

The Endurance and Decline of Single Party Dominance in African States: A Case Study of Botswana and Senegal

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Abstract

This article explores the underlying causes for the endurance and decline of single party dominance in Botswana and Senegal. The time period includes one-party dominance in Botswana under Botswana democratic party (1965-2009) and one-party dominance in Senegal under the socialist party (1978- 2000). The article uses qualitative research strategies with a comparative case study design. The investigation is based on a review of previous researches, published reports, government documents, and surveys websites. The article provides qualitative evidence that supports the argument that incumbent resource advantages are the most important underlying factors for the endurance and decline of single party dominance in Botswana and Senegal. Further research and quantitative evidence is necessary to test whether the same conclusion can be applied to other cases. This research contributes to the understanding of one-party dominance in developing countries.

Key Words: *democracy, ethnic cleavage, historical legacy, institutions, one party dominance, political culture.*

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Introduction

Single party dominance that is the winning by one party of an absolute majority in at least three consecutive elections is an emerging phenomenon in African countries.² In this regard, two developments are worth mentioning. On the one hand, there are only few African countries in which dominant parties lost election. On the other hand, there is a “worrying trend of one-party dominance” on the continent. (Bogaards 2004: 192). Thus, there is “an urgent need for systematic research into the nature, sources, conditions and consequences of dominant party systems in Africa.” (Ibid).

There are a few studies devoted to the explanation of one-party dominance.³ These studies have approached the issue from five directions. Some studies take historical background of a party to explain the emergence of one-party dominance. (Huntington 1968; Giliomee and Simkins 1999). Some other scholars depend on the social cleavage approach to explain single party dominance. (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). Others invoke the institutional approach which considers electoral law and electoral system as determinant of party system in a given political system. (Duverger 1954:217). Some consider political culture to explain one-party dominance (Schaffer 1998; Cruise O’Brien 1999). Finally, the theory of resource advantage considers incumbent resource advantage as the cause for the endurance and decline of one-party dominance. (Greene 2007). Of these studies, few apply a systematic and comparative approach to explain one-party dominance in the African context.⁴ To the best knowledge of the researcher, there is no research work that analyses one-party dominance in Botswana and Senegal with a comparative research design.

² This definition of one party dominance is adopted from Sartori (1976) definition of pre-dominant party systems

³ The few existing studies on single party dominance include: Duverger (1954), Tucker (1961), Blondel (1972), Greene (2007), Huntington and Moore (1970), Arian and Barnes (1974), Sartori (1976), Pempel (1990), Brooker (2000), and H. Giliomee and C. Simkins (1999), J. Wong and E. Friedman (2008), C. Spiess (2009), and M. Bogaards and F. Boucek (2010), Rimanelli (1999), Jager and du Toit (2013); Doorenspleet and Nijzink (2013).

⁴ Doorenspleet and Nijzink (2013); Jager and Du Toit (2013)

Thus, this article fills the gaps in research and theory by providing a comparative analysis of the underlying causes for the endurance and decline of one-party dominance in Botswana under Botswana Democratic Party (1965-2009) and Senegal under the Socialist party (1978- 2000). Botswana is an interesting case of enduring single party dominance while Senegal represents non-enduring single party dominance.

Methodology and Case Selection

The study is an exploratory research. It is fully based on the review of available studies on one-party dominance in Botswana and Senegal. As the main objective of the study is exploring the causal mechanisms of single party dominance, the researcher employs the case study approach which has an advantage for a research of an explanatory nature (Gerring 2007: 39; Yin 2003:1).

The cases of this research are selected in line with the most similar systems design. Botswana and Senegal are similar (they are free and democracies) but differ in the dependent variable (one party dominance). The two cases are selected based on their similarity in their level of freedom (using the Freedom House Index) and democracy (using Polity IV and the Democracy Index).⁵ Moreover, unlike the dominant parties in most African countries and many other cases of one-party dominance in developing countries⁶, the dominant parties in Botswana and Senegal did not come out of revolution or armed struggle against colonialism. Despite

5 Freedom House Index 2013;; Polity IV2010; and Economic Intelligence unit 2013

⁶ Gilome and Simkins (1999:3) have shown that unlike dominant parties in industrialised countries, the dominant parties in developing countries were not born or revitalised in some crisis of political mobilisation. Rather, they were born in a much greater trauma or in wake of “a nightmare.” They come out of a background of revolution (Mexico), counter-revolution(Taiwan), apartheid (south Africa), colonial rule, foreign occupation and war of insurgency (Malaysia), continuing struggle against the communist regime in Beijing (Taiwan), and liberation struggle of an indigenous people against social and economic subjugation (Malaysia and South Africa).

these similarities, Botswana and Senegal differ in the dependent variable that is one-party dominance. Botswana represents a case where single party dominance endures. In this regard, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has won every election since independence in 1965. On the other hand, Senegal represents a non-enduring one party dominance. The socialist party (PS) won five elections between 1978- 1998. However, the PS lost power in the 2000 election. As such, single party dominance is discontinued in Senegal.

