

**THE ROLE OF CHIEFTAINCY IN PARTY POLITICS IN AFRICA: AN ANALYSIS OF  
THE LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION SYSTEMS OF THE SOUTH WEST AFRICA  
PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION (SWAPO) AND THE BOTSWANA DEMOCRATIC  
PARTY (BDP)**

By

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## Declaration

I, **Mayanga Agenda Matongo** hereby declare that this study is a presentation of my original research work. This study has only been submitted to the University of the Western Cape and all efforts have been made to indicate and accurately acknowledge the sources used.

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**Mayanga Agenda Matongo**

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**21 October 2019**



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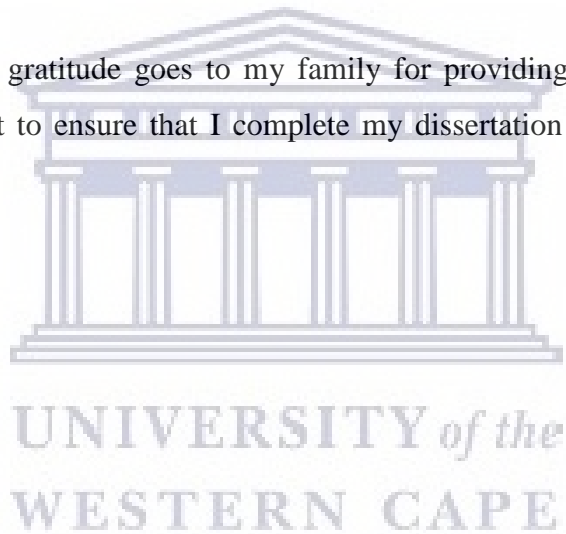
## Acknowledgements

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## Abstract

This research analyses the influence of chieftaincy in party political processes in African states. In this regard, the study employs a case study design in investigating how chieftaincy shapes leadership succession dynamics within the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) in Namibia and the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) in Botswana. These countries are among those renowned for their healthy constitutional democratic systems in Africa. However, despite this recognition, the two states' governing parties, the SWAPO Party and BDP, continue to experience factional battles. This is due to what some current and former members have described as a lack of intra-party democracy, with claims of the stifling of debate and presidents having preferred individuals to succeed them being the cause of disagreement. The handpicking of a successor is synonymous with the chieftaincy system where leaders assume power because of their primordial right, leaving the rest of the polity with no say on who gets to lead them.

In addition, in chieftaincies, there is very little debate (if any at all) as to who the successor should be. This is inconsistent with democratic systems where debate is a key feature. In most cases, especially when it comes to the issue of succession within a political party, those with different views and choices from those of the party leader are seen as being disloyal to both the party and its leadership. The aim of the study was to establish the extent to which the leadership succession systems of the SWAPO Party and BDP are influenced by chieftaincy and the possible implications for the future of democratic governance in these two countries in particular and Africa in general. The study adopted an interpretive research paradigm by applying a qualitative approach using narratives captured through semi-structured, in-depth one-on-one interviews and a focus group discussion. Since the SWAPO Party and BDP are democratic organisations, the study used the Democratic Theory. This was due to the belief that it would be more helpful in analysing the extent to which succession processes in these parties mirror or not, those of chieftaincy and whether there is a hindrance to intra-party democracy process as a result.

The study revealed that there is a degree of cultural, /traditional values or chieftaincy influence into party politics in general and leadership succession systems in the SWAPO Party and BDP in particular. The study also found that there were other factors (internal and external) influencing electoral processes in these two political parties. These factors include but are not limited to the

rank and file's understanding of democracy, freedom of expression in the parties, fair competition, political party procedures and ideologies, social and economic factors. Some of the internal and external factors could also be linked to the influence of cultural and traditional norms and values. Thus, the study proposes that care should be taken to avoid a situation whereby political parties in Africa could be run like chieftaincies as this would compromise democratic practice.

### **Keywords**

Chieftaincy, Democracy, Power, Succession, Representation, Participation, Leadership, SWAPO, BDP.



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## Acronyms/Abbreviations

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| BDP   | Botswana Democratic Party               |
| BMD   | Botswana Movement of Democracy          |
| CC    | Central Committee                       |
| OAU   | Organisation of African Unity           |
| RDP   | Rally for Democracy and Progress        |
| SWAPO | South West Africa People's organisation |
| UNSC  | United Nations Security Council         |



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### 1.1 Introduction

Historically, chieftaincy has been viewed as a distinct governance system from the representative governance system enshrined in a liberal democracy setup. While the election of office bearers characterises the latter, the former is a form of governance system whereby incumbents assume office by virtue of being born into primordial families. While the two systems of governance demonstrate evident points of divergence, there are instances where points of convergence become discernible. Among such instances is political succession and the accompanying squabbles, which occur in certain instances. In both governance systems, succession is sometimes marred by contests and in-fighting among potential candidates.

A quick scan of the literature leads to the conclusion that although most African countries have conformed to liberal democracy, which is the dominant form of governance at the moment, the intra-party democratic processes of their governing parties are still found wanting. Factional battles that mostly arise in these parties in the period leading up to, during and immediately after the election of new leaders are a testimony to this reality. A close glance at the electoral processes of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) Party in Namibia and the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) in Botswana shows signs that they are not different although they govern countries acclaimed as beacons of democracy on the African continent. Evidently, both parties have experienced splits at certain times due to unhappiness among some members because they believed that the leadership succession processes were handled unfairly.

Against this backdrop, this study purported to do a comparative analysis of the relationship between chieftaincy and party politics using the two case studies of Namibia and Botswana. There were specific reasons for choosing the two countries. These reasons include the similarities and differences, which exist between the two countries. Firstly, Botswana was a British Protectorate before obtaining independence in 1966. Namibia, on the other hand, was once under Germany but was later placed under South Africa's administration before becoming a democratic country in 1990. Secondly, in both countries, there is dualism whereby chieftaincy is being practised

alongside the democratically elected leaders. Therefore, these two cases provided a platform to compare and contrast the selected cases with the view to delineate the subject matter of this study.

## **1.2. Background**

### **1.2.1 The SWAPO Party**

The SWAPO was established on 16 April 1960 as a liberation movement. Its launch took place in the Tanzanian capital of Dar es Salaam. The movement's dual aim was to unite the people of what was then known as South West Africa (present-day Namibia) and to instil nationalism among them. Dobell (1988, p. 30) states that initially, its leaders had chosen to pursue independence through diplomatic means. However, the Organisation of African Unity's (OAU) Liberation Committee established following the founding of the OAU in 1963 agreed that for liberation movements to achieve their objectives they could use all means including the use of violence. By 1964, SWAPO had a plan of waging an armed struggle, which it presented to the Liberation Committee, solidifying its position as the only movement that had to be recognised as fighting for the liberation of South West Africa (Saunders, 2018, p. 155).

After three decades of fighting, Namibia became independent through a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 435 which oversaw the transfer of power from South Africa to the people of Namibia. SWAPO won the 1989 democratic elections and then transformed into a political party from a liberation movement. As such, the SWAPO Party has been ruling Namibia since independence on 21 March 1990. Sam Nujoma was the leader of the organisation from its years as a liberation movement. At Namibia's independence, Nujoma became the country's first president, serving from 1990-2005 (Melber, 2006, p. 98).

Hopwood (2004), cited in Melber (2006, p. 99) states that when Nujoma's term of office was coming to an end, three individuals (Hifikepunye Pohamba, Nahas Angula, and Hidipo Hamutenya) were nominated by members of the central committee as his possible replacements. The election of the SWAPO's presidential candidate would take place at its 2004 extra-ordinary congress. Incumbent President Nujoma had nominated Pohamba as his preferred successor at the 2002 congress where Pohamba was unchallenged. However, at the 2004 extra-ordinary congress, two other candidates were nominated (Nahas Angula and Hidipo Hamutenya), bringing the

number of contestants to three. Pohamba emerged as the winner of the fiercely contested presidential race. He was sworn in as head of state in 2005 and served until 2015, and also took over as president of the party from 2007 until his resignation in 2015 two years earlier than the time his term as party president was supposed to end (Here comes electoral college, 2009).

At the 2004 extra-election congress, Pohamba's election did not go down well with those who supported Hidipo Hamutenya. The disgruntled members and Hamutenya quit the party citing lack of inner-party democracy. They formed the Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP), and Hamutenya became its president. The RDP became the official opposition after the parliamentary elections that followed later in 2004. In his second and final five-year term in office, Pohamba also presented current president Hage Geingob as someone he preferred as his successor (Melber, 2006, p. 108).

Heading towards the 2007 congress, Pohamba rallied support for Geingob to be elected as the party's vice-president. When one is elected vice-president, it places them in a better position to take over the presidency once the incumbent's term has ended. Leading up to the congress of the party which would take place in 2012, Pohamba continued to campaign for Geingob to ensure that he survived any challenge from other presidential hopefuls. Another party veteran, former Robben Island prisoner Jerry Ekandjo, was nominated and joined the presidential race. Despite his interest, he was defeated at congress where slate politics in SWAPO had become apparent. Pohamba's term as head of state ended in 2015, while his term as president of the party was ending in 2017 (Melber, Kromrey & Welz, 2017, p. 295).

In 2015, Pohamba announced his resignation as the president of the party and handed over the presidency to his preferred successor who was now his vice-president. This sparked debate and unhappiness within the party with those against this hand-over of power arguing that it was in contravention of the party's constitution because only the Congress could elect a party president (Melber, Kromrey, & Welz, 2017, p. 295). Among those opposed to this hand-over were senior cabinet ministers Jerry Ekandjo and Pendukeni Iivula-Ithana who were intending to contest against Geingob at the 2017 Congress. When Geingob was re-elected, he reshuffled his cabinet, firing Ekandjo and Iivula-Ithana. What is clear from this background is that succession within the

SWAPO Party has been handled similarly with chieftaincy where it is known upfront who the successor of the incumbent will be if he vacates office.

### **1.2.2 The SWAPO Party Constitution, Rules and Procedures**

For an organisation to function in an orderly and organised fashion, it requires a set of rules and procedures guiding its operations. This set of internal rules is referred to as a constitution. A constitution is a document used in both democratic and non-democratic governments, although it is mainly for "administrative convenience" for the latter. In addition, a constitution "involves restrictions on the functioning of the government mainly in order to protect certain liberties of the citizenry or to prevent government organs from expanding their power by trenching on the powers of other organs" (Tullock, 2004, n.p). Put differently; a constitution serves as an organisation or government's framework. It is therefore indispensable that a mass-based democratic political movement such as the SWAPO Party has a constitution where the rights and obligations of its members and the procedures for the election of office bearers are outlined. According to Chapter II, Article IV of the SWAPO Party's constitution:

A member of SWAPO PARTY has a right to, inter alia, (c) (1) (a) demand the fulfilment of what is established in the constitution, as well as the implementation of resolutions, decisions, directives, and agreements of the PARTY. (c) (1) (e) elect and be elected to positions of authority in the PARTY subject to restrictions set out in this constitution (SWAPO Party constitution (SWAPO PARTY. Const. art, IV).

Article IV of the same chapter further states that a member of the SWAPO PARTY has, among others, the following obligations:

(c) (2) (h) to oppose factionalism and defend the PARTY; (j) to promote and exercise criticism without fear and self-criticism to overcome any defects, errors or deviations in the PARTY (SWAPO PARTY. Const. art, IV).

Concerning the election of the office bearers such as the top four (the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General) and the Central Committee (CC) of the

party, only the Congress held at five-year intervals may do so. The highest organ of authority between the two congresses is the CC, which is chaired by the president. The party also has an organ referred to as the Political Bureau comprising of 24 members including the president, Vice-President, Secretary-General and Deputy-Secretary General. In addition to the top four leaders, the CC elects 18 members among its fold, while two more members are appointed to the Political Bureau by the president. Among other functions, the Political Bureau is responsible for policy formulation in the period between CC meetings (SWAPO PARTY. Const. art, V, VI, VII, p. 8-13). The SWAPO Party's Rules and Procedures for Election of Party Office-Bearers and Party Representatives at Legislative and Government Levels stipulates that:

It is an established tradition that the Political Bureau has been vested with powers of vetting candidates who aspire to represent the SWAPO PARTY at various elective levels of government and legislature. This is to ensure that aspiring candidates meet minimum requirements set out in the rules and procedures adopted from time to time as well as to avoid infiltration by persons not worth the honour of representing the SWAPO Party at various structures of the Party (SWAPO Party. Rules and Procedures, 3, p. 2).

It is one of the General Principles of the party that all positions within the party will be contested through elections by a secret ballot. The party, according to its rules and procedures, does not allow for the automatic promotion, acclamation or confirmation of any position. A candidate may only be confirmed into a position if they are nominated unopposed. According to the rules, both the Political Bureau and the CC shall each nominate and second up to three candidates for each of the positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General. A final list of three candidates per position emerging from this process is presented to the Congress for election (SWAPO Party. Rules and Procedures, 12, 35.1, 35.2, 35.5, p. 10-22). Both the constitution and the rules and procedures clearly outline processes to be followed to ensure that the election of leaders is free and fair. What is also clear is that the rank and file play no direct role in the nomination of the leaders as this is done by members of the Political Bureau and Central Committee.

### 1.2.3 The Botswana Democratic Party (BDP)

The BDP has been Botswana's ruling party since the country's independence from Britain in 1966 after being formed by its first leader Seretse Khama in 1962. Khama went on to be Botswana's first president at independence. He was also the Chief of one of Botswana's main polities/clans, the Bangwato. His popularity as a chief helped the BDP to win the 1965 elections and those that would follow (Makgala, 2005, p. 304). Khama died in 1980 and was replaced by Ketumile Masire (Nyamnjoh, 2003, p. 97). However, according to Nyati-Ramahobo cited in Makgala (2005, p. 305), Masire belonged to a different polity/clan. In order to assuage members of Khama's polity/clan, he appointed the former president's cousin Lenyeletse Seretse as his vice-president. Seretse died in 1983 and could therefore not live to take up the reigns of the party and country. According to Botswana's Constitution, the president appoints the vice-president. The BDP used a system of controlled succession whereby only a few individuals would select a President.

Since its formation in 1962 to around the late 1980s, the BDP did not experience factional challenges that would threaten its unity. However, this changed in the early 1990s. Factionalism started but not to the extent of splitting the party. One of the factionalism management strategies Masire employed was cancelling internal elections during a fierce factional battle between the Kwelagobe and Merafhe factions in 1997, opting to instead go for a compromise solution where the two groups would be placed into the party's executive positions. Between 1997 and 2003, no internal elections took place in the BDP (Kebonang & Wankie, 2006, p. 148). Towards the time of his retirement in 1998, Masire's succession plan was under threat due to internal strife. He thus pioneered changes to the constitution and introduced an automatic succession system. According to this system, the vice-president would take over when the president died or retired (Lotshwao & Suping, 2013, p. 345-347).

Masire had appointed Festus Mogae as vice-president. When he retired in 1998, Mogae took over as president of both the party and the state. Upon taking over, Mogae did not appoint a vice-president among seasoned politicians and senior ministers. He instead appointed Ian Khama a Lieutenant General in the Botswana Defence Forces and son of the first President Seretse Khama as his deputy and his obvious successor when he left the office. Mogae retired, and Khama took over from him in 2008 (Lotshwao & Suping, 2013, p. 345-347).



Prior to that, Khama had indicated his willingness to stand for the chairmanship of the BDP in 2001, but was advised by the elders of the party not to stand against Ponatshego Kedikilwe who according to an agreement between the factions had indicated that he would be retiring and would therefore not be available for election in 2003. However, at the 2003 Congress, Kedikilwe changed his mind and availed himself for election. He was challenged by Khama who had the full backing of President Mogae. Mogae's public support of Khama enraged Kedikilwe and his supporters who believed that the president was supposed to have taken a neutral stance instead of throwing his weight behind one of the contestants. When Kedikilwe lost the contest, he was ignored by the president for any other position in the party or government (Kebonang & Wankie, 2006, p. 149).

During Ian Khama's tenure in the build-up to the 2009 elective conference, his comrade Daniel Kwelagobe indicated that he was going to contest for the chairmanship of the BDP. Khama came up with an ultimatum that ministers would have to choose between being members of the cabinet and working for the party. This was seen as a move that was aimed at frustrating Kwelagobe's ambitions to contest for the chairmanship of the party. Kwelagobe defied the ultimatum and Khama removed him from the cabinet. Ironically, the ultimatum seems to have targeted the faction which the president was not aligned to. He appointed members of the faction he supported into the central committee while they held cabinet positions.

