

Research Article

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How accountable and transparent is the African democracy? Reviewing political party financing and regulations

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Abstract: Democracy is identified as one of the best forms of government worldwide because of its aspirations and a promising tendency to foster accountability and transparency in all its ramifications. This includes the channel of selecting leaders, the governance process, and financial spending. One of the major concerns for democratic governance is how to tame the ugly trend of excessive spending during the campaign process. It is well known that politicians are in their nature selfish and can employ all strategies of winning an election, including violation of maximum spending limits as stipulated by law. This study puts the African democracy into a rigorous test of accountability and transparency by examining the regulations and provisions on political party financing and especially by analysing the extent of the strengths and weaknesses of the law and

compliance in terms of adequacy or otherwise. The study adopted a descriptive qualitative method of political inquiry where documented sources of data were consulted. The method used for data analysis is content analysis with an emphasis on thematic analytical interpretations. The study discovered that most African countries lack a unified and comprehensive law on party financing, and where it exists as anticipated, failure of enforcement and sanction renders the laws inactive. Besides, there is no effort by the African states towards taming the menace of excessive campaign spending and the use of money in politics. The most annoying aspect is that most of the money for campaign expenditure in African states are sourced from the state treasury, which resulted in bribery, corruption, looting, and misgovernance. The study recommends, among others, that there should be a prompt action need to adopt a unique framework for taming the excess of campaign spending and the use of state treasury for personal political purposes even though the study realises that it is practically impossible to adopt the same rules for financing as each country has its own unique laws of democracy.

Keywords – Accountable, Africa, Political Party Financing, Regulations Transparent, Reviewing

1. INTRODUCTION

Democracy is not only identified as one of the best forms of government, but it is also perceived as the final form of human organisation globally in the present era (Fukuyama, 1996). The end of the Cold War era has signified an important dimension for democratisation in its third wave across the continents more than ever witnessed before (Huntington, 1996). Democracy entails a style of governance in which the leaders together with the followers are



linked up or the people's influence determines the direction of public policy (Grigsby, 2009). Democracy is an equal opportunity for power-sharing in which individuals are given similar voices to express their views on how they should be governed (Hix & Whiting, 2012). Democracy in itself is not a unique style of leadership as there are many ways in which democracy is organised and operated from one state to another because the institutions, processes and structures can differ from one democracy to another (Lijphart, 2012). Democracy was initially theorised as a form of government and later practicalised. It started from the postulations of Aristotle, Tocqueville and Schumpeter who have their doubts on the goodness of democracy owing to the tyranny of the majority. The other side of the arguments by the liberal democrats such as Mills, Locke and Rousseau argued that the tyranny of the majority has no better alternative if civil liberty is upheld (Cunningham, 2002). Either way, democracy is now the dominant system of government all over the world and it seems to continue to dominate, with the African, Asian and East European countries democratising incessantly (Okeke & Iloh, 2021).

Democratisation is a work in progress in Africa with the intense efforts to institutionalise the system as a workable model of government resulting from intermittent interruption from military for many decades. The imposition of one-party system and legitimacy crises caused a new dawn for a genuine democratisation in the continent in recent years (Ndegwa, 2001). African democracies are peculiar in comparison with other world democracies. This is owing to the influence of history, colonialism and indigenous leadership which affect how the democracy is operated (Salih, 2003). Africa is recording a rapid progress towards democratisation since the last two decades in the 1990s emanating from the influence of many factors such as the triumph of capitalism in the Cold War and globalisation (Diallo, 2015).

Political party financing is the processes and all activities involving the expenditure that is incurred in the quest for securing a political victory in an election. Political party financing is not only about the expenses acquired during electioneering process as it also consists of income, expenditure, regulations, sanctions and other related matters of funding (Ohman, 2014). Political party financing is a global issue that is being of great concern contemporarily by governments, institutions, agencies, policy makers, analysts and academics because of the principle of democracy that emphasises on accountability and transparency demanding for legal sourcing of campaign expenditure and legal spending according to regulations. The focus on political party financing today nationally and internationally is on the premise of the corrupt practices that are emanating from the processes and criminal funding of political parties and contestants to vie for electoral offices (Biezen, 2003). Transparency is critical from the part of political parties and politicians for a sound and representative democracy to flourish and this is the rationale behind the emphasis on strict laws and regulations on political party financing (Doublet, 2010). Political party financing globally is undergoing different levels of restrictions, designations and activities to promote compliance and adherence to the provided statutory laws on individual nation-states or at regional and continental level.

African democracy is a nascent one and a transition in progress that has series of problems. One of the major issues of democratisation in Africa is political party financing. It is uncovered that even the advanced liberal democracies are battling with the problem of accountability and transparency in political party financing which implies that such issue is more pronounced in the African democracies where the use of public treasury, personal accumulation and illicit campaign spending are obtainable and are difficult to trace due to the nature of politics practise in the Continent and influential interplay of political decisions from the citizenry in advocating for compliance from the leaders as expected in every liberal democracy (Ohman, 2014). While there are different existing binding legal documents on political party financing in Africa varying from one country to another, there was also an effort for a continental and global cooperation to tame the phenomenon yet, the issue of party financing is far from being an appreciative venture in the African realm of democracy.