After a careful selection of the cases, a comparative method is applied in order to identify similarities and differences concerning the factors that potentially influence one-party dominance in Botswana and Senegal. Due to the small number of cases, the researcher conducted qualitative inductive analysis instead of testing a theory. (De Vaus, 2007:263).

For the purpose of analysis in this study, different factors have been identified to explain one-party dominance: Historical Legacy, Social Cleavage, Institutions, Political Culture, Government Performance and Incumbent Advantage. The subsequent parts provide the analysis of discontinued one-party dominance in Senegal and enduring one-party dominance in Botswana. It attempts to answer the question why and how one-party dominance endures in Botswana but not in Senegal?

Senegal: The Rise and fall of the PS

Senegal is the westernmost nation of West Africa. It became the first French colony in West Africa in 1895 (Fall 2011:162). Senegal has remained a constitutional democracy since independence. Unlike most West African countries, Senegal did not experience military coup or civil wars. As a result, Senegal is considered one of Africa's stable, rare functioning and shining democracies. (Villalon 1994:163).

During the colonial period, elections were held in Senegal in which native French citizens of Dakar, Goree, Rufisque and St. Louis could elect representatives to the municipal council and deputy to the French parliament. However, the majority of black Africans were not eligible to vote until 1916 after lobbying by Blaise Diagne, the first African Deputy in the French Assembly elected in 1914. (Beck 2008:52; Villalón 1994:167).

In 1945 two more Senegalese; Lamine Gueye and Leopold Sedar Senghor served in the French Constituent Assembly. Lamine Gueye founded the socialist party while Senghor together with Mamadou Dia founded the Senegalese Democratic Bloc (BDS) in 1948. (Gellar 2005: 77-78).

These political parties dominated pre-independence party competition in Senegal. They had advocated the extension of universal suffrage and other civil and political rights to indigenous subjects. In 1958, Lamine Guèye's Socialist Party merged with Senghor's democratic block to become the Senegalese Progressive Union (UPS), known as the Socialist Party since 1976. (Ibid). The National Assembly, elected in March 1959 and made up solely of members of the UPS, adopted the first constitution of an independent, unitary Senegal on 26 August, 1960. Leopold Sedar Senghor was elected the first President of the Senegalese Republic on 5 September, 1960. The independence constitution maintained the parliamentary regime established by the constitution of 24 January, 1959. In 1963, a new constitution that established a presidential regime was adopted.

Senegal broke with the pattern of one party rule in 1974 when it recognised an opposition party, Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) under the leadership of Abdoulaye Wade. Moreover, Senghor amended the constitution in 1976 that made the country a '*de jure*' three party system. Legal recognition was given to three parties representing three ideologies. The ruling PS was designated as social democratic, the PDS as liberal democratic and the Parti Africain d'Indépendance (PAI) as Marxist-Leninist. (Creevey, Ngomo and Vengroff 2005: 480).

All the above three legally recognised parties contested in the 1978 presidential and parliamentary elections. Senghor defeated Wade with 82.5 per cent of the vote, and the PS won 82 of the 100 seats in the national assembly. However, The PDS won 18 seats.⁷ The PS dominated the political scene until 2000. The only power alternation during the period was intraparty that is Senghor handed over power to his successor, Abdu Diouf. Senghor officially stepped down in 1981 before the end of his term.

7 African Elections Database accessible at <http://africanelections.tripod.com/>

Diouf amended the constitution in 1981 that eliminated the limits on the number of political parties. Diouf also made electoral reforms in 1983. These were designed to consolidate Diouf's power over the PS, create opportunities for the opposition to win some National Assembly seats and legitimize the presidential succession at the polls. (Creevey, Ngomo and Vengroff 2005: 481).

The end of PS dominance came in the 2000 presidential election and later the parliamentary election in 2001. The following part deals with the factors that contributed to the endurance and decline of the PS in Senegal.

Historical Legacy

The initial emergence of dominant party in Senegal followed political independence from colonialism. However, unlike most African countries and many cases of one-party dominance in developing countries, the dominant party did not have a legacy of violent or armed struggle for independence. Rather, the emergence of one party dominance in Senegal was a result of a long history of elections. As such, the influence of historical legacy on PS dominance could be seen in the context of Senegalese long electoral history, and its founder, the late poet, philosopher Leopold Sedar Senghor. (Beck 2008:52-53; Gellar 2005:78; Hartmann 2013:177)

Social Cleavages

Senegal is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country. The largest ethnic group are the Wolof (43.3%). The vast majority of Senegalese population (94%) is muslim that adheres to the Sufi brotherhoods. There seems to be agreement among scholars that no distinct social cleavages particularly ethnicity and religion play vital role in political mobilisation and association in Senegal. As such, the party system and one-party dominance in Senegal seems not to be influenced by any particular cleavage. (Creevey, Ngomo and Vengroff 2005: 479; Villalon 1995:2; Hartmann 2013:178; Cruise O'Brien 1999:324-325)

Institutions

Senegal has a semi-presidential system of government and mixed electoral system. The system of government has been changing from semi-presidential to presidential in 1963 constitution, and back to semi-presidential in 1970s and 2001 constitutions. Despite these changes, a powerful president has characterized the core of Senegal's institutional architecture. (Hartmann, 2013:180). The electoral system has also changed from Majoritarian to mixed system.