In addition, Khama also rewarded other members of this faction with appointments to the party's sub-committees. When the party's Secretary General Gomolemo Motswaledi challenged Khama's authority in making these appointments unilaterally, he was suspended from the party and recalled as the BDP candidate for Gaborone Central (Lotshwao & Suping, 2013, p. 347-348). In 2010, those who were unhappy with Khama left the party citing intolerance and his undemocratic leadership style. They went ahead and formed the Botswana Movement of Democracy (BMD) (Lotshwao & Suping, 2013, p. 345).

What is of interest in this brief recollection of events is that as was the case with Namibia, Botswana's leaders also made concerted efforts to anoint their successors just like the ruling king would anoint a successor to his throne. Similarly, those who differed with the President's decisions were seen to be undermining the leader's authority, an issue similar to a commoner not having the



right to question a chief or king in a chieftaincy or kingship. It is for this reason that chieftaincy was juxtaposed with democratic succession in this comparative study.

#### **1.2.4 BDP Constitution**

As is the case with other organisations, the BDP has a constitution as its framework. The party practices participatory democracy, which is a political system where the citizenry participates directly in the decision-making processes on issues that affect them (Balderacchi, 2016, p. 164). According to Article 4 of its Constitution, the party is committed to fighting against social ills such as "domination, tribalism, poverty, hunger, ignorance, disease, crime and prejudice". Members of the BDP are obliged to put the interests of the country and party first and be ready to embrace the people of Botswana's human rights and other liberties and should also not practice favouritism (BDP. Const. art, 12.2, 12. 3, p. 9). The constitution does not discriminate; therefore, all party members are governed by this document in the same manner.

Members have the right to be elected or appointed to any leadership position or any office within the party under the Party Banner. The constitution also allows members to freely take part in the meetings they are entitled to attend. Similarly, should there be activities where a member requires clarification or wishes to contribute to discussions, they are free to do so. Also, members may question or criticise constructively and through following the right procedures of the party, other members of the party, party officials or actions of government (BDP. Const. art, 12.2, 12. 3, p. 9). This means that those doing so should not be seen to be undermining the President's authority should he/she be the one being questioned or criticised. The principle is that no one in the party should be immune to criticism.

According to the organisation's principles, all officials of the party are to be elected democratically through a vote. Due to the participatory nature of the party's political system, its officials are answerable to its members and organs, and all decisions at any level are to be taken democratically (BDP. Const. art, 16.1, 16.2, 16.4, p. 9). Unlike the SWAPO Party's congress, which takes place at five-year intervals, the one for the BDP takes place every two years. The Congress is the Supreme National Policymaking Organ of the Party and is the platform where the president and members of the central committee are elected. Their election is through a secret ballot (BDP.

Const. art, 16.1, 16.2, p. 9). This being the case, any other form of choosing members of the central committee would thus be unconstitutional.

The party's president is elected by secret ballot at the National Congress called by the central committee during the general election year. Before the Congress, each region may nominate and submit one name of an individual seeking to contest the election. Similarly, individuals who seek to stand for election may also submit their names. When the party is in power, and a vacancy of president opens up, the vice-president takes over as party president and head of state, but if the party is not in power, the chairperson of the party becomes the president of the party (BDP. Const. art, 29.1, 29.2, 29.3, 29.3.4, 29.3.5, p. 27-28). This is because the party does not have a vice-president. Only the country has a vice-president who is nominated by the president and voted by parliament. The problem is that the president chooses the person he deems fit for the position, and this has caused friction within the BDP.

### **1.3 Research Aim**

The study's main aim was to establish the extent to which the leadership succession systems of the SWAPO Party of Namibia and the BDP of Botswana are influenced by chieftaincy and the possible implications for the future of democratic governance in these two countries in particular and Africa in general.

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

Drawing from the stated aim of the study above, the specific objectives of the present study were:

1. To establish how the governing parties of Namibia and Botswana prepare for their leadership succession.
2. To establish the role of chieftaincy in influencing party politics in both Namibia and Botswana.
3. To establish if there is any typology that can be discerned by analysing the SWAPO Party and BDP.
4. To recommend the way forward regarding the theme of the study.

## 1.5 Research Questions

For the aforementioned objectives to be achieved, the study purported to address the following questions:

1. How do the governing parties in Namibia and Botswana handle the issue of succession?
2. To what extent does chieftaincy influence the leadership succession systems of the SWAPO Party in Namibia and the BDP in Botswana?
3. Are there any similarities and differences between the SWAPO Party and BDP in terms of leadership succession?

## 1.6 Problem Statement

Namibia and Botswana are among countries renowned for their healthy constitutional democratic systems in Africa. This is because they both have so far been able to hold credible, free and fair elections, as well as smooth leadership transitions as per their national constitutions discussed above. Since Namibia's independence in 1990 and since Botswana's independence in 1966, both countries have been under the rulership of the same political parties, the SWAPO Party in Namibia and the BDP in Botswana. Paradoxically, despite their healthy democracies, these governing parties have experienced factional battles in the past due to what some current and former members have described as a lack of intra-party democracy, with claims of the stifling of debate and presidents having preferred individuals to succeed them being the bone of contention.

The handpicking of a successor is synonymous with the chieftaincy where leaders assume power as a result of their primordial right, the rest of the polity has no say on who gets to lead them. In chieftaincies, there is very little debate (if any at all) as to who the successor should be. Mostly, it is culturally uncharacteristic for subjects to engage in a debate with the chief. The chief's word is final, and any contending view from the subjects is perceived as a sign of disrespect. Yet, in a democratic order, debating is among the core features of the system. However, in most cases, especially when it comes to the issue of succession within a political party, those with different views and choices from those of the party leader are seen as being disloyal both to the party and its leader and end up being alienated. Therefore, the primary aim of this study is to determine the extent to which the leadership succession systems of the SWAPO Party and the BDP party are influenced by chieftaincy. It is envisaged that such a comparative analysis will paint a broader

picture of the relationship between the two governance systems, which are chieftaincy and democracy.

## **1.7 Structure of the Dissertation**

This study is divided into six chapters, organised as follows:

### **Chapter One: Introduction and Background to the Study**

This chapter has outlined an overview of the study before focusing on the historical background of Namibia's SWAPO Party and Botswana's BDP. It has also discussed the two parties' constitutions as well as Rules and Procedures concerning leadership succession. The study's aim and objectives, as well as research questions have also been presented in this chapter. The chapter has also given an overview of the problem, which states that despite Namibia and Botswana being applauded as among countries with healthy constitutional democratic systems in Africa, their intra-party democratic processes have been questioned by some.

### **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

This chapter will address the study's fundamental analytical framework, looking at concepts of leadership, political leadership, leadership succession, power and chieftaincy. The chapter will also discuss the relationship between traditional leaders and their elected counterparts before looking at the literature on the experiences of Botswana and Namibia concerning the influence of cultural practices on democratic practices. The chapter will then discuss the rationale of the study before the conclusion.

### **Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework**

Because the study focuses on democratic states and looks at their governing parties' intra-democratic processes, the research will be grounded on the Democratic theory. Particular emphasis will be put on the types and principles of democracy such as direct democracy, participatory democracy and representative democracy. Importantly, criticisms levelled against this theory will be discussed, and justification for using the theory despite those criticisms shall be provided.

## **Chapter Four: Research Design and Methodology**

Chapter three will cover research design and methodology. This will entail describing how the study was carried out. Issues such as population, sample, data collection and procedure, data analysis and research ethics shall be addressed. Any challenges experienced during the data collection phase and how such challenges were either minimised or dealt with shall also be covered in this chapter.

## **Chapter Five: Research Findings and Analysis**

This chapter will present and discuss the findings of the study. It will also analyse the data collected so that it could be more comfortable for the reader to understand it better. The analysis will focus on issues of leadership, power, succession, representation, and participation in an ideal democratic system, compared to those in the SWAPO Party and BDP, as well as in a chieftaincy governance system. What the parties practice will be weighed against what is outlined in their constitutions.

## **Chapter Six: Conclusion and Recommendations**

Following the presentation and analysis of the data in Chapter 5, the concluding chapter will achieve a dual aim. Firstly, it will pull the entire dissertation together by reiterating the key findings of the study or by emphasising the study's key points. Secondly, it will make recommendations which will be informed by the findings presented in Chapter 5. The recommendations will take two forms. Some will specifically draw from the study itself with the view to suggest what needs to be done in order to improve the current practice. The other set of recommendations will be broad-focusing on the gaps which future studies on the same theme should address to fill the gaps which the present study could not fill.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

Although at independence both the SWAPO Party and the BDP adopted democracy as the political system they were going to use within their parties, and at government level, there was no period where they attempted to abolish chieftaincy in their respective countries. Instead, they recognised the chiefs and kings and created institutions in the form of traditional authorities to ensure that the two systems co-existed. In this regard, Namibia established a Council of Traditional Leaders, whose primary purpose is to advise the president of the country on the control and utilisation of communal land (Council of Traditional Leaders Act, 13, 1997, p. 2). Botswana, on the other hand, integrated the two systems by creating a House of Chiefs, which also advises the government and the Parliament (Proctor, 1968, p. 59).

The two political parties have presidents as their leaders, while a traditional authority is under the leadership of a chief or a king. According to Namibia's Traditional Authority Act of 25 of 2000 (p. 2), a chief is the "supreme leader of a traditional community" residing within a particular communal area who has been recognised by the government according to the laws of the land. The difference in the way the leaders ascend to power in the two systems, however, is that the president is voted into office by members of the party either through direct participation or through representation, while chiefs and kings assume office by virtue of being born into primordial families. Therefore, since these systems co-exist in the countries governed by the SWAPO Party and BDP, this study's aim (as outlined in the introduction of this dissertation) is to establish the extent to which the leadership succession systems of these two parties are influenced by chieftaincy.

Against this background, the present chapter gives a conceptual understanding of terms such as leadership, leadership succession planning, power and chieftaincy. The chapter also explores the relationship between political office bearers and members of traditional authorities. The last part of the chapter briefly looks at what the literature on succession in Botswana says, focusing particularly on which political system adapted the other in terms of succession between the pre-

independent Tswana political culture and the post-independence democratic political culture in the case of Botswana as well as the Basotho culture during the same periods.

## **2.2 Literature Review**

### **2.2.1 Leadership**

From a general perspective, leadership is undoubtedly an essential aspect of any organisation. Good leadership can take an organisation or institution to greater heights, while poor leadership can break or impede an organisation's growth. Leadership is widely described as a complex concept, which only became widely used in the early nineteenth century, particularly in the literature about the political influence and control of the British Parliament. According to Bass and Stogdill (1990, p. 6), since then, studies on leadership have become imperative because organisations' successes or failures are dependent on the leader. Despite its many definitions, "leadership has been conceived as the focus of group processes, as a matter of personality, as a matter of inducing compliance, as the exercise of influence, as particular behaviours, as a form of persuasion, as a power relation, as an instrument to achieve goals and as many combinations of these definitions" (Bass & Stogdill, 1990, p. 11).

This means that a leader should have a combination of these attributes in order to minimise conflict and ensure an organisation or institution's growth. To be called a leader, one has to have a strong influence that changes others' behaviour. For an organisation to experience positive change and success, the goals to be achieved through the power and wisdom of the leader should be those of the organisation and not of an individual. However, in most cases, some leaders with these attributes abuse their power and influence and start tilting processes towards the achievement of their individual goals, something contrary to one of the fundamental features of democracy, which is about carrying out the will of the people.

Moreover, leadership with the traits identified by Bass and Stogdill (1990, p. 11), tends to create a gap between the leader and followers, with the leader beginning to be individualistic and not being part of the collective (Douglass, 2017, p. 387). Douglass also argues that leadership is a shared and complementary process for the attainment of change that has a positive impact. One could, therefore, argue that if a change of leadership in an organisation brings about infighting and divisions, which even lead to an organisation splitting, then that would not be a positive move.



Moreover, a leader is someone who should have a vision and be able to see the bigger picture. Holding a top position does not necessarily make one a leader. A visionary leader should be able to have an idea of the consequences of their decisions for an organisation (What is leadership? 2006, p. 456). In a democratic political organisation, the will of the people should come first and should be respected. Things should be done differently from a traditional authoritative set-up where, in most cases, what the chief or king believes is right should be done because there was no majority rule.

According to Avolio and Bass (1991) cited in Zagoršek, Dimovski and Škerlavaj (2009, pp. 147-148), there are three main types of leadership behaviour, namely, *laissez-faire* (non-leadership), transformational and transactional leadership. *Laissez-faire* is a passive form of leadership where a leader applies a hands-off approach and instead relies on delegating responsibilities to other members. With this leadership style, a leader avoids taking responsibility, surrendering their authority and abnegating taking decisions. Put differently, this sort of leadership type is referred to as non-leadership. However, in a political or traditional authority setting where power is a crucial factor, this type of leadership does not apply.

A party or traditional leader might have deputies, who assist them, but they cannot do as they please. They mostly have to carry the leader's instructions. In most political organisations, followers do what is required of them in order to be recognised by the leader because the leaders will reward them with positions due to their obedience. This kind of style is where a leader rewards those who perform according to their requirements and where those who have divergent views or are seen as opposing the leader are punished. It is referred to as transactional leadership. With this kind of leadership, followers carry out instructions out of fear of punishment and to benefit materially or psychologically through job security (Zagoršek, Dimovski & Škerlavaj, 2009, p. 148). This political clientelism is prevalent among leaders who want to remain in power or those with a specific candidate they want to succeed them. A leader receives support for their plans and rewards those who support such plans with positions and career security.

This is unlike transactional leadership where the leader does most of the thinking for the followers. With the transformational leadership system, the followers are encouraged to think on their own and come up with new ways of moving an organisation forward. Transformational leadership is



most suitable for a democratic organisation. Instead of using patronage politics and rules to ensure that followers toe the line, leaders applying transformational leadership can motivate, build the followers' trust and loyalty as well as admiration in them. They can achieve this by aligning their interests to those of the entire organisation and its membership. The building of relationships through a shared vision, values and ideas is the focal point of transformational leadership. This ensures that everyone has a similar understanding and followers form and feel that they are part of the change process (Zagoršek, Dimovski & Škerlavaj, 2009, p. 148). This is a leadership style that seeks to unite an organisation as it enables followers also take part in an organisation's decision-making process in the quest for positive change.

Additionally, there are other leadership styles such as autocratic leadership, bureaucratic leadership, charismatic leadership and democratic leadership. Autocratic leaders have much power over their followers. It is a leadership style where the leader takes decisions unilaterally, and the rest should abide or only implement. Autocratic leadership is associated with the military where those in the top structure make decisions, which should be implemented without any delay. For some, this style of leadership can be useful because there are no consultations when it comes to making decisions and therefore no delays in implementation. However, its downside is that followers can bare bitter feelings of resentment at their leader and become rebellious over time. Bureaucratic leaders, on the other hand, follow the rules and are uncompromising in ensuring that their followers strictly follow procedures. Although it is not a recommended style in organisations that embrace flexibility and creativity, some leaders prefer this style because they attain their position by upholding rules (Manktelow & Carlson, 2013, p. 2).

Charismatic leadership is similar to transactional leadership in some way. It is a leadership style where leaders motivate their followers through their ability to make them excited and committed. However, charismatic leaders always become the centre of the organisation, and for them, the focus is on themselves. Therefore, their followers can begin to think that if the leader leaves the organisation, then it would collapse (Manktelow & Carlson, 2013, p. 3). This kind of leadership makes leaders only to disregard those of the organisation. Lastly, Manktelow and Carlson (2013, p. 3), assert that, with democratic or participative leadership, the leader only makes the final decision because it is a style where the followers are involved in the decision-making process. It is a leadership style where the results are always right.

### 2.2.2 Political Leadership

Most leaders in Africa tend to be attached to leadership positions, and this becomes a challenge when it is time for them to leave the office. Most of those who leave in line with the constitution anoint their successors. These would mostly be people they are comfortable with, such as close political allies, friends or family members, giving an impression that they would want to continue to influence the running of the affairs of the party and the state. Alternatively, they would do it for reasons of security in cases where their tenure could have been marred by controversy. This is usually referred to as ensuring “soft landing”. From a general perspective, a political leader is someone tasked with the responsibility to lead a political organisation. This entails ensuring, among other things, that its constitution is upheld. Political leadership is a concept often dependent on historical, institutional and cultural contexts. It is described as the manner of conduct of those with authority. Political leaders are influential in everything to such an extent that even external factors seeking to influence processes within a party go through them. Moreover, they have the power to change the rules of the game and determine how and who plays (Rotberg, 2014, p. 243). Through their conduct, what they say and how they think can influence a good number of people they lead (Teles, 2015, p. 23).