This study is an in-depth investigation of the level and nature of the accountability and transparency of the African democracy through examining critically the political party financing and regulations. A rigorous search



indicates that such works are still inadequate academically in Africa. Most of the works on this subject matter are reports from international organisations and agencies. Political party financing is problematic in Africa because it is associated and with a disguised corruption, plunder of public resources, abuse of public offices and in some cases, a charade and pseudo parties that purposely formed to gain access to the allocated resources as grants for parties (Ohman, 2014; Sigman, 2016; Sule et al., 2017). The above studies on Africa and others that were critically analysed in other sections of this paper on party financing have not succeeded in linking Africa's democratisation and party financing with the purpose of determining the level of accountability and transparency. This work is an effort to fill the research gap and contribute to knowledge through providing a different approach towards analysing the processes and regulations of political party financing using the available reports and the existing academic works to identify the neglected area and address it. This is the major target of this work. In doing that, the research employed a descriptive qualitative strategy of data collection and analysis. Documented materials were consulted for analysis while content analysis, a thematic analytical interpretation was adopted for data analysis.

2. LITERATURE SURVEY

In this section, various existing works, reports, and research works are reviewed critically to enable for finding a weakness in the field of study to fill the gap and strengthen the area.

2.1. Democracy and democratisation in Africa: A review

A decade of democratisation has passed in many African country as a work in progress after many decades of authoritarian rule which succeeded in eroding political institutions. This means institutionalisation of political institutions towards democratisation is paramount in measuring the experience of African democratisation so far. Also, democratisation in Africa attempts to constitute a citizenry that is prepared for democratic rule (Ndegwa, 2001). African democratisation is oftentimes accompanied military transformation into civilians in many cases such as Libya and Sudan. Such transition and democratisation tend to be an acrobatic failure and a well establishment of democratic dictatorship in one party style (Assensoh & Assensoh, 2001). There are varieties of factors that are changing the landscape of African politics towards democratisation including globalisation and external imposition. However, there are cynicism and pessimism on the workability of the Western liberal democracy in Africa owing to difference in history, nature, culture and socioeconomic settings (Diallo, 2015).

There is a sustainable and consistent attempt at influencing Africa to democratise. This is inspite of the existence of weak and authoritarian democracies in developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America. The African continent receives the highest attention of the indicators of backwardness emanating from misgovernance. Most of the African countries or almost all of them were engaged in one form of democratisation or the other depending on the constitution and administrative arrangement obtainable in a state. In some cases, there is the adoption of the one-party authoritarian regimes, in others it is multi party and other related institutions and structures. However, the democratic renewal is anchored in Africa and pressurised because it is perceived as the only continent that is yet to exhibit significant economic and political competition internationally (Adejumobi, 2015).

Democratisation in Africa is being affected by some cyclical factors which comprise of the transition process which is imposed by the military or Western affiliates, state failure, economic condition, long decades of dictatorship, gender segregation, ethnoreligious conflict, and internal schism (Hyden, 2006). The obstacle to proper democratisation is legitimacy, which emanates from the shoddy elections in transition from one periodic election to another. This has made the issue of legitimacy a procedural activity but not accentuated by real law and proper democratic principle (Lindberg, 2006). It should be noticed that democratisation in Africa took two different decades and dimensions; the anti-colonial struggles for self-democratic rule and the struggles against the yolk of military dictatorship in the 1980s and 1990s. The strengths of both internal and external pressure are palpable in



ushering in of democratic regimes in Africa. Relatively stable economy and positive human right records are witnessed in the present Africa's democratic renewal (Adejumobi, 2015).

Democratic transition in Africa was achieved through political liberalisation and economic reforms that foster liberal political institutions such as a multiparty system, constitutionalism, military disengagement and the impact of regionalism (Tordoff, 2002). After more than 30 years of military despotism, African countries made giant efforts in democratisation by adopting constitutions, economic strategies, and the establishment of legislature. Reflecting on Africa's tumultuous democratic transition, there was a remarkable and significant transformation and a shift towards sincere democratic rule unlike before (Le Van, 2015). The "Third Wave of Democratisation" witnessed the emergence of legislative powers in Africa where independent legislative bodies emerged in many African countries particularly in Nigeria where on many occasions, they demonstrated the ability to draw a clear battle line with the executive in deterring abuse of power and excessiveness (Barkan, 2009).

The arguments on democratic performance in Africa have not been fixed so far. The notion is democratic rule should facilitate functioning political system, human rights, accountability, transparency, stability, innovation and economic fairness. To conclude that democratic rule is the best form of government is too hasty and abrupt. Africa is yet to display the shape that can be measured or quantified to interpret its democratic performance. However, it is not only in Africa that democracy is in crisis; democracy is suffering from one lapse to another in every part of the world. Democratisation in Africa is heralded with prospects and challenges, successes and failures simultaneously. Challenges in bigger countries like Nigeria, South Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Egypt in terms of corruption and misgovernance are affecting the democratisation to a larger extent on the whole continent (Adejumobi, 2015).

Poverty, hunger, ethnicity, and multi-ethnic societies are limitations and challenges in cementing democratisation in Africa (Bigman, 2011). Civil societies played a vital role in democratisation in Africa. The period 1990s and early 2000 saw the explosion of civil societies across Africa in various countries which are collaborating with international organisations in pressurising the African leaders for proper democratisation (Tar, 2009). Party system affects democratisation in Africa in many ways. From one dominant party to perverse multi-party, parties are not helping in genuine institutionalisation of democratic principles in Africa. Parties are vital ingredients for democratic rule and operative mechanisms that necessitate for the operation of democracy. Party system and elections are regarded as two important elements for democratisation in modern times and which are not structured accordingly in the African context (Doorenspleet & Nijzink, 2014).