The influence of executive-legislative relationship on one-party dominance seems to be indirect and minimal. (Hartmann 2013:80). Electoral rules and institutions, however, seem to have influence over the pattern of one-party dominance in Senegal. Mozaffar and Vengroff (2002:605) observe that the series of electoral and party reforms since 1963 seem to reinforce PS dominance. They were also instruments of cementing PS legitimacy. The 1963 constitution that created a Majoritarian electoral system ensured *de facto* one party rule. In 1978, a constitutional change provided election of 100 seats in national assembly by proportional representation (PR). In 1983, electoral reforms introduced a mixed electoral system whereby 60 of 120 seats were allocated by proportional on national list and the remaining allocated by block plurality. This electoral system clearly benefited the incumbent PS. Coordination on plurality seats would reduce opportunities to win the PR seats, which the weakly organized opposition parties were better positioned to gain. (Hartmann 2013:181; Mozaffar and Vengroff 2002:605).

When we come to presidential election, Senegal has a two round system. This system encouraged broad party competition in the first round. In the past, this ensured PS dominance and fractionalized the opposition. This had helped to fractionalize the opposition, thereby helping to assure a PS majority. However, this also provided the opposition the opportunity to unite against the incumbent in the 2000 presidential election. (Vengroff and Magala 2001:139).

In the final analysis, we can say that the incumbent manipulated electoral system to sustain its dominance. However, the series of reforms could have also contributed to the gradual erosion of its power. The

researcher concurs with the ideas of Vengroff and Magala (2001:139-159) that “while institutional change may be a necessary condition for a democratic transfer of power, it is not a sufficient... Institutional reform creates opportunities but does not ensure a successful transition.”

Political Culture

As it has been described earlier, Senegal has a long and rich electoral history starting in the colonial period. A tradition of competition and debate existed even in pre-colonial Senegal. As such, the country was not new to elections and competition at the time of independence. This well-developed political culture of competition and contest finds its evidence in 2000 when the incumbent Abdu Diouf concedes defeat in the presidential election and facilitated the peaceful transfer of power to opposition Abdoulaye Wade. The peaceful transfer of power here after enabled Senegal to pass Huntington's (1991:266-267) ‘two-turnover test’ of democratic consolidation:

By this test, a democracy may be viewed as consolidated if the party or group that takes power in the initial election at the time of transition loses a subsequent election and turns over power to those election winners, and if those election winners then peacefully turn over power to the winners of a later election. Selecting rulers through elections is the heart of democracy, and democracy is real only if rulers are willing to give up power as a result of elections.

The influence of political culture on one party dominance in Senegal differs in rural and urban areas. The consensual understanding of democracy among rural people in Senegal could have reinforced PS dominance. This can be substantiated by Senegalese meaning of ‘Demokrassai’ emphasizing consensus and material benefits. (Cruise O'Brien 1999:323). The association of this culture to rural population particularly Muslim brotherhoods, the support base of the PS for long, tells its significance. However, support to multi-party politics, and difference in urban areas cannot be underestimated. Hartman (2013:183) argues that Senegalese

political culture resisted one party rule in the 1970s. Later, the prevailing political culture was not favorable to PS dominance.

Government Performance

The analysis of government performance in Senegal under the PS shows that the economic condition of Senegalese population did not improve since independence in 1960. (Ka and Dewalle 1994). Hartmann (2013:184) observes that when senghor handed power over to Diof in 1981, the country faced severe economic problems, and the situation in rural areas deteriorated since independence. There was also a contraction of agricultural production between 1973 and 1984. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s human development remained lower than in other low income countries. Despite such poor government economic performance and worsening economic conditions, immediate change of voting behavior did not occur. It was only in the 1990s that PS began to lose the support in urban areas (Hartmann 2013:185).

Incumbent Advantages

As in many African political systems, incumbent advantage seems to be an important variable in the study of Senegalese politics given it shares the defining features of African politics that is patronage and clientalism. Bratton and Van De Walle (1994:459) show that personal patronage constitutes the foundation of African political institutions. As a result, political transitions in neo-patrimonial African regimes reflect the struggles to have access to state resources by establishing the legal rules that can ensure participation and competition. Most scholars of Senegalese politics seem to agree that Senegalese politics is characterized by patrimonial networks such as between Sufi brotherhoods and the state (Hartmann 2013; Beck 2008; Oya 2006).