Owing to their power and influence, political leaders can remodel the political space so that their chances of political survival and their other needs can be met (Király, Köves, & Balázs, 2017, p. 135). In Australia, political leadership is measured on policy. For a political leader to win or lose an election, it all depends on the success or failure of their policy. Followers do not support a leader because they have been coerced into doing so or through political clientelism. Conversely, they vote for a leader based on the leader’s capability (both assumed and real) to deliver to them and solve their problems. However, despite this principle, those in leadership positions still put efforts to reorganise the government or structures of the party to suit and meet their needs, taking advantage of processes provided for in the constitution (Kemp, 2008, p. 203).

According to Rotberg (2014, p. 243), leaders should not impose their will on their people by forcing them to do what they would not want to do. Rather, they should be persuasive through their policies so that through their own will and conviction, the followers can endorse the leaders’ suggested policies and goals. In principle, political leaders should not be divisive, and they should

instead identify an organisation's shared goals and strive to ensure that collectively, members of the organisation work towards achieving those goals and making sure that unity is maintained. As such, in their decision-making, shared goals and the interest of the organisation should be the main focus. This relegates to the periphery, ethnic, small group or sectarian interests (Rotberg, 2014, p. 246). This can help to ensure that issues of one's origin, tribe and race cannot form part of a political leader's thinking when dealing with party issues. Their foremost interest should be about the party's members as a whole without having favourite individuals or groups due to personal interests.

The centralisation of power, presidentialism, clientelism and the use of resources to win support characterise political leadership in most African countries. According to the presidentialism style of political leadership, democratic processes in an organisation are a mere formality. Outcomes of these supposedly legitimate and democratic processes are *fait accompli* (Van Wyk, 2007, p. 12). With presidentialism, the leader has unlimited powers, meaning that leaders may exercise their power in a manner they deem fit without being called to order or being opposed. This is mostly the case in political organisations where a leader is highly revered and followers only look up to that leader for decisions. As such, some leaders tend to use this power to elevate into positions of authority those who endorse their ideas and side-line those with divergent views (Arriola, 2009, p. 1341). As soon as those who oppose the incumbent leader have been rendered outcasts, the leader can begin to do what he likes and whatever he says is the final word as is the case in most chieftaincies where a chief may even take decisions without consultation. Questioning their decision is deemed disrespect of authority, and there could be dire consequences or repercussions for doing so. In such circumstances, Councils' views are ignored.

According to Király, Köves and Balázs, (2017, pp. 135-136), the main driving factor among political leaders is to stay in power by all means necessary. Therefore, party leaders become selective in terms of who they listen to and involve in their decision-making. Political leaders then avoid listening to various views because this can bring about more deliberations and consultations and a kind of leadership, which is not centralised in one individual. This approach ensures that leaders surround themselves with people only willing to listen and endorse their decisions without opposing them. These followers who are ready to do anything for a political leader in power, who in most cases would have been the ones supporting the leader's bid to the high office, are what

Király, Köves and Balázs (2017, p. 136), refer to as the “winning coalition”. This approach creates factionalism within a party with the “winning coalition” seen as the leader’s people, while those with different views are seen as being disrespectful and disloyal. For political parties with a central committee and a politburo, the majority in such committees would be the “winning coalition” to make it easier for the leader to have his decisions passed and carried out without resistance. Those in the minority tend to fall out of favour and are frustrated by the “winning coalition” causing divisions, which at times lead to suspensions and expulsions. In a nutshell, as Dion (1968, p. 2) aptly reminds us, political leadership represents just one form of leadership. It does not exhaust the discussion or definition of leadership in general.

### **2.2.3 Leadership Succession**

Leadership succession is a global phenomenon. In Africa, there is a battle to have smooth leadership successions. This applies to both those with or without a succession plan. A succession plan aims to ensure an organisation's continuity (Huang, 1999, p. 609). Huang (1999, p. 609). Thus, succession planning is a process where individuals with ‘critical skills’ are chosen and placed into an organisation's leadership position. However, in most political organisations in Africa, the nomination of leaders to succeed those whose terms of office are coming to an end always becomes a conundrum. Those who support the incumbent leader always argue that the leader is better placed to know who among his followers can take over and steer the ship in the right direction. For them, this is part of succession planning. However, those with other favourite candidates always argue that when an incumbent anoints someone to succeed them that is not democracy. In doing so, the incumbent might have something to hide and would, therefore be running away from being held accountable. They argue that in a democratic system, succession should not be similar to the hereditary system of chieftaincies. Succession is a term that originates from the epoch of monarchies and refers to the substitute of one ruler with another. Succession is defined as a change in leadership from one individual to another (Govea, & Holm, 1998, p. 132).

In chieftaincies, succession followed and still follows a bloodline. It is always known who the next chief or king would be. While the chief or king plays a pivotal role in deciding who the heir apparent is, his family has a role to play in this regard. Although leadership succession in a democratic system differs, political leaders also anoint successors and can successfully designate

them. This kind of transfer of power mostly takes place between the incumbent leader and his deputy. Apart from the leader coercing the followers to vote for the deputy, the deputy also rides on the wave of the successes and popularity of the leader. Having been part of the presidential administration already gives the deputy a competitive edge or advantage because the voters associate them with that administration (Mattei, & Weisberg, 1994, pp. 495-496). Other organisations justify this kind of succession as crucial for continuity. This means that a particular candidate who is already the deputy is given a competitive advantage over others, primarily when the outgoing leader openly supports and campaigns for them.

Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999), cited in Hargreaves (2005, p. 163), argue that, until succession planning is done fairly and correctly, the process will be mismanaged. In line with this, Rothwell (2001, p.6) suggests that succession planning should, therefore, be a continuous programme at all levels, intended at ensuring that there is no vacuum in an organisations' key positions. This means that it should be an outlined process, which everyone in the organisation understands so that when the time for a change of leadership arrives, there is no element of surprise among the members and chances of infighting are reduced. Although there is a general belief, especially in African politics, that the issue of succession is always attached to self-interest, this scenario is not always the case. Other people argue that most leaders always have favourite individuals to succeed them because they would have used their office to amass wealth illegally and would, therefore, want a leader to take over, who would protect them and their interests.

Julius Nyerere, the former president of Tanzania renowned for creating a stable state in a politically volatile region, is applauded for always putting the people and the country's interests first. He was also known for being flexible and able to adjust to change even if he did not agree with the direction of such change, but he also had a favourite person to succeed him when his term of office ended. Nyerere showed no interest in amassing wealth or aggrandisement, but he wanted Salim Salim to take over from him when he left the office. However, he later dumped Salim and recommended Ali Hassan Mwinyi to the ruling party Chama Cha Mapinduzi to replace him, citing many leadership qualities he saw in him (Ingram, 2007, pp. 71-71). This means that despite being a consultative and selfless leader, Nyerere still saw the need to recommend his successor, instead of letting the party's rank and file to decide on their own without his influence. This case raises the fundamental question; what influences this behaviour among most African leaders?

According to Govea and Holm (1998, p. 130), leadership succession can be discerned into two types. The first is the institutionalised succession system where there are rules and procedures by which the change of leadership should be carried out. For the succession to be considered legitimate, it depends on how the process was followed and how the set rules and procedures were adhered to. With this system, the leadership transition is mostly peaceful, although in most cases, those on the opposite side would accept the outcome grudgingly. This means that as long as the succession process is seen as having conformed to the set rules and procedures, the outcome will be considered legitimate. It is a system used in democratic countries. However, with the other system, institutionalisation lacks. Decisions on succession lay in the hands of the leader who has the supreme powers. With such powers, the leader also determines the legitimacy of the succession process and uses a set of policies. In this system, opposition groups have no bargaining rights, they are not accommodated, and there is no compromise (Govea, & Holm, 1998, p. 130). This system can be equated to the succession system in a chieftaincy where issues of succession are not open for non-members of the royal family. What the chief and those close to him decide in terms of succession is not negotiable. The argument in literature is that the leadership succession process in a democratic system should not mirror that of chieftaincy, which is antithetical to the values and fundamental principles of democracy.

#### **2.2.4 Political Power**

In a democratic system, the party's 'rank and file' are regarded as the most powerful and important actors because of their ability to use the ballot to install and remove leaders. However, in most political parties in Africa, this works in reverse. Leaders tend to be the most powerful while the followers are reduced to, and become comfortable with the role of being mere worshippers and recipients of directives. This has led to a belief among political commentators and scholars that rules and institutions in Africa do not matter because some political leaders do what they want regardless of what the rules and institutions dictate. Put differently, instead of the rules and institutions shaping the leaders' behaviour, the latter break the rules and manipulate institutions to suit their agenda (Posner, & Young, 2007, p. 126). This means that because of the power vested in them by the people, the leaders can change the rules or use procedures set by institutions to their advantage and not necessarily that of the collective.



This is referred to by French and Raven (1959, p. 151) as 'power and influence', a two-sided occurrence related to one another. This means that power is a relationship between people. Moreover, in order for one to be powerful, they require various components such as an apparatus to give that power. Those would be people, rules and institutions. When a leader has these by their side, they can have a hold over the subject (Dahl, 1957, p. 203). Despite a lack of agreement on the specific definition of power from the various interpretations of what it is, a general understanding is that it is an individual or a collective's ability to get something done to achieve their goals in the midst of opposition or resistance from other individuals or groups (Parsons, 1963, p. 232). In order to understand the relationship between power and influence, French and Raven (1959, p. 151) look at the effects of power by considering what influences the giver of power and what influences the 'reactions' of the receiver. Although there could be other bases of power, French and Raven refer only to five, which they believe are common and most important. It is these five bases of power (reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, referent power and expert power) that this study also briefly focuses on.

#### **2.2.4.1 Reward Power and Coercive Power**

As self-explanatory, reward power is based on one seeking to exert power's aptness to reward the receiver of the power. The muscle of this power lies in the amount of reward the recipient of the power perceives the giver can mediate for them, while at the same time, the one exerting power should have the ability to mediate the reward as perceived by the recipient (French, & Raven, 1959, pp. 151-152). For example, in a political setup, a leader could make people do his or her will because they want to be rewarded through cabinet appointments because they know the one exerting power/leader, can do so. There is a thin line between reward and coercive power. While the former is about rewarding recipients of power by the one who exerts it, the latter is about compelling the recipients of power to conform. Failure to do so means that they will be punished.

However, despite the thin line between these two bases of power, there is still a variance in that, reward power promotes the attraction of the recipient of power to the one who exerts power due to the rewards, while the opposite is the probable result with coercive power. The strength of coercive power depends on the severity of the "negative valence" of the consequence as a result of nonconformity as well as the perceived possibility that the receiver of power escapes punishment

by doing what they are compelled to do (French, & Raven, 1959, p. 152). This means that although the recipient of the power may do what they are compelled to do, they are likely to rebel against the one who exerts power.

#### **2.2.4.2 Legitimate Power**

Legitimate power is defined as the power based on the recipient's norms and values, which compel them to believe that the one who exerts power has the right to determine, influence and prescribe their behaviour. For example, cultural values are a basis of legitimate power where the recipient of power believes that according to the norms, values and dictates of the culture, there should be someone in a community who determines behaviour. Another basis for legitimate power is the acceptance of social structure. This could be a structure of an organisation or religious group. The recipient accepts the authority given to the leadership of such an organisation's hierarchy (French, & Raven, 1959, p. 153). This suggests that due to that acceptance, followers will believe and accept whatever the leader says because according to their internal values and norms that is how things should be done. In other words, what the chief says should be obeyed, what the clergyman says in a religious group, should be done and what a president says in a political organisation should be accepted because of the authority they have in the hierarchy of those structures.

#### **2.2.4.3 Referent Power**

This power is dependent on the recipient's level and degree of identification and relationship with the one exerting power. This works more based on attraction. Therefore, if the one who exerts power appeals to the recipient and the recipient is allured to them, they would want to be associated with them. Similarly, if it is a group with the power, which the recipient identifies with, then they would be attracted to it and would become a member. Moreover, if there is already a relationship that exists between the one who exerts power and the recipient, then the recipient would keep the status quo because of their desire to be like and be associated with the one with the power. The recipient idolises the one who exercises power over him or her. Therefore, the more the recipient feels attached to the one who exerts power, the stronger the referent power would be (French, & Raven, 1959, pp. 154-155). One would thus assume that when such a relationship between a follower and a leader exists, the follower would be vulnerable because his desire to be like the leader would open him up to any influence because this desire for oneness clouds their judgement.



#### **2.2.4.4 Expert Power**

Naturally, an expert is someone considered to have superior knowledge in a certain area. Therefore, the perception of the recipient of the power about the knowledge and expertise of the one who exerts power forms the basis of expert power. Its strength differs on the perceived knowledge the recipient ascribes to the one who exerts power in a certain domain (French, & Raven, 1959, p. 155). This means that when someone shows knowledge, ability and skill in a certain area, those who follow them will respect and listen to them. For example, a leader can easily influence a community in a certain area or a group because they believe that the leader was put in that position because of their knowledge, ability and skill. Therefore, most of the things the leader says will be perceived as true. In a nutshell, different leaders will use the power they have differently, but in a democratic system, the power is in the hands of the people hence it is referred to as a rule by the majority and not the minority or an individual.

### **2.3 Chieftaincy**

A chief is a leader of a traditional authority of an area. The individual assumes the role by virtue of their ancestry and is appointed according to custom. This means that the individual has traditional authority over those who reside in that leader's area of jurisdiction. Chieftaincy is hereditary, and this makes the chieftaincy institution a non-democratic way of governance where downward accountability does not exist (Chieftaincy and Kingship in South Africa, 2016, n.p.). Chieftaincy is not exclusive to the African continent, but it is a system of governance, which is also practised in other parts of the world. As such, this section will look at the practices of this system in the Island of Tikopia situated in the south-western Pacific Ocean, before focusing on chieftaincy in Africa.

#### **2.3.1 Chieftaincy from a Global Perspective**

Tikopia is a small island on the south-western Pacific Ocean and forms part of the Solomon Islands of Melanesia. The Tikopians are among the few people in that part of the world who have preserved their cultural norms and tradition. The island's political system is fundamentally based on the institution of chieftaincy. As is the case with most communities using this system of governance, only those who belong to the lineage of royalty in Tikopia can ascend to the throne, making

succession hereditary. Moreover, chieftaincy is primogeniture, meaning it is only restricted to the male part of the family. It is not rotational, making the term of office unlimited. The chief may only be replaced upon his death or when they willingly step down. In the event of these two phenomena, there are always considerations of who becomes the next chief. Opinions among ordinary people would always differ in terms of the qualities they look for in the new leader due to their personal preferences (Firth, 1960, pp. 161-168).

The chiefs and their families also have a generalisation when it comes to the issue of the heir apparent's qualities. However, the common understanding among them is the customary practice and principle that the eldest son in birth order from a legitimate wife is the heir to the throne. Squabbles do arise in cases where the chief opts to choose someone other than his elder or eldest son. In a case where the eldest son is considered too young to take over as the regent, a chief plays a more significant role in the choosing of his successor. An example is given in the case of the Tikopia community where a chief lay on his deathbed and was read names of possible successors so that he could pick the one he wanted as his successor (Firth, 1960, pp. 161-168).

Interestingly, despite the apparent fact of primogeniture, the anointed heir is not guaranteed automatic succession. The successor is still chosen through an election process, which would still elect the person who was chosen by the chief or meets the requirements discussed earlier. The chief's powers are wide-ranging, and he imposes his limitations to his authority. A chief is considered by the community as superior and can criticise and reprimand commoners when not happy about something. Generally, members of the royal family consider commoners as inferior, unimportant beings (Firth, 1960, pp. 165-172).

In Satawal Island in Micronesia, chieftaincy is also an established form of governance. Various clans ranked according to their time of arrival on the island make up the Satawal society. The heads of the three clans believed to have been the first to settle on the island are the chiefs of that society, while members of the other clans except for the Sawsát (fourth arrival on the island) are regarded as commoners. The chieftaincy of the Satawal society is also hereditary. Moreover, the authority to organise island and inter-island activities is reserved for the chiefs. The three chiefs and the head of the Sawsát form the chiefs' council, which takes decisions on the island. The commoners are informed of the decisions at a meeting called by the council. However, the commoners are not

allowed to speak at the meeting until asked to do so (Sudo, 2006, pp. 58-59). This treatment and that of the commoners in Tikopia suggests that they have no opinion because as inferior beings, they would hardly even get a platform to interact with those belonging to the royal family. Another clear indication here is that commoners have no say on whom their next chief should become because customary rules dictate that those belonging to the royal families handle the issue of succession and election.