The quality of democracy and its performance in Africa can be measured according to Van Eerd (2017) using one institution and one activity or issue. The quality of political parties in institutionalisation, representation, responsiveness and governance are a strategy that is plausible to identify the progress of democratisation in Africa. The quality of African parties is not up to the average standard of global political parties which means there is a long way to go. The second issue or activity is the power and role of opposition. The opposition in Africa is still at the level of hiding and seek with the established powers because of intolerance, abuse of power and dictatorship. Thus, the quality of democracy in Africa is at low or minimal level in this regard. There is a need for a final big push in proper democratisation with institutionalisation that is all encompassing and all-inclusive in nature.

2.2. Political party financing: A global view

Political parties must secure a source of funds to address their campaign activities and this can be done through either public or private funding. The concern on political party financing is on the premise that corrupt practices by parties and politicians prevent accountability and transparency which are presumed to be part and benefit of democratic rule. Globally, there are reported cases of scandals across many countries which weakened the credibility of elections and the democratic process (Biezen, 2003). The accountability and transparency of political parties is paramount in fostering of healthy democracy worldwide. This can be achieved through closer monitoring



of political parties' finances, politicians' spending, rules on donations, a clear establishment of the dichotomy between private-public sponsorship, fair play ground for political parties in the state funding, strict regulations and censorship of private funding and donations, audition of parties' accounts appropriately and adequate sanctions for parties and politicians that violate the regulations (Doublet, 2010).

The sharp economic recession in recent years is busy awakening the conscience of citizens in various countries on the issue of transparency in democratic governance. Additionally, the numerous cases that are reported on scandals in corrupt cases emanating from political party financing is becoming a subject of attention for the voters. Citizens in developed democracies believed that corruption exists in the course of campaign expenditure. In the United States, 67.9% of the citizens perceived corrupt practices in the process, 87.9% in Greece, 80.8% in Spain and Italy, 70.9% in Portugal, 66.1% in the UK, 57.3% in Germany, 53.8% in France, 61.9% in Hungary, 86.7% in Kenya and 88.6% in Nigeria (Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development, 2012).

There is a global effort to address the process of party financing across regions and countries all over the world. The Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) provided a database of study in political party financing which consists of 180 countries in the world. The study revealed that all the countries that were scrutinised used their own regulatory framework for curbing illegal party funding and excessive spending. Regulations were made to enforce compliance with the sole aim of preventing corrupt practices in the process. According to the database, the level of party financing, public/private funding, maximum spending limit, disclosure and auditing vary from one country or continent to another. A proper and detailed understanding of the challenges and legal aspect of each country's political party funding is vital in ensuring that transparency is achieved. The measures to be adopted to enforce compliance include donations ban, maximum limit of spending, public funding, disclosure and periodic auditing of parties' account books (Ohman, 2014).

In Africa, legal frameworks are weak and the major challenges that are identified in preventing corruption and ensuring for a transparent party financing process are access to funds for all political actors, excessive use and abuse of state resources for political campaign, Clientelism, money politics, vote buying, illegal funding, external or foreign donation and the cumbersome cash nature of the African economy. All African countries ratified the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) in 2005 which requires that signatories should enhance transparency in political party financing except Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Gambia, Somalia and South Sudan. The African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption provides the overall guidance on political party financing including contribution limits, contribution bans, private income, foreign funding, illicit funding and public funding. Media and civil societies in Africa provide a critical watchdog component in the political activities related to campaign income and expenditure (Ohman, 2014).

In America, democracy is expensive because private funding and private donations were allowed freely. Regulations on party financing are relaxed which enables for excessive spending and breaking of limit point in the process. The legal enforcement for monitoring of spending and sanctioning of violators are weak. The regulations on disclosure states that it is compulsory upon all private and public donations and foreign donations is forbidden in cash or in kind (Ohman, 2014). A good case is the 2016 Presidential Election in America which saw President Trump triumphant. The sources of campaign finances for Clinton and Trump were not properly disclosed, limit spending was allegedly violated and money was instrumental in the process. This compelled the American citizens to embark on frequent calls for political party financing reform to avoid corruption and foster transparency (Jacob & Smith, 2016).

Asia has a unique challenge from that of Africa and America in the issue of political party financing. Public funding is restricted in most of the Asian countries which led to the supremacy of the private or personal funding and this has made those with high financial muscle to have their way into power. Politics was commercialised through private donation and sponsorship by multinational corporations. This scenario has led to intensified calls by individuals, academics and NGOs for regulating excessive funding and private financing of political parties as



measures to fight political corruption. Corrupt practices are reported in the process of party financing in Asia including Clientelism, illicit funding, weak opposition because of use of state resources and vote buying. A giant stride was made through since 1990s in the resurgence of democratisation in Asia by establishing a blueprint for monitoring of party expenditures under the ASEAN Democracy Free and Fair Elections from 2009 by the Asian Network for Free Election (ANFREL) and the 2012 Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections (Ohman, 2014).

In Europe, there was no unified adopted measures for monitoring of political party financing even in Eastern, Central and Southwestern European countries. This is because most of the countries are recently democratisation in the liberal perspective of democracy. Abuse of state resources, state control of political dominion, multinational corporations' sponsorship, Clientelism, illicit funding and overspending are the major issues of concern in these regions. Despite the challenges, there are attempts at regulating the process through adopting some measures on campaign monitoring and setting of limits (Smilow, 2014). Contrarily, in Northern, Southern, and Western Europe, democracy is expensive like in America and the political activities related to campaign spending is influenced by moneybags. The economically buoyant region supports the culture of money politics in party financing. Surprisingly, the free liberal democracy in these regions failed to regulate political party financing despite the assumption that democracy should herald accountability and transparency. To this end, political corruption, excessive spending and illegal sourcing of funds are obtainable in these parts of the world in the political activities related to campaign spending (Piccio, 2014).