Beck (2008:1) considers clientalism and patrimonial politics as essential features of Senegal's political system. According to him, the entrenchment of Africa's political incumbents as well as the defeat of PS in

the historic presidential election in 2000 can be explained by the complex and varied relationship between clientalism and democracy. Beck (1997:2) shows that the stability of one-party rule and "presidential monarchy" in Senegal were based on personal patronage that pervaded the legislature, judiciary, bureaucracy, ruling PS, and a group of communal leaders. Hence, Senghor's patronage incorporates all elected or appointed government and party officials blurring the distinction between their legislative, judicial, and administrative functions. The state had also full control over all forms of mass media. As a result, Senghor monopolized the political game (Ibid: 8).

According to Beck (1997), Senghor's regime did not become military dictatorship in the face of economic pressures and opposition since the regime avoided political violence and repression⁸ by becoming 'patrimonial democracy': "political incumbents who undertake political liberalization to legitimize their besieged regime, while assuring their continued tenure in power by controlling the scope and implementation of democratic reforms through their patrimonial relationships." (Ibid: 2). Patronage politics also characterized Senghor's successor, Abdu Diouf. Diouf enjoyed important advantages over the opposition in terms of access to the state coffers and party clientelist networks, as well as control over the state apparatus that determined the rules of the game (Ibid: 15). He used the patronage within the PS to manipulate the electoral code and Muslim brotherhoods. Beck (Ibid: 16) states that:

Like Senghor before him, Diouf sought to ingratiate himself to the marabouts and their peasant-disciples by erasing their agricultural debts and sharply increasing the producer price for peanuts prior to the 1983 elections. Recipients of various other state "awards" such as large infrastructural projects, the leaders of the brotherhoods were persuaded

8 Allen (1995:305-306) notes that in general, military intervention was not used to avert what he calls the 'crisis of clientalism' after decolonization in Africa. He identifies four mechanisms African governments used to avert this crisis: First, retention of clientalism combined with control; second, centralization of power in an executive presidency; third, use of bureaucracy, instead of party, as distributor of clientelist resources; fourth, downgrading of representative institutions.

to give a public command (ndigal) for their disciples to vote for the PS, whereas in the past the marabouts only made vague declarations of friendship, while their aides-de-camp quietly conveyed their voting instructions to their disciples.

Thus, incumbent advantages seem to be the most important factors behind the endurance of PS dominance in Senegal. Patronage networks enabled the PS to control the state apparatus including legislature, judiciary, and bureaucracy. The strong support that the PS enjoyed from the Muslim brotherhoods also showed the prevalence of patronage politics in Senegalese society. Even in the face of PS patronage decline, “the desire to protect the incumbency of the ruling party extends beyond the party elites to their clientelist networks of politicized bureaucrats, local party representatives and communal leaders” (Beck, 1997:2).

The gradual decline of PS dominance strongly correlates with shrinking of the Senegalese state in the 1980s. Galvan (2001:59) traces the symptom of the PS collapse to the 1988 ballot that coincided with the shrinking of the Senegalese state due to implementation of IMF structural adjustment in 1985. The structural adjustment had irreversible consequences for PS. First, agricultural credits declined. Second, the state resources that had financed the ruling patronage link between the ruling party and the marabouts also diminished between 1988 and 1993. Consequently, the marabouts stopped issuing religious edicts in support of Diouf’s ruling party. In subsequent elections, the marabouts adopted a stance of political neutrality. By 2000 the PS had become vulnerable without the backing of the marabouts.

According to Levitsky and Way (2010:275), the PS failed to reconsolidate power after 1993 presidential election. They mentioned two important developments related with the decline and collapse of the PS. First, years of fiscal retrenchment and economic reform caused “Patronage decompression.” This in turn undermined PS’ capacity to contain elite defection. Second, economic liberalization also undermined the Socialists’ clientelist ties to Sufi Brotherhoods. Consequently Mouride support “dramatically declined.” Most marabouts remained neutral in the 1993 election, and many of them backed Wade in the 2000 election.

According to Villalón (1994:163-164), the viability of the system has been threatened due to the economic decline of the 1980s. The influence of patronage on single party dominance and decline in Senegal is similar to that of Mexico. The PR regime in Mexico used widespread network of patronage ties in the context of relatively free and fair elections. Similarly, partially free elections have been held in Senegal without threatening PS dominance. As in Mexico, the gradual erosion of stability of the system has been observed in Senegal in the 1980s. According to Galvan (2001:54), the PS experienced “patronage compression” within its ranks since Diouf refused to retire. As such, the decisive shift in Senegalese politics came not from outside but from within the PS itself. Like Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas in Mexico and James Soong in Taiwan, key political actors within the ruling party in Senegal became disaffected and eventually provided the possibility of an opposition victory. The splits within the ruling party were facilitated by the reasonably civil and democratic norms of elite politics in Senegal that prevented Diouf from purging, exiling or imprisoning party rivals (Ibid: 54-55).