### **2.3.2 Chieftaincy in Africa**

Chieftaincy has been part of African states since the pre-colonial era. This institution is still powerful and influential among many communities in most African countries today. As is the case with Tikopia, in most African countries, there are only minor differences in the way things are done. A chief of a community is considered as a superior being and regarded as the father head of that community (Mbajjorgu, 2017, p. 25). After gaining their independence, many African states such as Ghana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and many others attempted to abolish chieftaincy because they saw the institution as an impediment to democracy and nation-building. However, this could not succeed because of how grounded in the communal societies this institution was. Politicians realised that chiefs were crucial in winning them the rural vote because of the respect they commanded among their communities. According to Morapedi (2010, p. 215), most African states retained the chieftaincy institution and were now working together with it in administering communal areas. For example, in West Africa, chiefs provide judiciary services, allocate land and are responsible for raising taxes. Before independence, these were functions that made chieftaincy a target of the colonial authorities.

As such, chiefs who were previously accountable and answerable to their people were made part of the colonial administration and the powers of the polity to hold chiefs accountable were abolished. In some cases, a group of headmen who would choose someone befitting attributes of a chief choose chiefs democratically. However, to suit their agenda, colonists changed this. Their main intention was to impose an indirect rule (Palagashvili, 2018, p. 278). Thus, across most African states, the system of succession is similar to that of Tikopia. They follow strictly the system of male primogeniture, where the chief's eldest son from the main wife succeeds him (Mbajjorgu, 2017, p. 25). Because of the power they have over their subjects, questioning of the chief's

decisions is considered disrespect for authority. Democracy warns against allowing an individual too much power because they can quickly turn into a tyrant, sparking a constitutional crisis.

### **2.3.3 Relations between Traditional and Political Leaders**

The relationship between traditional and political leaders can be described as bitter and sweet. Traditional leadership is one of Africa's oldest institutions and has stood the test of time, having been in existence in pre-colonial times, lived through colonialism and survived in the post-colonial era. Adewuni and Egwurude (1985), cited in Keulder (2010, p. 152), define traditional leaders as "individuals occupying communal political leadership positions sanctified by cultural mores and values, and enjoying the legitimacy of particular communities to direct their affairs." When Africa was colonised, the colonists chose to indirectly rule over the natives through their chiefs, especially in the former British colonies. Traditional leaders were empowered to collect taxes, and they were given powers to allocate land and serve as magistrates for traditional courts. However, at independence, many states took off some of the traditional authorities' powers, while some abolished the chieftaincy institution altogether (Baldwin, 2014, p. 254).

In the countries where the institution of chieftaincy continues to exist, the relationship between those who supported the political leadership in power is sound. This is because of the two trade resources and votes. Political leaders give resources and materials to the chiefs for their own use and distribution to their communities. Moreover, the chiefs mobilise their subjects to support the political leaders and their parties. In most cases, the traditional leader may not even need to compel their followers to support and vote any political party or leader, but the followers feel obliged to vote the political leader and organisation supported by their traditional leader for two reasons. First, culturally, the belief is that the chief's choices are always correct. Second, there is the fear that voting or showing support for someone else other than the one the leader supports might lead to them being deprived of the resources distributed by the political leadership through the chief (Baldwin, 2014, p. 257).

However, despite the harmonious relationship which exists between traditional and political leaders, there have been instances where traditional and political leaders have clashed due to what one could describe as the "two bulls in one kraal" scenario. This is not only exclusive to Africa. For example, in the Pacific societies of the federated states of Micronesia, Fiji, Marshal Islands,

Rotuma, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu among others, there has been a tussle for power between traditional and political leaders. This led to the chiefs and their subjects rising against the central authority and the state (White & Lindstrom, 1997, p.45).

In Namibia, from a distance, there seems to be a harmonious relationship between traditional leaders and elected leaders. However, a closer look gives a picture of a precarious harmony. As put by Keulder (2010, p. 162), there are at times conflict for power, status, prestige and wealth between traditional leaders and elected councillors with both claiming to be the rightful representatives of the local people. In Botswana, the situation is no different. There have also been conflicts between chiefs and government ministers, mostly attributed to the clash in the egos of the chief and the local government minister. For example, at some point, the Minister of Local Government, Lands and Housing suspended Chief Seepapitso of the Bangwaketse. The minister then appointed the chief's son and made him paramount chief (Sharma, 2003, p. 254). This summarises the fragility of the relationship between traditional leaders and their elected counterparts.

#### **2.4 The Botswana Experience: Morapedi and Maundeni's Perspectives**

In analysing the influence of chieftaincy in party politics in Botswana and Namibia, part of this study builds on Maundeni's (2005) analysis on "Succession to High Office: Tswana Culture and Modern Botswana Politics." Although the study mostly endorses the position adopted in Maundeni's study on Botswana, it in some instances departs from some of his conclusions, while focusing exclusively on internal party politics of the BDP especially on the issue of representation, and the "Big Man" syndrome of the party leader. Firstly, a look at Morapedi's (2005) position on the "Demise or Resilience, Customary Law and the Changing Order in Africa: The Case of Chieftaincy in Botswana." Although the institution of chieftaincy has somehow been weakened, it remains prevalent among rural communities. After Botswana's independence in 1966, the BDP used the institution as a "vote bank" because of the chiefs' popularity and influence among their people. Moreover, at the state level, there is a House of Chiefs as provided for in the constitution which advises the government on customary law and tradition. The House of Chiefs can summon ministers to answer questions and provide clarity on issues of concern. However, the government is not bound by decisions of the chiefs (Morapedi, 2005, pp. 185-186).

According to Morapedi (2005, p. 186), the role of the chieftaincy institution has changed as it tries to adapt to the post-independence political order and society's new ways of life. He argues that this is necessary if the institution is to remain relevant because some traditional practices have changed as people become more developed. As such, the roles of chiefs in these societies have also changed. Sekgoma (1998), cited in Morapedi (2005, p. 195) writes that after the independence of Botswana, the institution of chieftaincy "has been mobilising the rural population to ensure both the economic and political reproduction of a plural democratic state." For example, before and during colonialism, only men became chiefs among Setswana speaking group, but under the new political dispensation, a woman successfully claimed the throne, an indication that the chieftaincy had adapted to the new social and political order (Morapedi, 2005, 192). This suggests that to a certain extent, politics has had an impact on chieftaincy and has changed the institution so that it begins to conform to the fundamental principles of democracy.

However, Maundeni (2005, pp. 81-85) contends that the Tswana political culture rules are the ones upon which modern democracy in Botswana was built primarily with regards to leadership succession. According to him, the Tswana practice of limiting the determination of the chief to the royal family is similar to what happens with the determination of the country's president where only a group of elected representatives in parliament elects the head of state. This, Maundeni argues, does not open political participation to the ordinary people, thus excluding them from choosing their leader, but it somewhat restricts this process to one institution. Botswana has an automatic succession system where the president chooses a vice-president, who automatically becomes head of state when the incumbent dies, resigns or retires. Therefore, the vice-president does not go through a full democratic process of election because this is left to members of parliament to decide. This system is adopted from the Tswana political culture where chieftaincy is hereditary and is presided over by a group of royal family members and not open to the whole polity (Maundeni, 2005, p. 88).

In addition to this exclusivity in the voting process, only political leaders in Botswana are allowed to contest for the position of president of the country. This means that chiefs, private individuals, civil society, church and business leaders are not allowed to stand for the position of president because they do not belong to a political party, which could have fielded parliamentary candidates. The leader of Botswana becomes a president on the basis that their party won majority seats in



parliament. At the political party level, contestation for party leadership by senior politicians is always avoided to avert factionalism. This in itself is a limitation to internal party democracy. Powerful and popular councillors within the BDP can serve for a long time and can even choose a successor upon stepping down. Therefore, both the BDP and the state have adopted succession practices of the Tswana political culture. After all, the first leader of the BDP and the first president of an independent Botswana was a chief while most of the party's leaders came from a royal background (Maundeni, 2005, pp. 88-90).

## **2.5 The Rationale of the Study**

The literature looking particularly at what influences succession practices within political parties in Africa is scant. Although there is some on Botswana, very little focus is placed on the governing parties in Botswana and Namibia. Mostly, the focus is always on succession at the level of the head of state. There seems to be little written about what influences the culture of choosing successors at the party level. This is despite the SWAPO Party and BDP governing countries renowned for championing democratic principles on the continent. Interestingly, these two parties have very different backgrounds. The SWAPO Party started as a liberation movement, which operated from outside the borders of the then South West Africa and now Namibia under a military culture, with its leaders and foot soldiers trained by the then communist states, and only transformed into a political party at Namibia's independence.

Meanwhile, the BDP was formed as a political party from the onset and did not require any form of transformation to become a democratic party of Botswana at independence. Despite these divergent backgrounds and the fact that the SWAPO Party does not have a constitutionally documented succession plan while the BDP has, the two still have similarities. This is in terms of how they handle the issue of succession, the roles or lack thereof of their rank and file in choosing their leaders, and the manner in which their leaders exert their power. It is for these reasons that the study sought to establish whether chieftaincy has an influence in these parties' manner of operations, especially given the fact that the institution of chieftaincy remains influential and popular among the majority of these countries' citizens.

## 2.6 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the literature review. It gave a conceptual understanding of terms such as leadership, leadership succession, power and chieftaincy. It also explored the relationship between political office bearers and members of traditional authorities before looking at the literature on succession in Botswana. The literature on leadership states that it is an essential aspect of any organisation. Lastly, the chapter discussed the rationale for this study. Having concluded this chapter, the next one focuses on the theoretical framework upon which this study is grounded.





## CHAPTER THREE

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 3.1 Introduction

A theoretical framework is a cluster of concepts that complement each other. It serves as the rudiment upon which knowledge for a research study is built. It serves as the skeletal frame for the justification of the study, the problem statement, purpose, significance, and the research questions. It is also an anchor for the literature review, the methods and analysis (Grant & Osanloo, 2014, p. 12). Moreover, a stronger and valid theoretical framework section helps the research to have a more positive impact on the literature and helps the reader to fully understand the paper (Sutton & Staw, 1995, p. 378). This part of the research locates the present study in a broader context. Theories are imperative because they "provide complex and comprehensive conceptual understandings of things that cannot be pinned down: how societies work, how organisations operate, why people interact in certain ways" (Reeves, Albert, Kuper, & Hodges, 2008, p. 631).

Theories help researchers to solve complicated matters by providing them with another perspective from which to draw parallels or divergences, serving as a framework within which they can conduct their analysis (Reeves, Albert, Kuper, & Hodges, 2008, p. 631). Similarly, Keynes (1936), cited in Heywood (2014, p. 53) states that theories are critical because they provide clarity and meaning to meaningless situations. By giving a structure, shape or meaning to a shapeless or meaningless situation, a theory helps one to understand how and why things happen in a particular manner. Also, not only are they essential for the description of a particular phenomenon, but theories are also necessary for "evaluation, interpretation and explanation. They are necessary for simplifying the world, widening and sharpening our perceptual field, defining our ethical horizons and providing a guide to action" Heywood (2014, p. 514).

As the search for knowledge increases, so have the theories. However, there is no theory that is better than the other. Different theories apply to a different phenomenon. For a theory to be considered a good one in social sciences, it should "correspond to reality, have explanatory power as well as parsimony and elegance, and it should have logical coherence" Heywood (2014, p. 520-522). Against this backdrop, there are several theories that could have applied to this study such

as constitutionalism, social constructivism, poststructuralism or postmodernism and post-colonialism. But, the study is anchored on the Democratic Theory due to the belief that it will be more helpful in the analysis of the extent to which, succession processes in the SWAPO Party and BDP, do mirror or not, those of chieftaincy and whether there is a hindrance to intra-party democratic processes. This chapter discusses the Democratic Theory on which the study is anchored, looking at its history, features, types and its criticisms.

### **3.2 Democratic Theory**

Democracy is a broad concept, which has multiple definitions. Developed by the Greeks around 500-400 BC, democracy is a type of government, which was conceived due to power struggles and leaders who executed those who were against their rule. It was also established to bring about equality among the people. According to Fleck and Hanssen (2006, p. 115-116), "democracy is a Greek word which means rule by the *demos*. *Demos* means people." These scholars assert that for a regime to be considered more democratic than another, then the most of that regime's population must influence policy by participating in decision-making processes. Proponents of democracy believe that the system has brought about equality, economic prosperity and peace. They believe that there would be no peace in the world if it were not for the democratic system. To avoid the problems that were caused by one person or group rule, they introduced a system of joint rulership (Haddox, 2016, p. 125). Advocates of this system of governance describe it as the fundamental element for civilisation, which originated in the West and has since spread to most parts of the world (Dunn, 2005, p. 209). Majority of political organisations have since subscribed to this ideology, and it is used widely as a system of governance in most countries.

Regardless of its many definitions, there is consensus among scholars that democracy fundamentally means that the power is with the people and they rule. However, this does not mean that they rule themselves. It simply means that they use the power they have to give legitimacy and mandate to their representatives to run state or government affairs to bring order to a state and its citizens. At the heart of a democratic system is the fact that this legitimacy is given to these representatives through regular, free and fair as well as competitive elections and participation. Elections are deemed free and fair in the sense that citizens can freely express their will through the ballot, and equally important, those who meet the constitution's requirements, are free to fairly

compete for those votes in electoral processes (Dunn, 2005, p. 208-210). Therefore, this means that unless prohibited by the constitution, no individual regardless of the office they hold, may prohibit anyone from exercising their right to elect a leader of their choice. Neither may an individual, organisation or government alienate someone because of their participation in what is supposed to be a free and fair as well as competitive electoral process. Doing so would not only be against the core values and principles of democracy but also borders on the contravention of the supreme law of the land.

Moreover, instead of democracy being only a system of government or ideology, it is a fundamental right, which people must enjoy under "freedom, equality, transparency and responsibility" (Democracy: Its Principles and Achievement, 2019, pp. IV-V). This means that political organisations and countries, which have embraced this system, should respect the will of the majority and not the will of individuals in positions of influence. Moreover, this means that under a democratic system, all people are equal, and therefore, no individual or group should be oppressive over others. Additionally, Owen (2003, p. 107) defines democracy as a form of governance where integrated members with a common interest are equal and can govern either by themselves or through other people and where matters of their interests as a collective demand joint rulership of these members. The point here is that all members of this unit are politically equal, and they rule equally. This requires consultation and consensus, and no individual is more important to take decisions on their behalf.

LI (2011, p. 274) theorises democracy into two models. He refers to the first as the "cooperation model." This one is premised on majority rule as a decision-making procedure. According to this model, when a decision over an issue of public good is to be taken, the view supported by the majority is applied. That decision becomes the entire unity's decision, including the minority, who were not in favour of such a view. The majority rule enjoys superiority because it is likely to be correct. Moreover, because it is seen as the will of the people, the people themselves are likely to comply without being forced to do so. According to Li (2011), a democratic regime is different from a despotic one because the latter uses minority rule where decisions are taken by an individual or a group of people and not based on majority agreement.

The second model is referred to as the completion model. According to this model, in a democracy, there should be "fair, peaceful and regular competition for public office." Because democracy is a rule for the people by the people, no one should monopolise power. The people possess the power, and they contract political power to those who win their support through elections to hold office for a specified period. Although this model also supports the majority principle, it differs from the first one on the principle of being an empowerment procedure and not a decision-making one (LI, 2011, p. 274). What is clear here according to both the cooperation and competition model is that, in a democratic system, the power is with the people and their interest comes first ahead of the interests of any individual. This promotes cooperation and ownership of decisions taken, as well as the power to take such decisions. Briefly, when power is centred in an individual or a group of people as is the case with the institution of chieftaincy, this is minority rule and not democracy.

According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (Democracy: Its Principles and Achievement, 2019, p. 7), despite its many meanings, democracy has fundamental rights, and it lists among others, "life, liberty, due process of law, equality as well as non-discrimination, freedom of expression and assembly." This suggests that democracy would be questionable if these fundamental rights would be missing in the process. For example, the democratic process would be questionable if a leader of an organisation would promote discrimination against specific individuals who want to contest for a position, or if those who express their opinion would be sidelined.

### **3.2.1 Principles of Democracy**

There are fundamental principles to which a democratic system should adhere to. The Inter-Parliamentary Union lists 27 of them. However, this study focuses on a few relevant to it. First, the respect for the plurality of views and the interest of the majority reign supreme in a democratic system across the world regardless of the communities' economic status, cultural, political and social backgrounds. Democracy has various experiences and "cultural particulars" without departing from internationally recognised principles, norms and standards (Democracy: Its Principles and Achievement, 2018, p. IV). This means that despite the kind of democracy in place within a given political party, the will of the people comes first. Despite how different societies and their implementation of the system is, its norms and standards cannot be compromised.