In Latin or South America, dictatorial democracy abounds for many decades and are still existing. Money politics is influential and corruption is clearly recorded in the political activities related to campaign spending. Corruption and criminal control of the politics prevented efforts at transparency. The issue is not lacking of regulations which they do exist, the inability to enforce them and apply sanctions is the problem (Londono & Zobatto, 2014).

2.3. Political party financing in Africa: Regulations and ethical conduct

Political party financing in Africa is poorly regulated and it is difficult to determine how much is at the disposal of political parties based on their income and expenditure. In most of the African countries, there are laws that regulate maximum spending and donations. The issue of legality for acceptance of foreign funding, contribution limits, disclosure, auditing processes and sanctions for violations are not clearly spelt out in most of the countries. Even where such regulations are clearly defined, parties and politicians device means of bypassing them. Countries that allow for public funding opened up a room for inconsistency, irregularities and incompleteness. The fortunate emerging ruling party during the transition programmes, constitutional drafting, designing of electoral laws and party registration used their privilege to outsmart the opposition through entrenching of outrageous laws that perpetuate their hold onto power.

In some countries, public funding is enshrined in the electoral laws. In Benin Republic, Law 90023 provides public funding for the parliamentary candidates and presidential candidates which designed for reimbursement of the winners and candidates that win approximately 10% of the total votes and the total amount is to be decided by the President. Burkina Faso provides in 1997 for campaign expenditure to be covered for all parties' expenditure with 50% to be apportioned equally among the contending political parties in the National Assembly to the total amount of USD 380, 000. Cameroon in 1990 provided for public funding on all political parties to be determined by the President. Chad provides grant only for new parties from 1993 to the maximum of USD 10, 000. Egypt provides public funding for all parties with each to receive USD 29, 000 during each election. In Equatorial Guinea, a sum of USD 30, 000 is given to the presidential candidates while USD 8, 900 is offered to the parties. In Gabon, from 1990, it is provided that all parties which fielded a candidate in each of all the constituencies will receive USD 34, 700. In Morocco, a total of USD 13.6 million is allocated for public funding on the criteria of giving all parties 20% before



registration, 30% to parties according to seats contested in the election, 25% to candidates based on total votes and 25% based on number of seats won (Mathisen & Svasand, 2002; Ohman, 2014; Sule et al. 2017).

In Mozambique, from 1999, parties and presidential candidates were funded publicly with USD 340, 000 to two of the largest parties distributed and 1/3 allocated proportionately among all presidential candidates, 1/3 to parties represented in the parliament and 1/3 to all competing parties according to the seats contested by candidates. Namibia provided in 1997 a limited public funding to only parliamentary parties without disclosing the amount. Seychelles provides a total sum of USD 1.5 million to parties based on their performances in the previous elections with effect from 1996. Similarly, South Africa in 1996 set aside a sum of USD 9 million for public funding of parties which is specified for parties with membership in the National Assembly or in a Provincial Registration to be shared equally. In 1996, Tanzania provides a law for public funding which is a support for parties based on the proportion of membership in the parliament to a total of USD 10 million from 1996 to 2000. Zimbabwe introduced public funding in 1997 to a tune of undisclosed amount on the condition that a party must hold at least 15% of seats in the National Assembly (Mathisen & Svasand, 2002; Ohman, 2014; Sule et al. 2017).

Political party financing in Africa is affected by the pattern of the parties themselves and the electoral process in operation. For over three decades, one-party system dominated the African environment which made opposition hectic and burdensome. Ruling parties sway the electoral process and utilise public treasury for campaign expenditure which erodes the ethics and operations of modern democracy in terms of multi-party choice, free and fair election and transparency in political party financing (Erdman, 2007). Political parties and elections are patronage in Africa where they distribute resources according to client support instead of needs (Gyimah-Boadi, 2007) and this impedes proper democratisation because of ethnicity (Bogaards, 2007) and electoral violence (Laakso, 2007) vote buying or moneybags politics in countries like Ghana (Nugent, 2007).

The mode of political party financing in Africa is instrumental in comprehending the trends of political clientelism, political integration into electoral offices, and that this patronage-client relationship has a remarkable role on the development of democracy in the continent (Sigman, 2015). Political party financing in Africa exhibits a state capture through political donations linked with corruption and impaired democratic development. There is a dilemma of preference in African political party financing between the states that fund politics publicly and those that fund them privately. The states that adopted public funding such as South Africa, Ghana and Burundi have their financing carefully regulated and monitored but the excessive use of state resources invited for corrupt practices in the process (Sigman, 2015). The other side like Nigeria, Ethiopia and Kenya which regulated public funding and allow for private funding are accused of being unregulated, unmonitored and public disclosure is not effective (February, 2016). The level of or current state of political party financing in Africa remains what has been observed in the 2014 study by Ohman (2014). The new development or dimension involves extreme money politics and transparency question, lack of reform of regulatory framework, low levels of compliance and political corruption (Ohman, 2016).