Thus, in the context of economic and patronage resources decline, the ruling party was plagued by internal competition and factions that led to its ultimate collapse. The first major political player to leave the PS was Djibo Ka, government minister under both Senghor and Diouf. Ka founded Union for Democratic Renewal (URD) that won 13.20 percent of seats in the 1988 legislative elections. The next political figure to leave the PS was former foreign minister Mustapha Niasse who started the Alliance des Forces du Progrés (AFP). Both Ka and Niasse competed in the 2000 presidential election. In the first round, Ka and Niasse won 7.10% and 16.80 respectively. The incumbent Diouf won 41.30 and main opposition Abdoulaye Wade won 31.0. In the second round, Diouf remained stuck at 41.50, Wade masterfully won Ka and Niasse into his camp and won the election (Galvan 2001:54-55; Vengroff and Magala 2001:160).

Botswana: Enduring BDP Dominance

Botswana is a country situated in southern Africa. It was a British Protectorate under the name Bechuanaland. The British declared

Bechuanaland a protectorate in 1885 at the request of Tswana chiefs. Bechuanaland was the most neglected and least developed British protectorate in Southern Africa (Schmitt 2006:31). As a result, Botswana was one of the poorest countries in the world when it attained independence in 1966. However, the discovery of minerals after independence especially diamonds has changed the economic condition in Botswana. The country is now a days described as the “Switzerland” of Africa and “an African miracle” (Sebudubudu and Botlhomilwe 2013:115-116).

In its political history, Botswana is the longest enduring democracy in Africa. It held its first election in 1965 while still under colonial rule. It is different from many African countries in that it has never experienced military dictatorship, a military coup or one party rule (Sebudubudu and Botlhomilwe 2013: 116; Wiseman 1977:72). Botswana has developed a multi-party democracy that allowed the existence of opposition political parties. All Political parties emerged in Botswana right before independence. The political context and mobilizing agendas revolved around colonialism/white supremacy, and the retention or abolition of the traditional chieftain system. Especially, the traditional chief political system could be said to dominate the political debate in the 1960s. In this system, tribal chiefs were powerful accumulators of wealth and controllers of economic resources including land, labour and cattle (Good 1992:69).

Beaulier (2003:228) notes that chiefs played a vital role in determining allocation of land for different purposes such as hunting, residences or farming, and in managing and resolving conflicts within the tribe and with other tribes. Adult males could discuss, consider, and criticise the issues raised by tribal chiefs or local headmen in local gatherings called the Kgotla (Ibid). Good (1992:70) observes that the Kgotla has been compared with classical Athenian polis and big man system in Papua New Guinea highland. However, the Kgotla essentially operated to facilitate social control by the leadership. Its role was advisory and the chiefs utilised the forum to generate consensus for the actions they proposed. It was also dominated by privileged elites and interdependence did not necessarily involve reciprocity between rich and poor (Ibid).

The abolition or maintenance of this traditional system was one of the main agenda of the earliest political parties in Botswana. The yet to be dominant party Bechuanaland Democratic party (BDP), Bechuanaland Independence Party (BIP) and Bechuanaland people's party (BPP) were the three parties that went to the self-government elections in February 1965. The BDP, led by Khama, enjoyed a landslide victory in 1965 election by obtaining 28 seats while BPP got three, and BIP won no seats.⁹

The BDP remained the dominant party in Botswana. It faced serious challenges only in 1994 and 2004 elections when the Botswana National Front (BNF) won 13 out of 40 and 12 seats out of 44 respectively.¹⁰ Thus, Botswana has never experienced a regime or political party change. In other words, it is one of the cases of enduring single party dominance in Africa. The following part assesses the potential causes for the endurance of the BDP in Botswana.

Historical Legacy

The initial emergence of the BDP and its victory in subsequent elections has been attributed to the influence of Sir Seretse Khama who became the first president of Botswana in 1965 (Botlhomilwe and Sebudubudu 2011; 98; Sebudubudu and Botlhomilwe 2013:119). Khama was a key figure in modern Botswana history about whom Henderson (1990:27) aptly states that "The History of modern Botswana is very much the history of Seretse Khama". Henderson holds that Khama's leadership saved Botswana either from the slur of Bantustan or the possible control of it by neighboring South Africa. His influence and legacy in the BDP was rooted in his descent, personal history and the vital role he played for the independence of Botswana and drafting of the constitution in 1965.