In a democratic system, the procedures by which power is attained, exerted and exchanged, should be done through free political competition or be a result of the people participating freely and fairly in those processes according to the prescribed laws. Democracy is premised on the rule of law and human rights; as such, everyone is equal before the law (Democracy: Its Principles and Achievement, 2018, p. V). This suggests that those in positions of power should not use the power leased to them to exclude or discriminate against other participants in the democratic process. Those in leadership positions should not trump the laws as if they are above it. Everyone in a democratic system is equal, and as such, processes should not be tilted to favour specific individuals and disadvantage others.

Institutions with a clearly defined mandate and which are well functioning are a vital part of a democratic system. There should also be rules and standards that are adhered to while its existence also depends on the will of the people who understand their rights and responsibilities within this system. As stated earlier in the chapter, one of the main principles of democracy is the allowance of people to express their will through free and fair elections at regular intervals (Democracy: Its Principles and Achievement, 2018, p. V). This means that those to whom the electorate lease the power, should wield it through the set rules and standards of this political system and not trump the rules while abusing institutions by using them to suit their interests. Meanwhile, people should be equipped with the knowledge to know what their liberties and what is expected of them in a democracy.

Transparency, norms, ethics and procedures are central to a democratic system. These should be in place and be implemented all the time. Additionally, regulations are essential in a democratic system because they guard against impartiality and discrimination of any individual or group. Moreover, conditions within a political organisation or government under a democratic system should be conducive for "participatory rights" in a democratic process. There should be no obstacles to impede this process. Finally, there should be freedom of opinion and expression. This entails having the right to express oneself without fear and interference from those in power, while the sharing and receiving of information without any barriers is also a fundamental principle of the democratic system (Democracy: Its Principles and Achievement, 2018, pp. VI-VII). This means that people must be allowed to air their views without fear of facing any negative consequences even though they may be opposing those in power. In a democratic system therefore,

people have and must be guaranteed certain fundamental rights, which they cannot be denied regardless on any situation. This is a universal norm and standard that should be applied in each country under a democratic political system.

### **3.3 Types of Democracy**

Although democracy has universal principles that each country using the system has to adhere to, there are different forms of this system practised differently in various countries around the world. This study focuses on only three of them, namely, Direct Democracy, Participatory Democracy and Representative Democracy, which is the most popular among them. These models of democracy are discussed in the section below.

#### **3.3.1 Direct Democracy**

Altman (2017, pp. 1208-1209) refers to democracy as an institutionalised process through which the citizenry contributes directly to policies or make their choices over issues that concern them through a secret ballot. Intermediaries do not exist in a direct democracy system, and a secret vote is one of its essential aspects. Some of the mechanisms of direct democracy are popular initiatives and referendums. Popular initiatives are used when decisions to change the status quo are to be made, while referendums become necessary when a decision is needed on whether to maintain the status quo. Similarly, Matsusaka (2005, p. 187) defines direct democracy as a process by which citizens do not have to rely on representatives, but have a direct contribution to laws through voting.

However, during the earlier days before voting by secret ballot was introduced, public decisions were taken through town hall meetings. Direct democracy does not replace government institutions, courts or parliaments. It is merely a process where the citizenry has the right to decide on issues and policies that affect them. The system is vital because it increases honesty and trust among the people while it also improves social outcomes (Frey, 2019, p. 2). What is worth noting with direct democracy is that the citizenry is directly involved in decision-making, and therefore, intermediaries are not required. The use of representatives comes with the risk of them abandoning the mandate of representing the interests of their people and representing their interests.



Even though direct democracy seeks to ensure that ordinary people are directly part of the decision-making process, the system has its limitations. It can only function appropriately in smaller communities because it would present logistical challenges in larger populations. Another downside of the system is that ordinary people may not possess the relevant expertise to make sound policy decisions. In this regard, when information required to make policy decisions can only be collected from technocrats, academics and other specialists, outcomes can be worse than those of a process which involves representatives because the ordinary citizens it is meant to serve have no access to those opinions (Matsusaka, 2005, p. 193).

### **3.3.2 Participatory Democracy**

Participation is an imperative aspect of democracy. This is where people get to take part in political choices through elections. According to Smith (2017, p. 71), participation is the basis of the concept of democracy. However, in most democracies, public participation is relegated to matters of voting for members of the legislature, and this leaves the public outside the political space because they are denied the opportunity to participate in debates and to be part of decision-making processes. Smith (2017, p. 77) further states that the ability for one to be able to speak their mind in a meaningful way and to be listened to is the most elementary aspect of political participation. However, the system of representative democracy where a group of people make decisions on behalf of many pushes the ordinary voters on the periphery when it comes to the formulation of policies on matters that concern them.

The definition of political participation should not only be limited to the national level but should also be inclusive of the local level. Therefore, political participation is a process where the ordinary citizens get involved in the process to influence electoral outcomes as well as taking part in policy decisions (Bergström, 2006, p. 3). According to this study, the local level is the political party level. This is a fundamental level, especially in countries such as Namibia and Botswana where governing parties (SWAPO Party and BDP) have been dominant since independence. This means that whatever decisions they take, end up being national policy. It is thus imperative that processes within these parties are as inclusive as possible and that decisions should not only be left in the hands of a few individuals who ultimately end up taking such decisions according to their interests. A citizenry active in politics is at the centre of participatory democracy (Pateman, 2012, p. 7).

According to Jefferson (N.D.) cited in Smith (2017, pp. 72-73), when people are excluded from the political realm, they lose interest in public affairs and their representatives are turned into rulers and made "wolves who act not at the behest of those who elected them, but according to their own interest." Aragonès and Sánchez-Pagés, (2009, p. 1) assert that participatory democracy is a process where both ordinary citizens and politicians work together as a collective. The citizens make policy proposals, which are then implemented by the politicians. The citizens can then monitor the implementation process of these policies to ensure that the politicians stick to the decisions taken. This does not only ensure that the citizens take part in policy decision-making, but that they also monitor the processes to ensure that the politicians do not deviate from implementing what they (citizens) want. However, this process requires the full involvement of citizens because their degree of involvement affects policy.

In the theory of participatory democracy, individuals and their institutions cannot be separated. Therefore, any consideration cannot be done by one without the other. Moreover, the fact that representative institutions exist in a democracy is not enough, and there should be full participation of the people at that level. However, for this to be realised, people should be educated to equip them with democratic skills and for them to know the procedures so that they can make informed decisions. Participation is an education tool in this regard, because the more the people participate in processes, the better they become in knowing about the system. A participatory society must exist for democracy to exist (Pateman, 1970, p. 41). This suggests that education about democracy is essential for people to be able to understand the system and make meaningful contributions to policies and other issues of governance. Without the people's participation in these processes, democracy does not exist. In a nutshell, what one can deduce from the quick scan of the authors' interpretation of participatory democracy is that the ordinary people should be involved in taking decisions on matters that affect them without any intermediaries. However, participatory democracy is not only about participating, it is also about making decisions. Therefore, some level of knowledge and skill is required by the people in order to be able to make the right decisions.

### **3.3.3 Representative Democracy**

Representative democracy is the most popular model of governance. However, its exact meaning is contested, with scholars and political commentators having disagreements on the matter. It is a



contemporary system where people elect representatives to make decisions on their behalf. However, this has not deterred scholars from attempting to describe what representation is and what it is not. During the time of classical democracy around the 18th century, the citizenry could participate directly in decision-making, but as the world developed and the populations increased, such kind of system became difficult to handle making that kind of participatory democracy a challenge. That is how the system of representation was conceived (Setälä & Schillar, 2009, p. 3). Plokke (1997), cited in Urbinati & Warren (2008, p. 388) contends: "the opposite of representation is not participation but rather exclusion. Representation is not an unfortunate compromise between an ideal of direct democracy and messy modern realities. Representation is crucial in constituting democratic practices."

Alonso, Keane, and Merkel, (2011, p. 2-3) refer to representative democracy as a system where people choose others among themselves to run the affairs of government on their behalf and to take care of their interests. Proponents of the system claim that it is the best form of governance with one of its most essential characteristics being the fact that the ordinary people can openly discuss and exchange divergent views amongst themselves and their representatives, in their quest to improve governance. According to Alonso, Keane and Merkel (2011), representative democracy created an opportunity for rotational leadership, where representatives who are not serving their people according to their expectation can be voted out and replaced by others who serve this purpose. This means that representation is a delegation of powers where the citizenry gives a mandate to a group of people to defend their interests for a specific period. It is a contract between the citizens and their chosen representatives. Should the representatives be in breach of contract by doing things contrary to their mandate, they are voted out. This also highlights the power the ordinary people have in a democratic system.

Representation is a relationship between the ordinary citizens and the people they elect to represent their interests (politicians) in a given constituency. This arrangement makes a distinction between "the sources of power from those who exercise the power" (Urbinati & Warren, 2008, p. 389). The point here is that ordinary people are the source of power and not those given the mandate to execute it. Therefore, those given the mandate to execute it (representatives), should at all times put the interests of the ordinary people first, this entails implementing the people's wishes and not the other way round. Urbinati and Warren (2008, pp. 400-401) further state that political parties

are a vital instrument of representation. However, this depends on whether the citizens play a role through the electoral systems so that they can hold to account those in their political parties who represent their interests.

Lastly, the authors argue that representatives are "trustees" and not delegates of their people. The distinction they make here between a trustee and delegate is that as trustees their judgement replaces that of the people who gave them the mandate, but keeping in mind that their decisions made based on those judgements are in the interest of the people. Meanwhile delegates are representatives who cannot explain decision-making. The relationships between ordinary people and their representatives should be based on trust and should this trust be broken, ordinary citizens have the power to remove those representatives through the ballot. Therefore, this suggests that representative democracy is a system where ordinary people elect others to make decisions on their behalf.

According to Setälä & Schielar (2009, p. 3), the downside of representative democracy is that in some cases, the interests of those being represented do not matter. The representatives would instead take care of the interests of those at the top, mostly to secure their political futures. In such cases, a political party leader as the appointing authority to political positions, assumes that the representatives owe allegiance to him/her and as such expects them to do his/her will, disregarding the will of those they represent. Other critics of this system also argue that the only time the ordinary citizens get involved in decision-making processes is during elections when they have to choose representatives, which in most cases are held at intervals of a few years. Moreover, the representative system is limiting democracy because elite politicians use it to control the masses. This is so because the citizens are separated into small groups and as such lose the power they would have had as a collective to defend their interests. Because the ordinary people are powerless, their representatives succumb to much more influential individuals or entities and start protecting those particular interests.

### **3.4 Criticism of Democratic Theory**

While democratic theory helps understand what leadership is, how power is supposed to be used and how issues of elections are supposed to be handled, its opponents think that it is a system that is not in the best interest of the ordinary people. They believe it is "a set of techniques designed to

ensure the rule of the most powerful under the guise of popular consent" (Springborg, 1984, p. 537). According to Springborg, democracy is seen as a political system "designed to ensure the rule of special interest". Brennan (2017, p. x) shares a similar view. Brennan asserts that the democratic system is favourable to those with knowledge because they end up having more political power than the less knowledgeable and competent members of society. This means that those without knowledge can easily be misled into voting against their interests.

However, despite the criticism levelled against this theory, the researcher still considers it the best theory to help guide this study in answering the research question because the SWAPO Party and the BDP are governing using the democratic system that has certain principles, norms and standards that are supposed to serve as a guideline. The theory clearly explains the role and power of the ordinary citizens in politics to ensure that their leaders and the government do not abuse them. Political education is necessary for the citizenry to understand their full rights in terms of the power they have, their participatory rights, and what it means to have representatives in a democratic system.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

A theoretical framework is essential in research because it serves as the rudiment upon which knowledge for the study is built. This study analyses issues of intra-party democracy; it was, therefore, imperative that it is anchored on the democratic theory. Despite democracy having multiple definitions, authors agree that it is a system of government of the people by the people. It has many forms applied differently in different countries. This chapter referred to only three, namely, direct democracy, participatory democracy and representative democracy. Each of these was expounded in the chapter.

The chapter demonstrated that although these systems would enhance democracy and ensure that ordinary people's interests are taken care of, they are not popular. Most countries prefer the representation model of democracy where ordinary citizens choose people among themselves to represent them. Regardless of what type of democracy a country opts to use, there are standard principles of the democratic system that should apply. Failure to apply such principles makes the system questionable. This chapter also briefly discussed the criticism of the democratic theory. It stated that the theory's opponents argue that it is used by the literate and wealthy to control the not

so knowledgeable and the needy members of society. Having discussed the theory on which the study is grounded, the fourth chapter outlines the research design and methodology.





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## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology and design, which the author followed while conducting this study. The methodology entails describing how the study was carried out. It is not only about the methods used during the data collection phase but is also about describing in detail, the rationale behind the usage of such methods and techniques as well the steps followed from the beginning of the data collection phase to the analysis (Kothari, 2004, p. 8). The chapter will also reflect on the challenges that the researcher encountered during the data collection phase and what he did in order not to compromise the reliability of the study. Therefore, the chapter addresses issues such as research design, population, sample, data collection procedure, data analysis, research ethics and limitations.

#### 4.2 Research Design

A research design is the structure required for the study so that a work plan can be successfully implemented. Moreover, in social sciences, a design needs to be mapped out before data can be collected and analysed. The function of a research design is “to ensure that the evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2006, pp. 8-9). As stated earlier, the study aimed to establish the extent to which chieftaincy influences the leadership succession systems of the SWAPO Party and BDP. The study adopted an interpretive research paradigm by applying a qualitative approach using narratives captured through semi-structured, in-depth one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions.

Qualitative research looks at data that has to do with opinions, motivations, observations, meaning and utterances (Gerring, 2017, p. 17). Qualitative work mainly focuses on societies or large groups, individuals and cultures. Therefore, the researcher interacts with people to get to learn their experiences concerning a particular phenomenon. Unlike quantitative research, which is about numeracy and statistics, qualitative research is about words and understandings. A qualitative study gives the researcher latitude to seek an in-depth understanding of the subject matter. In essence, “it is research that helps us to understand the nature, strengths and interactions of

variables" (Black, 1994, p. 425). According to Creswell (2014, P.14), data collected through a quantitative method using instruments such as questionnaires includes close-ended responses while those of qualitative data are not predetermined because they are open-ended. Therefore, the data collected through the qualitative method were needed to analyse the following:

- 1) Perceptions of leaders on the democratic processes of the two parties discussed in this dissertation in terms of leadership succession.
- 2) Perceptions of the rank and file on democratic processes, including their participation during nominations and elections of party leaders.
- 3) Perceptions of former members on the democratic processes of their former party, and
- 4) Observations of political analysts of democratic processes within the two parties.

### **4.3 Population and Sample**

Gray (2009, pp. 145-146) describes a population as a group with similar features. It is an aggregate of possible components to be part of a study. The target population of this study included members of the SWAPO Party and BDP in leadership positions, current ordinary members, former members of these two parties and political analysts with vast knowledge on processes within these parties. Fifteen (15) respondents were reached by the researcher through interviews and focus group discussions (see table 4.3.1) using the snowball sampling technique. The researcher used the snowball sampling technique since he needed two respondents who had left the SWAPO Party but was struggling to find a second one.

The respondents were in leadership positions, ordinary members as well as political analysts who know about the party's rules and procedures, code of conduct and constitution. Former members of the SWAPO Party, who along with others, formed a splinter party were also included in the study. The researcher also identified three SWAPO Party members to be part of a focus group discussion. A BDP member also referred the researcher to one of the leaders of the party who ended up being the only one that was available for an interview. Similarly, the researcher only managed to interview one former member of BDP, through referral. Additionally, the researcher interviewed two (2) political analysts and two (2) ordinary members of the BDP, on a one-on-one basis. The table below (4.3.1) presents a breakdown of the sample.

#### 4.3.1 Sample Table

| <b>Party</b>                           | <b>SWAPO Party</b> | <b>BDP</b> |
|--|--------------------|------------|
| <b>Members in leadership positions</b> | <b>2</b>           | <b>1</b>   |
| <b>Ordinary members</b>                | <b>3</b>           | <b>2</b>   |
| <b>Former members</b>                  | <b>2</b>           | <b>1</b>   |
| <b>Political Analysts</b>              | <b>2</b>           | <b>2</b>   |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>9</b>           | <b>6</b>   |
| <b>Total number of respondents</b>     | <b>15</b>          |            |

#### 4.4 Data Collection and Procedure

The study used a combination of both primary and secondary data. The study used semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions for primary data collection. The researcher was familiar with political players in Namibia, and was, therefore, more comfortable to identify possible respondents. Upon their identification, telephone calls were made to set up interview appointments. Members in leadership positions of the SWAPO Party, former members and political analysts were interviewed one-on-one, while the ordinary members participated in a focus group discussion.