2.4. Money politics and its effects on African politics

Money is important in politics because without it, competitive liberal multi-party democracy is not practicable. Political party financing is linked directly to the wellbeing and survival of democracy. Campaign and political party financing reform is usually a pact affecting various conflicting contending groups. No country has its regulations on political party financing fulfilling its desires globally just the way there is no system that is perfect or neutral. However, in many countries today, money politics is becoming unbearable compelling for calls on reforms because of the sharp effects of money in politics involving uneven playing ground, unfair access to office, godfatherism, tainted politics, lack of competition, political exclusion, misgovernance and undermining of rule of law. It is therefore necessary to introduce reforms to limit the excess of money in politics. The reform should take



care of limits on donations, donation embargo, expenditure caveat, financial periodical end, revelation, and consideration for public funding (United States Agency for International Development, 2003).

One of the challenges facing policymakers and reformers on African democracy is the fact little is known on money politics in political party financing or campaign expenditure of politicians. Political party financing process in most African countries are mainly not transparent, fundraising decision and policies are confidentially determined and controlled by few individuals. Disclosure is extremely minimal. Money politics translate into vote buying which has less benefit or little gain to the voters in the process (Bryan & Baer, 2005). Money is an important factor in modern politics, but its presence also poses a great challenge for democracy and democratisation (Sule et al. 2021). Money is necessarily used by politicians to woo voters for an influential voting in favour of money spenders during elections (Sule & Tal, 2018). Money problem vary from one region to another and from one country to another. In Africa, money politics is an inevitable element of securing political power and political success at all levels in almost all the countries. The level and pattern of the use of money may however, vary from one African state to another (Ohman, 2013). Money in politics undermine democratic process and erode good governance through undisclosed private donations, abuse of administrative resources, formation of cartel and undermining of trust and integrity (OECD, 2013).

Money has many influence in politics including but not limited to a situation where wealthy interests gain undue advantage over the political system, campaign donations from businesses, personal and corporations may lead to corrupt practices, abuse of state resources including financial resources, institutional resources, enforcement resources and regulatory resources, illicit funding which influence the political terrain, erosion of national sovereignty through foreign funding, blockage of new crop of leaders because of excessive spending and vote buying (Ohman, 2016). Money politics has the prospects and leverage of undermining the standards and regulations of the masses' interests and subverting democratic governance by evading accountability and transparency (Pienaar, 2014). Scandals involving money politics has affected several countries and all the continents in the world (Anyuor, 2021). The consequences are the fuelling of distrust in democratic institutionalisation, undermining the integrity of political system, disproportionate advantage to some selected few politicians and the creation of a disadvantageous position for weak groups such as women and marginalised groups. A broader approach is required to strengthen the democratic institutions to survive the negative influence of money and protect accountability and transparency in the process (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2017).

3. FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

This work adopted two major frameworks to buttress the points raised in the literature. The frameworks will provide assumptions, postulations and ideas that can support the position raised in discussion in work and linked up with the discussions and findings. The two frameworks are: Theory of African democracy and clientelism

3.1. Theory of African democracy

The theory of African Democracy is postulated by various works (Sklar, 1983; Jackson & Rosberg, 1984; Joseph, 1989; Bratton & Van De Walle, 1994; Ross, 2001; Chandra, 2007). The theory emphasises that most of the African countries are legacies of arbitrary colonialism with a deliberate submerged of multicultural entities. African countries were bequeathed with fragile entities that formed a stumbling block for democratisation and institutionalisation of democratic process. The African leaders that emerged from this process found it expedient to utilise ethnicity, religion, primordial sentiments, state resources, nepotism and clientelism to control power without given any repose to accountability and good governance (Sklar, 1983). There is an argument that democracy is too infantile and infertile to operate in Africa in its full force and principles of operation as it is obtainable in the Western democracy. It is suggested that Africa inherited a volatile and disjointed system from colonialists that



makes it too difficult for a democracy to survive (Sklar, 1983). There is no institutionalisation of political institutions and processes such as political parties with ideologies, political mobilisation, political socialisation and good governance was relegated to political and socioeconomic issues that bedeviled the newly emerged states (Joseph, 1989). The implication is that African states were turned into rentier states where the political economy was hijacked while the rulers subjugated the subjects through political manipulation and economic impoverishment (Ross, 2001).

African democracies are besieged by neopatrimonial leaders who are despots and power brokers that blocked public choice and inputs for a restricted policy and decision making (Ross, 2001). To this end, such leaders determine which type of democracy should operate which tantamount to an obstacle towards authentic democratisation in Africa. Voting in an election is limited to leaders' wish and voting behaviour was subsided towards a political culture of patrimonial voting. Patronage is a decisive factor in who gets what and when. The level of financial contribution offered during electioneering campaign either legally or illegally determine who has access to economic resources of the state (Bratton & Van De Walle, 1994; Chandra, 2007). Rule in Africa has been personalised while political institutions are turned into abstract where power is scrambled based on sentiments instead of issues. State resources are fully utilised in the quest for power and perpetuation of the African leaders without due recourse to the doctrine of accountability and transparency (Jackson & Rosberg, 1984).

The above framework can clearly explain the subject matter of study in this work because the interrogation of the nature and level of accountability and transparency of African democracies can best be understood from the perspective of the foundation of democratisation that Africa found itself which is faulty and inadequate in the institutionalisation process. The African states inherited Western liberal democracies as super-imposed from the colonialists which are not really congruent with the African heritage and system. This issue made democratisation in most of the African countries a cumbersome process. Democratic principles specifically regulations in political party financing are easily stamped by African leaders to pave their way into power at all cost which is an issue of concern for achieving accountability and transparency in African democracy (Ohman, 2014).