Khama was borne into the royal family of the Bangwato in Serowe on 1 July 1921. He was the rightful heir to the chieftaincy that he was to

9 African Elections Database, accessible at <http://africanelections.tripod.com/>

10 Ibid

assume upon his return from his studies in Britain. However, the British colonial administration and his uncle Tshekedi Khama denied him the chieftaincy due to his marriage with a white British woman, Ruth Williams. Owing to the prevailing racism and apartheid, the mixed marriage also faced strong objection from the authorities in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa. As a result, Britain banned Khama from returning to Bechuanaland unless he renounced his chieftaincy. The Bangwato people supported him. They resented against British denial of the chieftaincy and his banishment created constant unrest (Henderson 1990; Botlhomilwe and Sebudubudu 2011:98).

In 1956, Khama and Ruth Williams were allowed to enter Bechuanaland after he renounced the chieftaincy. The Bangwato supported Khama when he formed the BDP in 1961. The central district where the Bangwato live is the largest district consisting of 37% of the population of Botswana. This could explain Khama's support base and success of the BDP (Botlhomilwe and Sebudubudu 2011:98). Moreover, Khama possessed personal attributes, intelligence, integrity and political skill that made him an influential leader. Polhemus (1983:401) states that Khama "offered a unique combination of modern and traditional qualifications for leadership." Wiseman (1998:248) notes that "In contemporary Africa only Nelson Mandela can be seen as possessing the type of immense personal authority and prestige enjoyed in the past in Botswana by Seretse Khama."

Wiseman (1998:248) argues that the electoral victories of BDP from 1965 to 1980 are attributable to the personal prestige of Seretse Khama. Even for some time after his death, the BDP has been viewed as 'the party of Khama'. However, the influence of Khama faded due to generational change and passage of time (Ibid).

Social Cleavage

Botswana consists of various ethnic groups, tribes, and religious groups. Botswana has several tribes that are multi-ethnic and various ethnic groups that are multi-tribal. (Charlton 1993:347). Setswana language is the most dominant of all the language groups found in Botswana, with at least 70%

of the population identifying it as a mother tongue and another 20% using it as a second language (Selolwane 2004:4).

The politically significant cleavages in Botswana run along ethnic and class lines. Holm (1987:22) attributes the success of the BDP to its class and ethnic base. The BDP is a party of traditional notables, cattle holders who make effective electoral campaign. The BDP support base is primarily Tswana speaking tribes of Bangwato and Bakwana which constitute 50% of the population. Within these ethnic groups, elections are a matter of ethnicity. (ibid).

However, Charlton (1993:345) notes that there is no empirical data on individual voting behaviour that can enable us to determine existence of ethnic voting in Botswana. As such, he simply takes both ethnicity and class as potentially significant factors in any explanation of either party or voting behaviour in Botswana. Similarly, Selolwane (2004:43) argues that BDP support base cut across all social cleavages. As such, BDP incorporates and accommodates different ethnic groups and tribes. In addition, the party leaders skilfully manage the differences that could have led to violence or conflict (Charlton 1993:48).

Institutions

Upon independence in 1966, Botswana adopted a republican government that operates a unicameral Westminster parliamentary system. Although Botswana is categorized as a parliamentary democracy, it is a mix of parliamentary and presidential systems. It varies from the Westminster system in that all executive power is vested in the president. (Holm 1987:21). The president is elected indirectly by parliament. The other features of Botswana's mixed system is that the president has the power to appoint and dismiss ministers, ministers are subject to parliamentary confidence, and the president can dissolve the parliament. (Sebudubudu and Osei-Hwedie 2006:37).

Botswana uses the simple majority, first past the post (FPTP), electoral system. Some scholars argue that simple majority electoral system contributes to one-party dominance in Botswana. (Molomo 2005:34; Somolokae 2005:24-25). Sebudubudu and Osei-Hwedie (2006:42) note that

FPTP electoral system and the absence of public funding further undermines the opposition in Botswana since there is no equal party competition for political office. They also note that FPTP disadvantages party representation especially for small, opposition parties because of distortion of seats. Thus, FPTP reinforces BDP dominance. The opposition in Botswana has been calling for a change to proportional representation to augment their parliamentary seats. However, the ruling BDP does not accept their proposal as it benefits from FPTP electoral system (Ibid: 42).

Nevertheless Sebudubudu and Osei-Hwedie note that electoral reform alone might not solve the problems of the opposition because of other problems such as lack of adequate resources and organizational capacity in order to establish branches, nominate candidates for every constituency and advertise itself to, or mobilize the public. Also, the opposition suffers from absence of public party funding law and their inability to get support from private groups (Ibid).

Political Culture

The political culture in Botswana can be said to be influenced by pre-colonial traditional chieftain political system and modern liberal democracy. Chiefs were the most powerful figures in the traditional political system. There was also a consultative forum for adult male members of the community called Kgotla where chiefs discuss political issues. Succession of chiefs was ascriptive or hereditary. As such, there was no idea of popular election of leaders (Holm 1987:24). Nevertheless Tswana traditional culture seems to facilitate representative democracy introduced in 1965.