However, in Botswana, where the researcher was not familiar with political players, he relied on referrals. Similarly, the researcher set up appointments through telephone calls for one-on-one interviews with a BDP leader, two ordinary party members, a former party member and two political analysts. All respondents were asked open-ended questions, which were deemed imperative because respondents were not limited to certain choices of answers (Schonlau &



Couper, 2016, p. 143). A piece of audio recording equipment was used to ensure that no information was left out. Interviews were carried out at venues chosen by the respondents. Some party documents such as party constitutions, codes of conduct, rules and procedures as well as a YouTube video formed part of the primary sources. Secondary sources comprised newspapers, published and unpublished articles as well as books and book chapters. The study used the triangulation of sources of information. It is a known fact that the triangulation of sources of information is not only necessary to boost data, but it is imperative for the validation of data through cross verification. In simple terms, triangulation is the usage of multiple methods and data sources to improve the credibility of outcomes (Mathison, 1988, p. 13). Therefore, the study used both primary and secondary sources to collate information to ensure that the findings truly represented the phenomenon it sought to measure. Secondary sources were used first to lay the foundation and then primary sources were used to get empirical data.

#### **4.5 Data Analysis**

All interviews were recorded on a tape recorder while the researcher also took notes, especially in cases where there were follow-up questions. Upon the completion of fieldwork, all interviews were transcribed for coding and analysis purposes. The collected data were then arranged logically. The data were then grouped and emerging themes were identified. An open coding system was then used so that the specific raw data could be scrutinised to examine their meaning. Using the research question and problem, the meaning was analysed using the theory upon which the study relied, as explained in Chapter 3. Regarding underlying themes, patterns were identified, and overall analyses referring to underlying themes, conclusions and recommendations were made. Since the data were qualitative, they were analysed thematically for ease of reference.

#### **4.6 Ethical Considerations**

Appropriate ethical principles are imperative in social sciences and qualitative studies. This is because qualitative studies are often conducted in settings requiring human participation and interaction. Therefore, due to the involvement of people, there should be ethical considerations, not only for the integrity of the study but for their protection as well. Ethics “pertains to doing good and avoiding harm” (Orb, Eisenhauer, & Wynaden, 2001, p. 93). On that score, participants in this study were requested give their consent to participate through signing a consent form before

the interviews and focus group discussions began. According to Mandal & Parija (2017, p. 78), informed consent is the most crucial aspect of research because the respondents get to understand what they are getting involved in.

Moreover, when they have accepted responsibility, it underlies the fact that they have accepted the consequences of the details involved in the research. The purpose of the study was revealed to the participants, and they were assured that the information that would be solicited from them would only be used for this study. They were also made aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any time and that it was their prerogative to participate or not. They were made aware that once they withdrew, any information that would have been collected up to that point would not be used but would be destroyed. The participants were also informed of their right to remain anonymous. Therefore, any information revealing their identity would not be included in the study, and they would thus be assigned a pseudonym, which would be used in all research notes and documents. The data obtained from participants was kept as confidential as possible.

#### **4.7 Limitations of the Study**

Like most studies, this study was not without hurdles and limitations in the process of collecting data. As stated earlier, the targeted sample totaled twenty (20) respondents, which meant ten (10) for the SWAPO Party, and another ten (10) for the BDP. However, only fifteen (15) of the targeted sample were interviewed. Out of the ten that were targeted for SWAPO Party, only one (1) ordinary member withdrew her participation at the last minute due to ill health. The ordinary member was supposed to have been part of the focus group discussion, and because her withdrawal came at the last minute, it became difficult to replace her, and as such, the focus group discussion went ahead with three other ordinary members.

The SWAPO Party leaders the researcher interviewed requested to be kept for less than an hour because they were busy preparing for the Electoral College. This was because 2019 was an election year in Namibia. As such, politicians were hardly in their offices. Also, because it was an election year, they were withholding some information to avoid jeopardising their political careers, as they were worried that the information they gave could be used against them. In this regard, despite their high profiles and the respect, they command in the party, they preferred to remain anonymous. The researcher respected this. The Botswana part of the study presented the most challenges, chief

among them being the unavailability of potential informants to interview. There were heightened tensions within the BDP at the time of data collection because of the fallout between the former president of the party Ian Khama and his predecessor Mokgweetsi Masisi. The party members were also divided depending on which leader they were sympathetic to. This created a challenge for the researcher in terms of finding members to interview at both leadership and grassroots level. More so, the rank and file were scared of discussing politics with a stranger, claiming that they were coming from a political period where it was dangerous to discuss politics because intelligence activities such as phone tapping and other methods of listening to people's conversations had increased.

As such, they were wary of discussing politics even among themselves, especially if such a discussion had elements of what could have been interpreted as criticism directed towards certain politicians. Due to these circumstances, the researcher was only able to interview one leader of the party and two ordinary members. The ordinary members preferred to be interviewed one by one and not in a focus group discussion as was initially planned. The situation in their party also prompted them to request anonymity. Former party members of the BDP who had formed a splinter party delegated one individual to be interviewed by the researcher, saying that they were on a party assignment outside town. As was the case in Namibia, politicians in Botswana were also unavailable most of the time because that country was also going to the polls in October 2019. To reduce the void that could have been left by the reduced number of respondents, the researcher gathered data relevant to the study from some newspapers and interviews of some leaders of the BDP on YouTube. Therefore, while the results presented in the next chapter are valid and credible, they deviated slightly from what was envisaged when the study was conceptualised.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

This chapter described how the study was carried out. The study is a qualitative study, which adopted an interpretive research paradigm by using narratives that were captured through semi-structured, in-depth one-on-one interviews and a focus group discussion. The chapter also highlighted how the data were analysed from each of the four categories of respondents. It explained how respondents were identified in Namibia and in Botswana. The chapter also discusses the challenges experienced during the data collection phase. Despite encountering

challenges, the data were collected and analysed systematically. The next chapters present the findings and analysis, as well as the study's recommendations – both with specific reference to the current study and those that focus on future research.





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## CHAPTER FIVE

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 5.1 Introduction

The politics of leadership succession in Africa has proven to be a complex matter as it is mostly marred by contests and in-fighting among potential candidates. This tendency is visible not only at the national level but within political parties as well. This trend is not prevalent exclusively to political parties governing countries that continue to experience civil wars and *coups d'état*, but also to democratic states. In light of these realities, this chapter presents the major findings and a discussion on the role of chieftaincy in party politics in Africa with specific reference to the two case studies. The study was conducted in Namibia and Botswana to establish the extent to which the leadership succession systems of those countries' ruling parties, SWAPO Party and BDP are influenced by chieftaincy. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the data were obtained through primary and secondary methods. The study used semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions for primary data collection. Secondary sources comprised newspapers, published and unpublished articles as well as books and book chapters.

The discussion in this chapter is organised in the following manner: First, is a discussion on the role of chieftaincy in party politics. Second, is a look at the findings of the internal factors that influence party politics and leadership succession systems in these two parties. These factors include but are not limited to the rank and file's understanding of democracy, freedom of expression in the parties, fair competition, and the rank and file's involvement in the nomination and election of their leaders and the political party's ideologies. Third, findings on the influence of external factors on party politics such as social factors, economic forces and the political factor will be discussed. Finally, the last part is the chapter summary.

#### 5.2. The Role of Chieftaincy in Party Politics

As is the case with most (if not all) African countries, Namibia and Botswana have embraced chieftaincy as a form of governance albeit at a communal level only. As indicated in chapter two of this thesis, Namibia has a Council of Traditional Leaders, which advises the state on the control and utilisation of communal land while Botswana has a House of Chiefs, which advises the

government and the Parliament on traditional and related matters. Given this interaction and at times friction between the government and traditional authorities over territorial authority, it is probable that one institution would naturally influence the other on the running of the affairs. Similarly, the same influence can psychologically cascade to individual leaders in the political space. Hence, this study aimed to establish the extent to which the leadership succession systems of the SWAPO Party and the BDP are influenced by chieftaincy and the possible implications for the future of democratic governance in these two countries in particular and Africa in general.

The study revealed that, in the case of the SWAPO Party, cultural and traditional values found a way into the party. There is therefore a modicum of chieftaincy influence in party politics in general, and leadership succession in particular as revealed by the study. It was discovered that this was the case because, as is the case with the chieftaincy, the leader of the party is revered and considered the figurehead of the organisation, the centre of power upon whom the entire membership relies in terms of decisions. The study found that although it is not documented that the incumbent leader's choice of who should succeed him may not be opposed, doing so has adverse consequences. Another discovery was that the cultural norm of young people having to listen to the elders without questioning their decisions is prevalent in the party. An informant substantiated this by stating that:

*In our culture, I do not think that democracy was the prevailing culture especially African culture where the head of the household was the one who was calling the shots. I think from that perspective also, what you see happening in the ruling party and some other political parties is that, as much as democracy has been adapted, our character as an adapting system you will see the surfacing and resurfacing of our traditional way of doing things (Former SWAPO Party member 1).*

In an interview with a SWAPO Party leader, it was revealed that, a chieftaincy system cannot influence practices in a democratic party because voting is central to the decisions taken. The leader further argued that there were structures in place that made decisions and as such, there was no room for unilateral decisions. According to the informant, because of these structures, rules, and procedures, a leader is not able to have a preferred candidate to succeed him/her. The leader stated:



*In SWAPO we vote. If you are not voted, then you are not a leader. You should be voted, at any level, including the president. In traditional things, they anoint. Here, you are elected into leadership (SWAPO Party leader 2).*

Based on consultation with ordinary SWAPO Party members, the study found the argument by the former SWAPO Party member more reasonable. During a focus group discussion, ordinary SWAPO Party members alluded to the fact that, as young members of the party, they could not question the elderly's decisions because of the belief in an African culture that, it was disrespectful to differ with an elderly person. The participants also stated that the young members of the society had to believe in the wisdom of the elders. Similarly, the study also revealed that in Botswana, there is a degree of Tswana culture influence on politics. The reviewed literature indicated that one of the features of chieftaincy across African states is that the chief has a monopoly over power. The study found that this similar trend was prevalent in the BDP where too much power is given to the leader of the party. A political analyst interviewed indicated that:

*The party empowers the president so much. One feature of African political organisations at least is that I think they end up empowering the president a lot because the president was usually a figurehead around which the state was founded so you find that the constitution of the BDP was probably made for Seretse rather than for the party itself. So, when Seretse goes, the political office that is the party president and even the state president, holds so much power that you can vote in a central committee and the president can effectively get rid of that central committee if he wanted (Political Analyst 1).*

From this quotation, it can be argued that in the BDP, the leader of the party has too much power and can thus ensure that most decisions go his way. This trend can be attributed to the fact that Botswana has a strong traditional authority set-up and a close working relationship between the chieftaincy and political institutions. Botswana's Consul General in Johannesburg, South Africa also confirmed this relationship between these institutions in an interview on SAFM's Talking Point:

*When you look at the setup of our villages, you will note that there is a Kgotla system, which is our traditional council that the country has had, ever since, time immemorial. And, I think that is what has made Botswana a politically stable country because we have*

*a model of democracy that is based on our culture to start with* (Botswana's Consul General in Johannesburg).

This narrative by the Consul General indicates the modicum of influence the Tswana culture in general, has on the political system of Botswana. The narrative implies that democracy in that country is modelled around cultural values that do not conform to principles of democracy. This is a threat to democracy now and in the future, because the ordinary people's rights are violated. These scenarios substantiate the fact that not only chieftaincy but also cultural values have an influence on politics in the SWAPO Party and the BDP. However, although chieftaincy and democracy may co-exist, they are different forms of governance. As indicated in the literature, in a democratic system, everyone is equal and should thus be treated as such, whereas in a chieftaincy system, there are classifications of royalty and subjects. The chief and his council comprised of family members is the one who takes decisions, which the subjects should follow. The findings above reveal the same approach in the SWAPO Party and the BDP where ordinary people have assumed the position of subjects, whereas they are supposed to be the ones with the power and the leaders are supposed to be the servants.

Although leaders of these parties are voted into power, the incumbent leaders wield too much power to ensure which direction the election should go. This is exacerbated by the fact that ordinary members believe that the incumbent leader has the right to give such a direction. This is dangerous for democracy because people are no longer taking part in processes on matters that concern them. Moreover, as powers are taken from them, the leaders begin to do as they please which could lead to unhappiness among the ordinary people who could thus resort to violence or other crude methods of civil disobedience. These would ruin the peace and stability being enjoyed in the two respective countries. Although the main aim was to establish the extent to which chieftaincy influenced party politics, it was discovered that there are other factors as well. Those are discussed in the sections below.

### **5.3 The influence of internal factors on party politics and leadership succession systems**

Apart from chieftaincy or cultural practices being identified as influencing the politics of leadership succession in the segment above, it also became clear during the study that there are other factors that are not fundamentally related to a chieftaincy system but are supposed to be

prominent and respected features in a democratic political party. Although voting is central to the election of leaders in a democratic system, it is not the only measure of that system. Party policies, as well as processes and how these are implemented, are important tools to establish its democratic nature. Therefore, this section presents findings on how internal factors crucial to democracy influence leadership succession politics in the SWAPO Party and BDP.

### **5.3.1 Understanding of Democracy**

As defined in chapter 3 of this thesis, democracy is the rule of the people by the people. This means that the people have the power, which they lease to representatives to run the affairs of the party or the state on their behalf. It is thus crucial that the people themselves understand this system to avoid the abuse of the party's rules and procedures by those given such power. Additionally, when the members know what their democratic rights and roles, as well as rules and procedures of the party, it is easy for them to establish if those they have given the mandate to represent their interests live up to expectations. Moreover, members enlightened of their democratic rights are in a position to hold to account those they elect. They also make informed decisions during the election of leaders.

In this regard, the study discovered that there was a general lack of understanding by the ordinary members of both the SWAPO Party and BDP of not only democracy but also party rules and procedures, as well as their constitutions. The study revealed that this lack of knowledge made them very submissive and would therefore accept everything without questioning the leadership. Similarly, it was discovered that there was little effort by the two parties to have political education programmes that were aimed at educating their members on democracy. However, an interview with a SWAPO Party leader revealed that the party established a school in 2018 aimed at giving political education to its members.

*For a long time, the party has struggled to establish what we now call the party school, a school that teaches nothing else but the constitution, rules and political programmes. It started this year and that is where the majority of the leaders at the lower level are opening up their eyes to see that some of the happenings were completely out of line with the requirements of the party documents (SWAPO Party leader 1).*

From this quotation, one can deduce that the party school is still not meant to educate the ordinary members but rather leaders, especially those in the lower structures of the party. The school is based in Namibia's capital city, Windhoek, meaning that it will only be beneficial to some of those living the city or those with the financial capacity to travel and attend. According to an ordinary member of the SWAPO Party, the lack of knowledge was a challenge:

*One of the obstacles is the lack of knowledge on how to deal with matters. Most of the members are used to being told what to do and they do it, they do not ask questions, they only act on commands. Maybe shortly things will change and people will start to know. (Focus group).*

This member confirmed that there is no political programme in the party and because of that, it can be argued that ordinary members become submissive to the leader, treating him as a chief-a practice synonymous with the chieftaincy system. According to a political analyst in Botswana, ordinary members of the BDP have the same challenge. He explained it this way:

*I don't think that the ordinary member of the Botswana Democratic Party has a deep understanding of what they have to be doing with the party and with the country. I think they are waiting for instructions from certain individuals to say this is how we are approaching this particular congress; we are going to vote like this. I do not think liberation movements had a chance to develop political education properly, they just found themselves already in government, now they cannot campaign outside the government, they have to campaign to stay in government and it is a different campaigning (Political analyst 1).*

From this quotation, it can be argued that it is by design that the ordinary members are deprived of crucial elements such as political education. It can be argued that educating them will enlighten them to a point where they could vote out of power the same party that educates them because they begin to have a better and informed judgement. The party would therefore rather do what it can to hold on to power. An ordinary member who also confirmed he was not aware of a political education programme in the BDP, had a tough time separating a state organ from the ruling party. According to the member:

*I do not know whether we should differentiate the BDP from the current government because, the current government is trying in terms of the IEC to educate people, more especially on the importance of voting. They are encouraging the people to vote, that is why I do not know whether we should separate the current administration from the BDP (BDP ordinary member 2).*

This uncertainty points to the fact that the electoral body which is an organ of government works towards encouraging people to vote, but there is no programme by the BDP to educate its members about the democratic system and its own rules, procedures and constitution. This being the case, the ordinary members think that they are only followers. Due to strong cultural backgrounds, they become submissive to their political leader in a similar fashion. The political leader is revered and begins to get away with decisions that he wants because the followers believe it is disrespectful to challenge the leader's decisions.