3.2. Clientelism

Clientelism is a political economy model that attempts to explain the payoff and bargains in power sharing especially in the electoral processes and power sharing. Clientelism is also a model that was designed by various scholars at different stages of its theoretical development to interpret and analyse the process of elites' accumulation in governance and democratic process. The term "Clientelism" emanated from the ancient Roman State which can be translated from its original "Cluere" translated as to submit, to be obedient or subservient to the top leader. The component part "Clientela" to someone or group of people that can pursue a political interest or power broking on behalf of their principal. The "Patronus" or patron means the clients of the political aristocrats. The patrons provide money in cash, kind, kickbacks, incentives, offices, contracts, projects and other accruals for their clients in place for loyalty towards victory to acquire power (Weber, 2010).

In the pre-industrial Europe, Clientelism dominates the European politics where the leaders used patronage and Clientelistic practices in the electoral processes and democratic governance (Gans-Morse et al. 2010; Darabont, 2010). Clientelism remains an important power interplay and power struggles in contemporary Europe and world over (Roniger, 2004). The first wave of works on Clientelism by scholars was in the 1970s and 1980s which were mainly on conceptualisation, construction, reconstruction and grounding the theory by social scientists especially the Political Scientists and Anthropologists in Europe and America. The second wave of the works on Clientelism spanned the period of the 1990s when arguments emerged on the notion that proper democratisation will obliterate Clientelism which will foster accountability and transparency in governance. However, these works later redefined their arguments on the fact and discovery that such fate has not been achieved (Roniger, 2004). The third wave of research and grounding the framework of Clientelism was in the 1990s and 2000s in which civil societies and



pressure groups focus on the impact of Clientelism and how it prevents transparency in governance. They insist that Clientelism impeded accountability and transparency and it supports corruption and illegal dealings (Roniger, 2004).

The basic assumptions of Clientelism include the emergence of vote buying in the electoral process, luring of opposite voters to sway their votes in favour of the undesired candidates in return for compensation that is characterised with corruption and illegal practices. Political party financing process was violated through illegal and excessive spending in practices that are enshrouded in corruption and violation of public trust for self-advantage (Gans-Morse et al. 2010; Isaksson & Bigsten, 2013). Sometimes Clientelism is not only persuasion and incentives that motivates voters to sway votes. Threats are often used on electorates to secure their support (Stokes, 2013). Clientelism is applicable in the context of this study because democracy can only facilitate accountability and transparency if rules of engagement are well-constituted and respected by political actors. The use of illegal spending in campaign as part of political party financing and vote buying, corrupt practices constitute a stumbling block against proper democratisation and good governance in Africa where the leaders are Clientel, patron-seekers, patrimonial, nepotistic and primordial in their leadership through primitive accumulation, looting of public fund, abuse of office, mismanagement and personal enrichment. The engagement of brokers by the ruling elites in Africa paved way for the continued consolidation of Clientelism where power is sought for private benefit in most cases. African leaders were found to have been corrupt and crime-inclined after leaving offices in many cases in many countries because of the personalisation of power through the use of the means of Clientelism.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this section, issues and matters that are related to the role of party financing in hindering good governance and fostering transparency in African politics are analysed and discussed.

4.1. Obstacles to accountability in African democracy: The use and abuse of public fund for campaign

One of the greatest threats to democracy in Africa is corruption that is linked to the process of political party financing. This is because it affects economic development which should have been better under democratic rule that presupposes accountability, transparency and the pursuance of the common good. Corruption in political party financing undermine the greatest weapon of democracy which is citizens' inputs in policymaking because it discourages political participation. For the past decades in Africa, corruption in party financing has drawn the attention officials, activists and some academicians and there are investigations on that and suggestions awareness, legislative provisions, and setting spending limits but the problem is the level of compliance and enforcement regimes (Bryan & Baer, 2005).

Political financing and political corruption represent an enormous challenge in the Continent due to nascent level of multi-party system, challenges across the continents, and the nature of African politics which is that of patrimonialism, prebendalism, clientelism, money politics and abuse of state resources. Solutions to these problems demand for understanding of how money corrupts politics and this differs from one country to another in Africa. After the secure of political independence in the 1960s, most African countries evolved into one party system dominantly which blocked for authentic strive towards democratisation and good governance. This created a situation of deprivation where the dominant one parties that ruled emerged wealthy used state resources to buy political support. At a point in time, most of the opposition parties in Africa were repressed, intimidated, coerced, suppressed and marginalised from active politics leaving them inactive and weak which prevents the African citizens from having a platform of alternative choice (Bryan & Baer, 2005).

A study established the evidence for the use of state resources in various African countries. For instance, in Benin, if you win an election, you can seek state resources to be reimbursed and finance your next campaign. Corruption emanates from this perspective because money politics is encouraged. In Botswana, access to the

national resources by the ruling BDP party enables it to engage in vote buying, bribery and squander of public treasury according to most of the respondents in the study. Ethiopia restricted funding to private affairs and foreign donation which in themselves allow for corruption and squander of public resources because the payoff for the foreign donors include an economic interest that may be detrimental to the country's economic development (Teshome, 2009). In Ghana, all the interviewers believed that there is a direct correlation between the political party financing and corruption. Public officials are believed to have been using state resources to reward and favour their financiers through illegal and dubious contracts. The same situation was reported in Kenya during the period of study. In Malawi, the use of state resources and abuse of the resources are clearly identified and reported by the interviewers in which they expressed that the ruling UDF failed to allow for any regulations in terms of spending limit or monitoring procedure regarding donations which fuels corruption in the process. They argued that the ruling party has utilised and co-opted state resources in its campaign financing unmonitored and unsanctioned in which the opposition have no liberty to that which weakens their quest for competing (Bryan & Baer, 2005).