Holm (1987:24) notes that Kgotla has been used by the BDP to discuss policy with local communities seeking consensus for implementation. Tswana culture is antithetical to physical violence than other African tribes. Tswana culture does not also support extremist organisations and even opposition to apartheid South Africa was handled in mildly. Tswana culture promotes peaceful approach to interpersonal and social relations. As such, “these traditional Tswana values of public discussion, community

consensus, non-violence, and moderation are critical elements of a democratic political culture”(Ibid).

The modern political system incorporates traditional political system with some modifications with regard to succession. The Botswana constitution recognised and defined the authority of traditional local leaders (Bagosi). They have no legislative powers, but often arbitrate conflicts in local disputes. The chieftainship is traditionally hereditary, but is now an appointment and election. The data from Afro barometer (2013) survey show that the majority of Batswana still support traditional chiefs.¹¹

Government Performance

Botswana can be considered one of the few one-party dominant party regimes with high level of government performance. Hillbom (2008:191) notes that after forty years since independence, Botswana is referred to as a growth miracle, sign of hope for sub-Saharan Africa and exemplar of success and prosperity.

Du Toit (1999:200) attributed the successive electoral victories of the BDP in the 1974, 1979, 1984, 1989, and 1994 to high government performance. He also observes that the electoral performance of BDP declined since 1994. He mentioned two factors that can account for this decline. First, declining government performance measured in terms of rising unemployment, declining economic growth, widening inequalities and corruption. Second, the BDP cling to its original support base and was not able to attract new category of voters such as urban and working class. The impact of both factors manifested in the 1994 election results (Ibid: 202). In the 1999 elections, the BDP gain improved from 54.59% to 57%. This also correlates with improvement of the economy and its boom in 1999. In contrast to BDP vote improvement, the 1999 election outcomes

11 Afro barometer (2013): Botswana’s Chieftainships Endure despite Democratic Consolidations (Press release)

showed declining vote share of main opposition BNF from 45.41% to 43 % (ibid).

However, like many other cases of dominant party systems, government performance does not seem to be sufficient to explain one-party dominance in Botswana. This has been shown in 2009 election where the BDP got elected despite economic decline and crisis. Bothomilwe and Sebudubudu (2011: 98) affirm that “The fact that 2009 was a year of economic crisis yet the BDP did not experience electoral defeat suggests that economic factors may be an important though not a sufficient condition to explain the BDP’s electoral performance.”

Incumbent Advantage

Bothomilwe and Sebudubudu (2011) assert that the single most important factor for the electoral success of the BDP seems to be incumbent advantage: “It is not in dispute that over the years the BDP has exploited these advantages to its own benefit in the elections” (2011:98). Greene (2013:45) has found that incumbent resource advantage derived from public resources is a powerful predictor of BDPs staying power. It uses its own and state resources for patronage that helps it to secure wider support and deprive the opposition of support (Ibid: 44). In addition to parastatal corporations involved in construction, transportation, and services, the government is involved in mining copper, nickel, coal and diamond. Greene (2013:45) further argues that the BDP can politicise these public resources and use them for partisan advantage because it controls the public bureaucracy.

Von Soest (2009) finds out that neo-patrimonial patterns exist in Botswana though they are limited when compared to other African countries. The BDP secures its position by the provision of public goods and limited patrimonial exchanges financed by the country’s revenues from diamonds, the South African custom union (SACU), and the Bank of Botswana. These revenues enabled the BDP to provide significant benefit to all social groups and people believe the ‘BDP’ will deliver the goods.’

Charlton (1993:340) notes that the BDP uses its advantage for patronage and patron-client ties to cement mass-elite linkages and to channel economic success into BDP support. However, Botswana has avoided morally and organisationally corrupting personalised patronage system that existed in many African countries (Ibid: 341). The popularity of the BDP amongst the peasantry has been further reinforced by the introduction of rural development programs. The most celebrated of these was the Accelerated Rural Development Program (ARDP). The ARDP was most famous of these projects and politically motivated implemented before 1974 election (Ibid: 605)

Bothmilwe and Sebudubudu (2011:98-99) observe that Cabinet Ministers, members of Parliament and Councillors also indirectly use their official positions to buy support for their party. Worth mentioning is the use of government resources to address *Kgotla* meetings in all parts of the country. These meetings cannot be used by the opposition because they are not arenas to campaign but to tell people about the success of government and its plan in the future. Even if an opposition Member of Parliament can participate, he/she can only advertise government programs. In addition, the government controlled media, Radio Botswana and Botswana Television, have also contributed to the poor performance of the opposition. They give unfair coverage to the BDP especially where political rallies are addressed by the president and his deputy. “The bias of the state media against opposition parties has a serious impact especially in view of the fact that none of the opposition parties owns a television, radio station or even a newspaper”(Ibid 2011:99).