Democracy is a system that most countries in Africa adopted. It is a system where ordinary people should have the power and should be part of decision-making processes. Therefore, there is a need for people to understand it if it is to be implemented satisfactorily. However, as indicated above, members of the SWAPO Party and BDP have no understanding of what the system entails – except for the fact that they have to vote for a new leadership after a certain interval. Because they are used to the chieftaincy system where a leader is exalted and they are subjects, they accept when they are told who the next president should be regardless of the underlying reasons. Due to this lack of knowledge, they are easy to manipulate because they have no idea of the power they have in a democratic system. Moreover, the lack of understanding of what democracy entails harms the system as leaders always get what they want at the expense of the ordinary people. Despite this factor being an internal influence, it is also tied to the influence of both the leaders and ordinary people's cultural background on party politics.

### **5.3.2 Freedom of Expression**

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (Democracy: Its Principles and Achievement, 2018, p. VI) describes freedom of expression as the liberty to express oneself without fear and interference from those in power. According to Pitts (1986, p. 26), “It is not politically prudent to censor freedom of expression.” This implies that people should be given the carte blanche to express their ideas,

opinions and be able to share and receive information without any form of retribution from the powers that be. This is a fundamental principle of democracy without which the system cannot be described as fully democratic. In this study, it was discovered that in terms of leadership succession in both the SWAPO Party and BDP, the trend is that the freedom of expression tends to be limited depending on which candidate an individual or group support. According to some informants, there have been cases where those who have supported candidates other than the one favoured by an incumbent leader have been side-lined and victimised. Asked if members of the SWAPO Party were at liberty to express their choices and opinions regarding their favoured leaders, a former member of the party stated:

*They do not have that right. If they do have that right, then maybe we should say that it is not respected. You can exercise it, but there is always a consequence. Meaning that, unless you support the favoured candidate of certain powers within the organisation, SWAPO in particular, you risk being victimised, sidelined, and labeled and so on (Former SWAPO Party member 2).*

From this view, one can argue that those supporting candidates perceived to be posing a serious challenge to the incumbent's choice of successor are side-lined to give an advantage to the anointed successor. It can further be argued that it is some form of coercion to expect everyone in a democratic system to support an individual nominated by an outgoing leader. The view also indicates that freedom of expression is often regarded as mere rhetoric. An ordinary member of the SWAPO Party acknowledged that they had the right to express themselves but mostly on other organisational matters. When it came to the election of leaders, they just relied on their representatives at the congress. Confirming this position, a SWAPO Party member explained:

*As an ordinary SWAPO member, the only platform I have to express my views is at the sectional level. From this level, it is a challenge for my message to reach the highest level because of bureaucracy. We have to rely on the intermediaries who most of the time do not deliver our actual expressions (Focus group).*

Reading from this member's view, one can argue that the freedom of expression is merely rhetoric and that the members' actual views will not make a difference. The bureaucracy in the party leads to the distortion of their views. The implication of this scenario on the members and democracy is that their choices of leadership is according to the interests of their representatives at congresses



and electoral conferences, which is ironic. In the BDP, findings pointed to inconsistencies in the existence of the freedom of expression and differences in the members' opinions on the matter. According to a party member, the freedom or lack thereof for one to either express himself or herself or not depends on the leadership style of the person at the helm. Another member believes that the party is consistent in respecting members' freedom of expression: The members explained:

*During Mogae's presidency, I think we could freely express our views. We did not fear anything. When Khama took over, we were introduced to a system whereby, we just had to follow even if something was not right, otherwise you would be expelled or you would be questioned. We had to follow orders (BDP ordinary member 1).*

*We have that system that allows us, to say who we want to be our representative. So it is incumbent upon every individual to see and choose whom he prefers and desires to be his leader in any geographical location (BDP ordinary member 2).*

The view of the first informant (BDP ordinary member 1), was shared by other informants such as political analysts, who indicated that the politics of the BDP were about personalities. Generally, each leader has a style of leading. It can thus be argued that leaders violate party constitutional provisions on freedom of expression. Although BDP ordinary member 2 was correct about members having the freedom to express themselves, this was only at the level where they had to choose their representatives. However, under certain leaders, the representatives who would have different views on the party leadership faced retribution.

These findings demonstrate that at some point, some leader/s of both the SWAPO Party and BDP have exhibited similar trends of not being accommodative of contrasting views or not being tolerant of those with different options. The responses by informants indicate that there have been consequences for the members with different views on the issue of a chosen leader. That is, those who have opposed a candidate other than the one supported by the incumbent leader. This is an indication that freedom of expression in the two parties is limited or does not exist – especially with regard to the election of the party leader. This is in contravention of a fundamental principle of democracy where people have the right to express themselves freely without facing any form of retribution. As reviewed in the literature, democracy promotes peace. This is so because when people are allowed to express themselves, there are no chances of them rebelling against the leadership. Despite the issue of lack of freedom of expression being an internal factor, it is also



linked to the issue of culture and chieftaincy where the commoners' voice is not important on matters of succession. In a democracy, this has a negative effect on the system and is a recipe for conflict.

### 5.3.3 Fair Competition

As discussed in chapter 3, an electoral process in a democratic organization is supposed to be characterised by free and fair participation and competition (Democracy: Its Principles and Achievement, 2018, p. V). Bendz (1997) cited in Dator, Pratt, and Seo (2006, p. 20), defines a fair system as one where everyone is treated equally and justly. According to Stigler (1988) cited in Listra (2015, p. 26), "competition is a rivalry between individuals (or groups or nations), and it arises whenever two or more parties strive for something that all cannot obtain." Therefore, it is expected that where there is competition in a democratic system, it should be fair, meaning that there should not be any favouritism or discrimination against some of those taking part in that process. In terms of leadership succession in the SWAPO Party and BDP, the trend is that there is no fair competition for positions. According to some of the respondents, the fact that the leaders of the SWAPO Party and BDP are allowed to nominate and handpick successors respectively brings unfairness to the process. In this study, it was discovered that the incumbent mostly does this for self-interest. A former member of the SWAPO Party put it this way:

*They want to put somebody there who they can trust. Nevertheless, the question is, is that person the right person to run the party or the country or is it the trust relationship between the one who is going out and the one coming in? (Former SWAPO Party member 1).*

From this former SWAPO Party member's statement, it can be argued that the leader will do everything in his/her power to ensure that the person he/she trusts takes over from them. Keeping in mind that the party leader has excessive power and is revered, the followers will do anything to impress him/her. However, according to a SWAPO Party leader, the president is a member like any other and has the right to exercise the right to nominate a successor. The leader explained:

*He even won't decide on his own to say I want this one, no, he will have caucuses with SWAPO members those who understand his vision and who subscribe to it, then they will agree that maybe this one should stand as vice president this one secretary-general and deputy. (SWAPO Party leader 2).*

This view by the SWAPO Party leader confirms that the party president nominates a successor. For reasons explained earlier, this gives the president's nominated candidate a competitive advantage over other candidates, which is against fair competition – a fundamental principle of democracy.

In the BDP, the top leadership of the party is elected at congress. Interestingly, at the congress, the president is confirmed into that position because there is no contestation for it. The absence of contestation means no competition for the position. This is because of the country's automatic succession system in place and the fact that the president of the ruling party and the country handpicks his deputy from his party in Parliament. When the president dies; steps down or his/her term ends, the deputy automatically takes over as president of both the country and the BDP. In this study, it was discovered that those who tried to challenge the president's choice previously were either side-lined or threatened. A former BDP member explained:

*Essentially the president is supposed to recommend to his members of parliament or his party. The understanding was that the president was supposed to have two or three names and say from these names I want so and so to be the vice president. If the members are not comfortable with that name, they go for either the second or third option. But, that understanding died when Festus Mogae was president and when he picked Ian Khama as vice president. It died because he said, I want Ian Khama as my vice president, if you do not endorse him as my vice president, I will dissolve parliament and we will go for fresh elections (Former BDP member).*

From this explanation, it can be argued that competition was discouraged in this particular scenario and the president ensured that his favoured candidate was endorsed under duress. Had the parliamentarians insisted, the president was going to dissolve parliament and they would end up jobless. From this observation, it can further be argued that for the representatives of the people, they considered their interests when the president threatened to dissolve parliament. Both these scenarios have a negative impact in the future because this way of doing things might one day give rise to despotism. As reviewed in the literature, leaders in Africa become more powerful than the party, and the fact that they are the appointing officers of political positions such as minister and their deputies in government, makes those with ambitions to serve in such positions to be more loyal to the leader than the ordinary members. It thus becomes easier, given this scenario, for a

leader to exert influence on those representing the ordinary members who then abandon their constituencies' wishes to please the leader in a typical political sycophancy fashion.

### **5.3.4 Political Party Procedures and Ideologies**

The SWAPO Party and BDP adopted the democratic system; this requires their leaders to be voted into positions. According to the SWAPO Party rules, both the Political Bureau and the Central Committee nominates and seconds up to three candidates each for among others the position of President and Vice-President. A final list of three candidates per position emerging from this process is presented to the Congress for election (SWAPO Party. Rules and Procedures, 12, 35.1, 35.2, 35.5, p. 10-22). For the BDP, the party's president is also elected by a secret ballot at the National Congress called by the central committee during the general election year. Before the Congress, each region may nominate and submit one name of an individual seeking to contest the election. Similarly, individuals who seek to contest in an election may also submit their names. When the party is in power, and a vacancy of president opens up, the vice president takes over as party president and head of state, but if the party is not in power, the chairperson of the party becomes the president of the party (BDP. Const. art, 29.1, 29.2, 29.3, 29.3.4, 29.3.5, p. 27-28).

From the scan of the literature, it is clear that the SWAPO Party uses the representative model of democracy. This implies that the rank and file's involvement in party processes, especially such as the election of the top leadership, is through intermediaries. For example, the rank and file have no direct involvement in the nomination process, this is done by the central committee. The study discovered that concerning the nominations and voting of leaders, the SWAPO Party follows its rules and procedures. In support of this position, a SWAPO Party leader explained:

*The central committee elects from amongst itself. So in terms of nominations for positions, this is done by either the politburo, but the central committee has to approve three names which are taken to congress for election (SWAPO Party leader 1).*

In the case of the above view, the understanding is that the central committee represents the interests of the ordinary members and would thus make such nominations on their behalf. When the central committee endorses the three names, they are then presented to Congress to contest for one candidature position. At the congress, the ordinary members are represented by members from their districts and the various leagues of the party. Since the president chairs the central committee,

it would be intimidating for its members most of whom are appointed by him into various political offices to oppose his choice because they would be risking their political careers.

Although two other names are endorsed for congress, most members of the central committee would want to be seen to be aligned with the president's choice. It can thus be argued that this becomes a matter of self-interest for the members of the central committee and not choices according to the wishes of the people they are meant to be representing. The SWAPO Party has over 400 000 members, and about 800 attend congress every five years to elect leaders. Some informants complained that this number is too small to decide for others who their leaders should be. Moreover, they complained that sometimes their intermediaries do not represent their views. An ordinary member substantiated this view by stating that:

*I am not given the platform at the grass-root, to give my view to nominate or to second someone. The nomination is done on top and then we should just go with the flow, whether you like it or not, you are only given three names even if you have someone else in mind and if that person is not among the three it is all over (Focus group)*

For the BDP, the study discovered that although the constitution states that the president is elected by secret ballot at the National Congress, the actual voting is for the Chairman and other positions. Whoever is elected as Chairman is set to be elected vice-president of the country if the president so wishes. In Parliament, the president handpicks the vice president, who is then endorsed into the position by the members. On those bases, some members argue that they are technically involved in this process through their parliamentary representatives. Due to the country's automatic succession system, when anything happens to the president or if their term expires, the vice president automatically becomes president of both the party and the country. At the congress, the president is endorsed into the position without contestation. It can, therefore, be argued that the ordinary members do not take part in the election of the president even through intermediaries. A leader of the BDP confirmed this:

*Whoever becomes vice president is destined to become president. And, in this case, the person who becomes president, when they are chosen vice president, the rank and file have no say. That decision remains the will of the president. The only caveat is that the name brought forward by the president must be endorsed by parliament, that is the only caveat,*

*but again, when you talk of the party, the rank and file is not involved, it is the choice of the president (BDP leader).*

An example was given earlier where a president's choice was opposed by members of his party and he threatened to dissolve parliament. If the choice of president was according to the will of the people as per the fundamental principles of democracy, then-incumbent would not have threatened to dissolve parliament, neither would have the members of parliament withdrawn their opposition if they were not threatened. This is once again a demonstration of how the process of leadership succession is being tilted to favour those in power at the expense of the ordinary members who according to democratic processes are supposed to be in charge of the process of empowering leaders. As highlighted earlier in this chapter, here too it can be argued that because of a submissive and not so knowledgeable rank and file, processes will be made to suit the interests of the leadership. This is synonymous with the chieftaincy where ordinary people have no say on the election of their chief. This could negatively affect democracy in the future because it could stimulate authoritarianism and possible civil conflict.

#### **5.4 The Influence of External Factors on Party Politics**

The previous section highlighted the influence of internal factors on party politics. The study discovered that there are outside factors that influence electoral decisions in the SWAPO Party and BDP, particularly concerning leadership succession. They range from, social, economic and political influences. This section presents findings in this regard.

##### **5.4.1 Social Factors**

As is the case in most findings, scenarios in the SWAPO Party and BDP concerning social factors influencing leadership successions in these two parties are similar. The study discovered that leaders are human beings who would want to retire peacefully. This affects democracy because the decision about who should succeed the incumbent leader is driven by self-interest and not the interest of the party. A political analyst stated:

*People want to protect certain things such as skeletons in the closet. If one knows that certain things were not in place, they might bring problems. Therefore, you avoid that by also emphasising a certain type of leadership to protect your interests (Political analyst 2).*

*Presidents are normal human beings, they have sentiments, they have biases, they have prejudices, and they are normal people. They want somebody who is much more amenable in the way they think, somebody who will protect their legacy, possibly, somebody who will protect their interests, somebody who will secure them when they are out of office, afford them protection if there is anything they fear, they need an insurance policy, when they are out of office (BDP leader).*

It can be deduced from the views above that a leader can be biased and can therefore not promote fair competition among those seeking to succeed him/her if they are not his/her close allies, friends or family. Leaders would want a certain outcome because it guarantees them security and a peaceful retirement. Therefore, they would want a certain candidate to take over from them, who would make sure that they retire in peace and that their legacy is protected. As human beings, they have certain individuals in the party with whom they have stronger ties, it can be in the form of friendship or blood relations. They would want these individuals to assume leadership positions to ensure that they also benefit. This culminates in the issue of protecting their interests and thus disregarding the rights of the entire membership of the party. This paints a picture that certain individuals are more important in an organisation than others, whereas according to the principles of democracy, the ordinary member and the leader are equal and the organisation belongs to all of them.

#### **5.4.2 Economic Forces**

Although political clientelism seems like a new phenomenon in developing countries, it became a characteristic of politics in the 1960s and 1970s (Kusche, 2014, p. 207). Kusche defines political clientelism as a process where patrons grant favours and benefits to less powerful clients in exchange for votes. In this study, not only was it discovered that this is happening in the SWAPO Party and BDP, but it was also found that the less powerful align themselves with, and vote for a particular candidate because they would want to directly benefit from such a candidate's influence once he/she attains power. According to one political analyst, this factor influences electoral outcomes in the leadership succession race of the SWAPO Party.

*As a leader of any organisation, you influence because the people in that organisation, who look up to you for certain benefits. They don't only look up to your leadership, but*



*they look up to you for certain benefits. The benefits might not be in the party, but might be in government, somewhere else in fishing quarters, or elsewhere in tenders (Political analyst 1).*

From this quotation, it can be argued that the wishes of the ordinary people who rely on the representatives are abandoned because the representatives begin to think about themselves and not the people they represent. This has a dent on democracy because those that are meant to be the real beneficiaries of this system are left out, while this also promotes corruption, which erodes the proper running of an organisation. The study also discovered that money plays a crucial role in determining outcomes of elections within the BDP. A member of the party and a political analyst substantiated this.