The ruling FRELIMO in Mozambique benefits from domestic state resources and foreign private and corporations' donations which allows for political corruption to sail through in the process of party financing. Not only the public resources, the opposition parties in the country alleged a connection between the banking industry and the FRELIMO and campaign financing (Bryan & Baer, 2005). Nigeria is a unique case of party financing than the above studied countries because all public and foreign funding are prohibited by the electoral law but the use and abuse of state resources for campaign expenditure is ripe (Sule et al. 2017). Studies (Sule et al. 2017; Sule et al. 2017; Sule, 2018; Sule & Tal, 2018; Sule et al. 2018) established a clear use of state resources to the tune of \$2.1 billion in the 2015 General Election for instance, by the then, ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). Several reports and studies similar to the above indicated the use of state resources by the ruling PDP from 1999 to 2015 and there was such report by the ruling APC too from 2015 to 2019.

Senegal is another African country in which corruption was reported in the process of party funding through the use of state resources and blockage of opposition from fair play (Bryan & Baer, 2005). South Africa relies on public funding which is believed to have been enmeshed in corrupt practices of different ranging from misutilisation to bribery and other corrupt practices. Similar reports emerged from Tanzania to that of South Africa. In Uganda, it was believed that the President and the Parliaments used public resources not only for campaign financing but also for enriching themselves on emergence onto power after election. The same scenario was recorded in the case of Zambia's party financing (Bryan & Baer, 2005).

4.2. Impediments to transparency in African democracy: Vote buying, corruption and clientelism

Democratisation was affected in Africa in the 21st century owing to corruption and other related corrupt practices. Political party financing is an anathema to political corruption in Africa. Corruption in the electoral process involves vote buying, bribery and Clientelism. There are any studies (USAID, 2003; Bryan & Baer, 2005; OECD, 2003; Ohman, 2016; IDEA, 2017 and Sule et al., 2018) which established that there is vote buying in many African democracies during election. The incidences of vote buying were reported in Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Seychelles, Malawi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Benin and other selected studied countries. Vote buying occurred either in cash or in kind such as gifting of cows or sheep in Malawi for example and cash in Naira in Nigeria. the effects of vote buying are it deprives an organised opposition from political competition. It also denied the candidates with integrity and well-designed developmental programmes to acquire power because they are flushed put by the impact of money in the process of party financing.

Corruption is recorded and witnessed in most of the selected countries studied. For example, in Nigeria, a case of electoral corruption in party financing in 2015 by the ruling PDP then led to opening up of investigation which revealed a shocking \$2.1 billion earmarked for the purchase of firearms to fight the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast being diverted from its statutory function to finance the campaign of the PDP. It was also uncovered that



some unscrupulous elements in the electoral umpire: The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) connived with the PDP officials and were bribed with N23 billion to sway the results of the 2015 General Election for the ruling PDP (Sule et al., 2018). There were no such specific reports from other countries that are studied here even though, the reports from the various studies indicated that the interviewers selected from Benin, Botswana, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Malawi, Seychelles, South Africa, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia all agreed that there were corruption and corrupt practices in the processes of their countries' party financing. It is suggested that individual country studies like that of Nigeria by academic researchers will better reveal additional information and expand the depth of knowledge in the area of study which should be carried out in the future.

Clientelism is found to be existing and in operation in the process of party financing in African democracy. The reports by various studies (Bryan & Baer, 2005; Adetula, 2008; Ohman, 2014) indicated that patrons secure the influence and support of voters through cash reward, promise of political appointment, contract kickbacks, coercion sometimes through policy priorities in favour of support or against it and the benefits from the foreign donors in return for an economic engagement at the behest of the national resources. It was discovered that Clientelism was existing in all the countries studied in different dimensions and at various levels.

4.3. Measurements of transparency in African democracy: Disclosure and sources of parties finance

There are legal provisions and regulations on party financing laws in various African countries which are established to ensure a proper monitoring and compliance but the level of compliance and sanction are what annoy the analysts. Disclosure of sources of parties' income and expenditure through auditing and exposure to public scrutiny are vital in this aspect. This will determine how transparent the democracy in Africa is or not. This section reviewed the various regulations on disclosure and the level of disclosure in some selected African countries that are obtainable under this study.

In Nigeria, two major constitutional documents are relied to ensure transparency and disclosure in political party financing process. The 1999 Constitution as Amended and the Electoral Act 2010. Section 225 and Section 226 of the Constitution elaborate for the sources of party funding which are restricted to private donations and personal sponsorship with all foreign donation or funding totally banned. Public funding was abrogated in the amended 2010 Electoral Act to avoid corruption and abuse of state resources which was hitherto existing in the 2006 Electoral Act. Section 80 to 90 of the Electoral Act 2010 provides for maximum spending limits, contribution bans, contributions limits, disclosure and auditing of the parties' financial books as well as other laws. However, compliance is the major problem. A study (Sule et al. 2017) revealed an impunity in violating the legal provisions without appropriate sanction.

South Africa is another country in which the Constitution provides regulations of fair play, openness and visibility in political party financing in Sections 19 and 236. The Public Funding Act 103 of 1997 provides an appropriate legal framework and regulations of public funding which was extended to accommodate private financing. Efforts to prevent corruption in the process was introduced in 2004 in the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act 12 of 2004 which identifies any act of gratification or bribe to get a politician elected as corruption. South Africa also signed and ratified many international conventions on legislation on party financing, transparency and combating of corruption. The problem with South African legislation which requires reform is lack of disclosure principles as in the case of Nigeria and Egypt. Compliance and sanction too are weak (Pienaar, 2014).