Osei-Hwedie (2001:60) observes that owing to its command of sufficient resources, the BDP has organizational and financial strength when compared to opposition parties. The BDP has its head quarter in the capital Gaborone and branches in all constituencies that nominating candidates in all parliamentary and council constituencies, running campaigns for all its candidates, formulating a new updated election manifesto in each successive election year, and mobilisation of voters: “It is its ability to get its supporters actually to vote on election day, through transportation and door-to-door appeals, which actually makes the difference in terms of getting the vote.”(Ibid).

Comparative Analysis of the Findings for Botswana and Senegal

The previous discussions of each case have described the six underlying mechanisms: historical legacy; social cleavage; institutions; political culture; government performance; and incumbent advantage. Based on these discussions, we can now compare the findings for Botswana and Senegal and conclude about the most important underlying factors for the endurance and decline of one-party dominance.

First, the influence of historical legacy on initial dominance has been significant in Botswana and Senegal. Although the political elites did not lead a violent struggle against colonial rule, they had an important role in the decolonisation process. In this regard, the influence of founding president Senghor in Senegal and Khama in Botswana is notable. However, the influence of historical legacy in both cases faded after sometime.

Second, in terms of social cleavage, there exist a striking similarity between the two cases, that is dominant ethnic groups, the Tswana in Botswana and the Wolof in Senegal, characterise their nations. However, no distinct social cleavage forms a basis of political mobilisation. Instead, the dominant political parties in Botswana and Senegal seem to transcend and cut across various social cleavages. This could have contributed to the endurance of single party dominance in both cases. However, social cleavage seems not be a sufficient condition to explain decline of single party dominance.

Third, the influence of institutions especially electoral systems on one party dominance seems to be mixed. It has been shown that despite the different types of electoral systems adopted by Botswana and Senegal, electoral systems in both countries seem to have impacted the endurance of single party dominance. However, electoral system is not a sufficient condition to explain the decline of single party dominance.

Fourth, political culture can provide favourable or unfavourable ground for single party dominance. In Botswana, the conservative political culture appeared to reinforce one-party dominance. However, recent survey data reveal the majority of Botswana support democracy and multi-party competition. In Senegal, Wolof understanding of demokaraasi seems to have influenced endurance of the PS. However, political cultures in towns

were not favourable for PS dominance. Recent survey data reveal that Senegalese supported democracy and multi-party competition after the collapse of the PS.

Fifth, Although Botswana and Senegal demonstrate differences concerning government performance, this has been revealed not to be directly related with decline of one-party dominance. Poor government performance did not prevent the PS from dominating Senegalese politics and it did not directly cause its decline either.

Sixth, incumbent advantages have been shown to be the most important factors for the endurance and decline of one-party dominance. The results for Senegal have revealed that incumbent advantage seems to be the most important underlying mechanism behind one-party dominance and decline. The PS in Senegal abused state resources for patronage politics within the PS, state institutions and Muslim brotherhoods. The Senegalese case indicates that the decline of one-party dominance is correlated with the decline of state capacity and incumbent resources. The shrinking of government size including state-owned companies due to increasing privatization seems to correlate with decline of single party dominance. This lack of and decline of incumbent advantage has been shown to result in the gradual de-alignment of important social support groups from the dominant party, defection of major political players and finally the defeat of the PS.

This indicates why one-party dominance still endures in Botswana. The BDP endures because it still controls states resources and can use the revenue from state owned enterprises for electoral gain. The BDP has access to diamond revenue, exploits big government size, and state owned enterprises. The BDP also uses limited patronage and distribution of materials to people demonstrating to them that supporting government brings material benefits. Moreover, the BDP has other advantages: exploitation of agricultural programs to get the support of the rural communities; exclusive use of traditional political institutions, the kgotla, in order to discuss achievements of the government; and the government control of the media including radio and newspapers.

Conclusion

This article has sought to explore the underlying causes for the endurance and decline of single party dominance in Botswana and Senegal. The study sought to answer the general question why and how one-party dominance has endured in Botswana but not in Senegal? The six factors identified as explanatory variables include: historical legacy; social cleavage; institutions; political culture; government performance; and incumbent advantage. The comparative analysis of Botswana and Senegal reveals incumbent advantage as the most important underlying mechanism that explains the endurance and decline of single party dominance in Botswana and Senegal.

The endurance of BDP dominance has been shown to be related with the incumbent advantage BDP possesses. The decline of one party dominance in Senegal has been correlated with the decline of incumbent advantage due to privatization. The results for Senegal have several implications for the analysis of the endurance of one-party dominance in Botswana and democratization process in other similar cases.

First, the Senegalese case indicates that dominant parties cannot survive without access to state resources and state owned enterprises. It is interesting to note that decline of incumbent advantages has undermined the capacity of the PS to abuse political institutions, exploit social groups, and to establish patronage within the party leadership and society. Second, the results for Senegal imply that privatization of state owned companies and economic liberalization in general may open the door for truly liberal democracy.

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