honest and impartial pursuit of the common good of the people as well as the sustainability of the polity, and the other sees it as an avenue for the pursuit of personal interest. The second school of thought is common to African politics where average political actor believes in the law of sow and reaping. In other words state actors sees politics as an investment where they have to make enough gains to the detriment of the socio-political and economic development of the state.

A broadened political system therefore should include the guarantee of basic civil rights, responsiveness, responsibility and accountability. Political institution of political parties and electoral system and representative organization must have sufficient capacities to articulate, aggregate and represent the interests of their constituencies in the political arena.

Of importance is the place of the civil society in ensuring an articulate and effective political system. The civil society is significantly important because it affects the distribution of benefits, the formula for legitimation, the level of citizen participation as well as affect the quality of the political system (Schmitter, 1995). In its entirety civil society raises the degree of expectedness among relevant political actors since it provides more reliable information for good governance, it also play the role of the school of democracy that instills notions and political norms that are civic, it creates channels other than political parties for the expression, aggregation and representation of various interests, it also reduces the burden of governance for both public and private producers and provide the last reservoirs of resistance to arbitrary governance.

A proper connection still needs to be established between democracy and development, with the people at the center of that connection. Of importance is the impact of institutional factors on the relative importance of party politics or national interest variables in forming political actors' positions. This is based on the idea that the extent to which actors stresses either party ideologies or national interests is by their party affiliation.

A look at the South African Parliament shows that the Parliament is dominated by party political cleavages. What this translates to mean is that government positions in the country is not determined and shaped by national interests but mainly by party interests. Relatively, the impact of institutional factors on the importance of party political or national interest forms actors' positions. This is based on the idea

that the extent to which political parties stress either party ideologies or national interests is determined by their party's or institutional affiliation; the ruling party seems to support this expectation; contrary to the fact that their decision, action or inactions should be guided and shaped by national interests.

Political institution expectedly is meant to bring men and women of good character into government and place power in their hands. Perhaps constitutional design of every democratic state requires political actors to possess most wisdom to discern, and most virtue to pursue, the common good of the society. Progressively, politics should be understood as an arena in which selfish interests are set aside and in which all political actors work together to discern the common good and to take collective action to achieve it. This justifies the model of politics postulated by Gardner (1999, p. 9) that politics is all about interest pluralism in Africa. This model rests on the assumption that groups and individuals seek power not to realize the common socio-political and economic good of the people but for the purpose of using power to pursue their own self-interest. This behavior places at the center of political life, approvingly, a kind of behavior that negate the common good of the people.

The main purpose of politics is to provide a forum in which the people may collectively identify the content of the common good and decide which policies are best suited to bring it into effect. Apart from the fact that politics also result in the election of officials committed to carrying out the policies selected by the people. If the political system in South Africa is to have any realistic chance of producing substantively distinct platforms and policy positions, then political parties must have the option of being both selective and exclusive concerning who can join and who can participate in their internal processes. Each party must be free to choose its platform and candidates, and to do so without input from those the party wishes to exclude.

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

Can political parties play some role in a selfless search for the common good, or must they inevitably degenerate into instruments for the self-interested seeking private benefits? There is possibility that political parties can promote political virtue, contrariwise, it's been assumed that political parties are inevitably vehicles for the pursuit of self-interest; debatably, conceives as unavoidable evils in a free society – forces to be condemned, yet patiently endured.

What informed this assertion is the believe that political parties rested on their belief that parties are the vehicles by which self-interested groups and individuals factions, coordinated and pressed their efforts to seize political power. Once in possession of power, factions could be expected to use it to pursue their own private self-interest at the expense of the common good. Put in another word political parties live on patronage and the spoils of politics. Helms (1949, p. 47) maintain that patronage is a tremendously important tool in party politics. The number of office-seekers may exceed the number of offices-to-be-filled. For every one person appointed there may be others bitterly disappointed. Even the person who received the appointment may be disgruntled. He may have been aiming for something higher and be insulted because he did not get it.

This brings us to the conclusion that it is of vital importance to institutionalized fight against corruption, unemployment; poverty and lack of service delivery which have already been the precipitating factors in civil unrest and violent protests in South Africa. An anti-corruption strategy based on civil society's effort and other agencies should be created; its sustainability, contribute to the stability of the economy and the country's political system.

A proper connection still needs to be established between democracy and socio-economic development, with the people at the center of that connection. The state needs political leaders who are absorbed by and with strong moral content, discipline and values necessary to steer the country in the right direction. South Africa needs leaders who will genuinely put people first, when entrusted with the positions of leadership, become committed to enhancing the welfare of fellow citizens as well as the sustainability of the polity.

Every political party needed to be internally democratic without which it cannot promote democratic principles in terms of encouraging participation in decision-making, respecting the rule of law and civil liberties and in promoting checks and balances in government when it assumes power. In other words necessity is laid on every political party as well as none state actors to ensure the development and sustainability of democratic deepening, political institutionalization and regime performance.

The problem of governance cannot be solved with voting alone. Without security and stability, the devastating effects of socio-political and economic conflict will not ease. If corruption is not reduced, the economy will not thrive and the economic resources will not benefit the entire population. Chapter nine of South

Africa constitution allows for the establishment of institutions intended to promote and strengthen the functioning of South Africa's constitutional democracy. Known as "Chapter Nine Institutions", these include; the human rights commission; the commission of gender equality; a commission to protect cultural, religious and linguistic rights; the independent broadcasting authority; public protector; and the electoral commission. Debatably, the electorate primarily selects men; but by doing so it also selects a policy. It instructs the men, whom it has elected, to carry discussion to a further and finer point in a legislative assembly; it instructs them to discuss the translation of the programme, for which they stand and on which they have been elected, into a body of general rules, or laws (Gardner, 1999, p. 20). Therefore the program of a responsible, accountable and responsive government is thus a comprehensible and rationally connected whole that reflects the coherent beliefs of the people.

Acknowledgements

Notes

In Politics, Aristotle believed man was a political animal; owing to the fact that man is a social creature with the power of speech and sense of moral thought as well as choice.

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