In Egypt, the Law of Political Parties provided for substantial public funding for all registered parties and private donations was limited to party members, Egyptian citizens and corporations excluding foreign donations. Disclosure is also required. However, compliance and sanction especially by the ruling party are the problem and the need for reform (Pienaar, 2014). In many other African countries like Benin, Ghana, Kenya, Botswana,



Mozambique, Malawi, Uganda and Tanzania, regulations on party financing were established but as strong as specific like that of Nigeria, South Africa and Egypt. Disclosure was either omitted in some cases or not well-specified. Some of the countries adopted public funding only, some public funding with flexibility for private donation from within the country, others private funding with leverage for foreign donations and others like Nigeria is strict in allowing for only private donation without any public funding or foreign donation (Bryan & Baer, 2005). The above analysis revealed that the African democracy is lacking in the measurement of transparency because the process of political party funding lacks proper regulations and strong effective laws for monitoring, compliance and sanction. This by implication will enable for corruption and subversion of the nascent democratisation in the continent. future.

4.4. Whither African political party financing? An alternative model

The search for an alternative model to enhancing accountability and transparency in the financing of political parties in Africa is not an easy task and is not going to be an easy task for now. Indeed, this study cannot adequately answer this question appropriately. There is need for a deeper investigation, consultation and modelling. Even the advanced democracies in the world such as America and European countries are still battling with the issue at stake (Ohman, 2014). One of the alternatives identified by this study is a continental and regional approach. It is impossible to identify a model and suggest that African countries should adopt it unanimously. This is because some countries like South Africa, Cameroon and Egypt still utilise public funding while others like Nigeria abandoned it (Bryan & Baer, 2005). However, the platform of African Union can be used to devise some common measures which should be applicable to all countries that may ratify the treaty or convention on the subject matter such as disclosure, maximum spending limit, donation and other similar related issues while the issues of public or private funding and legality of external donation should be at the discretion of the concerned countries. This is based on the model adopted by the European countries in tackling the challenges of party financing through the regional approach. If it is feasible, African countries can think of adopting a sub-regional convention for instance, regulations proposed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), South African Development Commission (SADC) and other sub-regional organisations to adopt unified regulations on party financing (Okon, 2021).

However, this might be difficult because of the fragile nature of the African economy. Most of the African countries are poor depending on external aid from America and Europe to democratise. The aid is not freely given which means that operation of the principles of democratic rule such as party financing may depend heavily on how the external donors approve for the recipient country to accept in the convention. Furthermore, international conventions are weak laws that can be accepted or ignored by countries based on their interest. Unified regulations might not get unanimous support. Nevertheless, continental and regional approach is the most affordable and feasible alternative towards harnessing transparency in the party financing in Africa. One of the recent developments in party financing in Africa is the current efforts towards the amendment of the 2010 Electoral Act in Nigeria to emerge as Electoral Act 2021. It has been observed in this study that Nigeria has the most comprehensive and workable provisions and regulations on party financing in Africa if there is adequate enforcement. The debates that are dominating the Nigerian environment now is the review of the section on maximum spending limit from N1 billion for the President to N15 billion, that of Governorship from N200 to N5 billion, Senate from N40 to N1.5 billion, House of Representatives from N20 million to N500 million and State House of Assembly from N10 to N50 million. most of the protagonists of the review argued that it will further entrench money politics, suppress weak and poor candidates and gives a cover-up for the elites in their campaign spending. However, they forgot that the inflation and devaluation rate in the country has reach an all-time high in the history of the country quadrupling virtually all expenses in comparison with that of the 2015 Elections. This study shares a variant view from the above. It has support the upward review as proposed in the 2021 amendment. The most consoling aspect is that no



mention of a public funding. Funding of parties and politicians remains a private affair in the bill. However, an outrageous and a controversial aspect of the proposed bill is the rejection of the electronic transmission of results by the National Assembly despite pressure and outcries from well-meaning Nigerians and civil societies. This has trampled on Nigeria's aspiration to fully transform into a digital democracy.

5. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that there is no denial that Africa is recording a significant and remarkable improvement in its democratisation process and it is making a headway in catching up with liberal democracies in the Western world. However, the issue of accountability and transparency in the African democracy is not appreciative. But it is discovered that political corruption and political party financing is a universal problem that even the advanced democracies in the world are battling with. The only setback in the African context is the crude and primitive use of shoddy corruption deals such as the abuse of state resources, vote buying and bribery in addition to lack of standard rules for regulating and monitoring of party finances. Only Egypt and Nigeria have established a well-designed policies and laws for party financing in which their cases too were affected by lack of compliance, weak sanction and improper enforcement regime. Other countries were either not studied or lack any model of party financing. This work discovered that places like Niger, Burundi, Rwanda, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Morocco, Algeria, Angola, Tunisia, Somalia, Mali and many African countries lack a proper study that can examine the nature of party financing, regulations, level of compliance and monitoring. This leaves a huge vacuum for researchers in the area of political party financing to step in and do the needful.

The study recommends that there is a strong need for reforms in all the African countries while in Nigeria there is need for political will to implement the regulations and monitor them effectively. If Nigeria makes a breakthrough, other African states may emulate. It is also suggested that national and international agencies should provide grants for undertaking of individual research across the African countries to have a full database of the situation and to have a uniform reform for ensuring of accountability and transparency in the African democracy.


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