*If you happen to be a member of parliament and you are a tycoon, you have businesses you can buy votes. In Botswana politics, we get involved in politics because we want to benefit something. Therefore, we always follow a leader who sometimes has a big wallet (Ordinary BDP member 2).*

*In the last elections, people were talking about how it is now becoming expensive to campaign, and delegates are up for sale. So, you know you put up delegates in hotels and you do whatever you want to do to get them. Delegates are kind of being induced now to vote and so you are looking for more and more money to win a political position (Political analyst 1).*

From the views above, it can be concluded that political clientelism is a major factor influencing leadership succession in SWAPO Party and the BDP, by either voting for a certain individual to gain access to resources, or being given money by those wishing elections to go in a certain way. Therefore, the rank and file who were not directly part of the election process would still not have been the ones choosing their leaders through their representatives because of these economic forces. It is a matter of those with money getting what they want through the vulnerability of the representatives who mostly would either be lured by the money or want positions and other benefits from those in power. This situation speaks to the issue of self-interest on the side of not only the leaders but the representatives as well. The ordinary members are thus left out of the equation of decision-making. In the long run, this could cause resentment among the ordinary party members who could among other things engage in civil disobedience.



### 5.4.3 The Political Factor

Among the external influences of party politics in both SWAPO and BDP is the political factor. The study discovered that two types of political cultures affect leadership succession in these two parties. First, the study revealed that there is the subject political culture, where the members do not regard themselves as role players in political processes but rather as subjects of those in power. Second, the study found that there is a parochial political culture where the rank and file do not show interest in what is happening in the party or government and as such have limited awareness. The following view by a SWAPO Party member substantiates this finding:

*I do not understand these political things. If the leader says this one is good and they are going to have a position in the party, for me it does not matter. I am fine with whoever is going to be elected (Focus group).*

From this respondent's assertion, it is clear that they do not mind knowing about the events happening in the party. Their role is to vote for whoever they are told to vote for, without knowing that particular candidate's ideology. It can be argued that this trend is mostly caused by a lack of education because such members are not critical or analytical. This political behaviour has a toxic effect on democracy because the outcome of an electoral process in terms of choosing the leader does not represent the will of the people. Similarly, a political analyst believed that a lack of awareness among the rank and file about their democratic rights was a factor.

*I am cynical about the BDP; I am not too sure if its people are aware of the democratic responsibilities. I get a sense that in the BDP as you said, if you are lucky enough and you have the right resources, you could win any day if you have the right resources. So it's about the resources, I am not too sure if the delegates are going there to say okay, we are stamping our identity on this thing and we would like to get the leaders that we want (Political analyst 1).*

Given these views, it could be argued that lack of education and awareness compromise the ordinary members' responsibilities. This, in turn, compromises the principles of democracy because the leaders become more powerful than the members and would do anything in their interests without being held accountable. These political cultures are entrenched in the parties hence the ordinary members would never see anything wrong about a certain leader. Even if they

see that the leader is not meeting the expected performance standards, they would still believe and vote for that leader because of the loyalty. For example, according to one informant, in the history of the BDP the position of president has not been contested, whoever finds themselves in that position at the time of going to congress end up being endorsed. The informant says this is done to ensure that factionalism does not divide the party. However, as indicated earlier in this chapter, the person who ends being the president of the party is handpicked by the incumbent in Parliament. The fact that the rank and file of the party does not see the need for the position of president to be contested substantiates the issue of this political culture.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the major findings and a discussion on the role of chieftaincy in party politics in Africa. The study revealed the degree of cultural, traditional values or chieftaincy influence into party politics in general and leadership succession systems of the SWAPO Party and BDP in particular. The study also found that there were other internal and external factors, influencing electoral processes in these two political parties. These factors include the rank and file's understanding of democracy, freedom of expression in the parties, fair competition, and the rank and file's involvement in the nomination and election of their leaders and the political party's ideologies. Some of the internal and external factors could also be linked to the issue of cultural and traditional norms and values. The next chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the findings.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions drawn from the findings as well as from the analysis of the literature and empirical evidence. The chapter is also going to present the recommendations before finally presenting areas of further research.

#### 6.2 Conclusions

By analysing the role of chieftaincy in party politics in Africa, focusing specifically on the extent to which it influences the leadership succession systems of the SWAPO Party of Namibia and the BDP of Botswana, this mini-thesis has shown how cultural norms and values affect politics in general and democracy in particular in those two parties. The findings of this study suggest that leaders of these parties are too powerful such that most of the decisions they make are implemented by the party. This includes the issue of succession where a leader just like in the case of chieftaincy can pick someone to succeed him and the ordinary people will believe that such a person is the right choice.

The study also revealed that because of the power the leaders have, those who oppose their preferred choice end up being alienated. Although voting is central to democracy in comparison to the chieftaincy system, the evidence suggests that those involved in the process to represent the ordinary members vote according to the wishes of the leader out of fear of victimisation because the leader appoints cabinet and makes other political appointments. In the SWAPO Party, the central committee which is chaired by the president, starts the nomination process and takes the final decision on the candidates to contest the party's top positions. In the BDP, the president of the party who is also the head of state handpicks a vice president at the state level who is then endorsed as the party leader at its congress, at the end of the incumbent's term of office.

For both parties, the findings revealed that the rank and file also treat the party leaders as father heads whose decisions cannot be challenged. Even though debate is central to democracy, this is to a certain extent stifled, especially with regards to the young people. In most African cultures

including those of Namibia and Botswana, when an elderly person takes a decision it should not be questioned. Doing so is seen as disrespecting the elders. These are traits that characterise chieftaincy where commoners cannot question the decisions of the chief. However, such traits are contrary to the principles of democracy where the custodians of power are the rank and file and debate is key to most decisions. In a democracy, ordinary people should play a role in the taking of decisions that affect them. However, the belief among the ordinary members is that their role is to receive instructions and get direction from the leadership. Thus, the study found that it was because the ordinary members lacked not only the understanding of what democracy was, but also did not know the parties' rules and procedures as well as the constitutions.

Although the primary aim of the study was to establish the influence of chieftaincy on politics and leadership succession as stated at the beginning of this chapter, it emerged that there are other factors both internal and external that affect politics in SWAPO Party and BDP. The lack of understanding of the democratic system is one of the internal factors that were identified. The SWAPO Party has a school where it teaches its members about the constitution, but this is only accessible to a fraction that can afford it. The rest of the members remain uneducated about both the constitution and democracy. The BDP has no education programme on democracy. Because of this, members are submissive to their leaders because the only right they know they have is to vote for their party and the leaders presented to them each election year. This suits the leaders because they can achieve what they want using democratic means. Education is crucial in a democracy because it helps people make informed choices. Lack thereof is disempowering.

Another internal factor identified by the study is the limited freedom of expression on the issue of leadership succession in both parties. The freedom or lack thereof for one to express themselves depends on which side of the fence they stand. This means that those who support the leader's choice of successor can express themselves freely, compared to those opposed to the leader's choice. From the findings, some of those who have competed with the leader's choice ended up leaving the parties or have been cast aside and replaced by those supporting the president's choice. However, in the BDP, this has depended on the leadership style or personality of the leader. Each leader approaches this issue differently. The above is contrary to the principles of democracy where freedom of expression is not optional. Regardless of the form of democracy an organisation

uses, freedom of expression is a fundamental principle that should be exercised (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2018, p. VI). Tolerance for dissenting views in a democracy is necessary.

The study also revealed that the playing field is not levelled for those competing for leadership positions. The fact that the party president has the right to nominate someone he would prefer as his successor puts that individual at an advantaged position because of the president's power and influence within the party and government. However, according to the principles of democracy, competition for votes should be fair. The leader's open support for one candidate affects that leadership contest because those involved in the voting process seek to appease the leader and not the party's rank and file.

Although like any other member, the leader has the right to nominate an individual, doing so publicly and campaigning for that individual causes unfair competition. Lastly, on internal factors, the SWAPO Party uses a representative system which entails a group of intermediaries who represent the ordinary people. The research revealed that the party follows its election rules and procedures when it comes to leadership succession. The BDP also uses representative democracy where a group of people represents the rest of the members at a congress that elects the top leadership of the party. However, some members of both parties are dissatisfied with this form of democracy because their representatives end up representing the leader's or their interests not those of their constituencies. In a democratic system, the representatives should represent the interests of their people.

External factors that influence the party politics of SWAPO and BDP are social, economic and political. The social factor that would influence party politics in general and leadership succession in particular is the fact that when a leader's term expires, they would want to do so without fear that whatever wrong they might have committed during their tenure is not investigated. Moreover, they would also want to ensure that their legacy is protected. As such, it becomes imperative that the outgoing leader leaves someone in office who would ensure that they enjoy their retirement. Contrary to the democratic principle of putting the wishes of the majority into consideration, the individual leader's interests are advanced. Instead of the majority getting a president they would have preferred, they end up having someone who is there to protect the interests and legacy of the outgoing leader.

Money and other economic factors play a role in influencing electoral activities in SWAPO Party and BDP. The study revealed that the representatives advance their interests by aligning themselves with the leader so that they can benefit from his influence. This is referred to by Kusche (2014, p. 207) as political clientelism, a process where a leader grants favours and benefits in exchange for votes. In other cases, political activities within a party are influenced by what is referred to as "brown envelopes" where representatives are given money to support a certain candidate. Once again, this leaves out the majority whose interests are supposed to be represented by the intermediaries who according to democracy are the real custodians of power. The choice of the leader at the end will not be necessarily the choice of the ordinary members but rather that of the leader and some representatives. Finally, the last external factor influencing party politics is the political culture, which is divided into two types. According to the first one, the rank and file regard themselves as subjects of those in power and not shareholders of the party. With the second type, the rank and file do not know what happens in the party, their role is to stand up on election-day to go and vote. These have surrendered their power as their democratic right to their leaders.

To conclude, it is clear from the findings that the SWAPO Party and the BDP have similar trends concerning leadership succession. This is despite the fact that they have different political backgrounds. The SWAPO Party was a liberation movement before Namibia's independence and had to change and become a democratic party at independence in 1990. The BDP, on the other hand, started as a political party from the onset. Given this difference in their political backgrounds, but similar traits in their leadership selection, and empirical evidence provided in the study, it can be concluded that there is a degree of chieftaincy influence in those parties, although other factors were also revealed.

It is worth noting that this study faced limitations, especially with regards to the unavailability of some key informants the researcher intended to interview. This was because the study was conducted at a time when the SWAPO Party was preparing for an electoral college which was taking place in September 2019, while members of the BDP were busy campaigning because Botswana's elections were a few months away (October 2019).



### 6.3 Recommendations

Given the findings summarised in this chapter, it is clear that the leaders of the SWAPO Party and the BDP are given so much power. This could become a problem if an autocrat leader could one day lead these parties. Therefore, there is a need to restrict their powers. The rank and file should be empowered as per their democratic right through the systems of the party to be able to correct or hold the leader accountable without fear of retribution should he not do as expected. Additionally, because the leader is the appointing authority of cabinet, other political positions and commands so much influence in the party, they should not be allowed to nominate and lobby for one individual they prefer as their success. This promotes issues of self-interest and gives that particular individual a competitive advantage over other candidates thus promoting unfairness. Moreover, the successor may be voted into power on the basis that he was supported by the outgoing president, and not necessarily on his capability to lead.

However, the outgoing president may still be able to exercise his democratic right to vote for his favourite candidate. This would allow fair competition among those seeking to succeed him. Fair competition in an election is a fundamental principle of democracy. Additionally, the SWAPO Party should consider employing a bottom-up approach concerning the nominations of the top leadership positions of the party instead of using the current system. This will allow the ordinary members to nominate individuals they would prefer, instead of only being presented with names decided by the members of the central committee. In the case of the BDP, the system of automatic succession at the state level has a potential negative impact on the BDP as it denies the ordinary people the opportunity to decide who leads them. This is so because the head of state appoints a vice-president who then takes over from the outgoing president of both the party and country. The incoming president serves as party and state president for about a year and a half before he is endorsed as the president of the party at its congress a few months before a national election. The presidency needs to start being competed for it to afford the people the opportunity of electing a leader they prefer.

The findings revealed that some members of the SWAPO Party and BDP do not understand democracy, and because of this, they do not understand the powers they have in this system. This was attributed to the fact that both the SWAPO Party and BDP do not have a programme to educate their members about democracy. It would thus be recommended that they start educating their



members on democracy and the party constitution so that they can understand their rights. Both parties have had incidences where some members broke away to form splinter parties or those with divergent views from those of the leader. Debate is one of the most important aspects of democracy. Therefore, debate should be encouraged because it strengthens democracy. Those with divergent views should be respected instead of sending them into political oblivion. It is clear from the scan of literature that there is a conflict between cultural practices and democracy. As such, where possible, there should be a separation of the two systems to ensure that democratic principles in a political system are not compromised.

#### **6.4 Areas for Further Research**

On this score, there is a need for further research on democracy in Southern Africa. The region is renowned as a beacon of democracy on the African continent. However, from 2007, there have been signs that it could be a ticking time bomb, especially concerning leadership succession. The exchange of power among leaders in Southern Africa is becoming problematic and is receiving limited scholarly attention. For example, with only a few months before his term as president was about to end, Thabo Mbeki was made to resign as state president by his comrades after he lost the leadership contest of the African National Congress (ANC), South Africa's ruling party. His relationship with his former deputy president who he had relieved of his duties had turned sour. In 2017, late former president of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe was made to resign in a move orchestrated by his former long-time ally Emerson Mnangagwa with the assistance of the army. In 2018, former South African president Jacob Zuma was made to resign by his party after his tenure as party president ended. Although they have been seen together with his then deputy Cyril Ramaphosa who succeeded him, their relationship had also soured. Lastly, in Botswana, the relationship between former president Ian Khama and his successor (President Masisi) who he had handpicked also broke down. Khama quit the ruling BDP and formed the Botswana Patriotic Front. If these cases of leadership succession are not well managed, they could have a negative impact on democracy. This is an area of leadership succession which researchers could expand on.

## 6.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on the conclusions drawn from the findings of this study as well as conclusions made from an analysis of the reviewed literature. The chapter also presented recommendations and suggested possible areas for further study.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: List of Informants

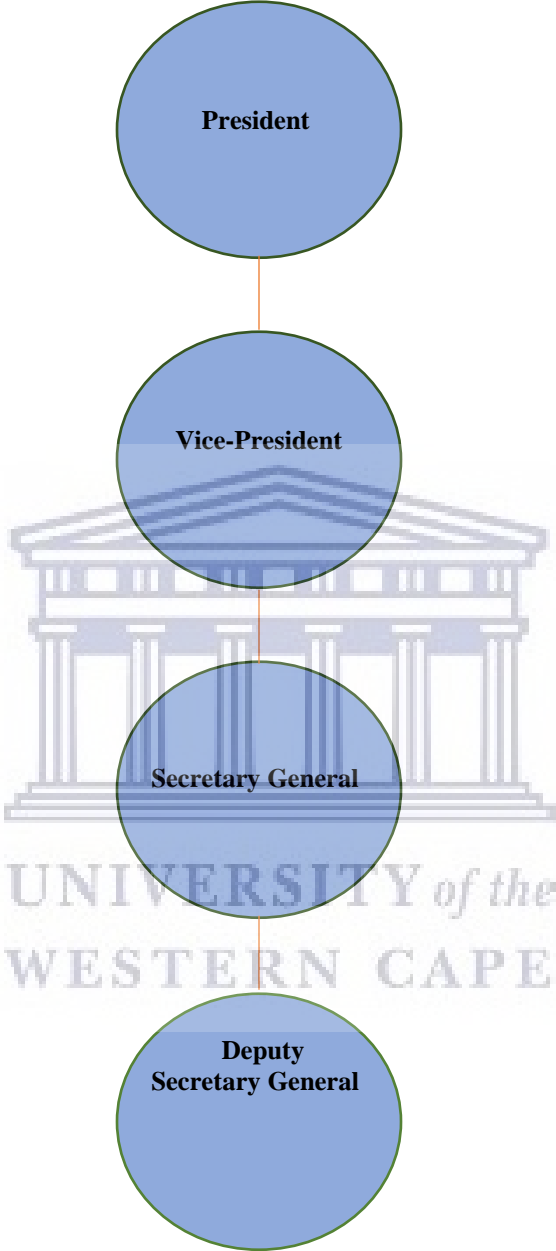
#### SWAPO PARTY (Namibia)

| Number | Informant                               | Date of interview | Place of interview   |
|--------|---|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1      | Former SWAPO Party member 1             | 6 June 2019       | Parliament, Windhoek |
| 2      | Former SWAPO Party member 2             | 10 June 2019      | Windhoek, Namibia    |
| 3      | SWAPO Party leader 1                    | 11 June 2019      | Suiderhof, Windhoek  |
| 4      | SWAPO Party leader 2                    | 11 June 2019      | SWAPO Party HQ       |
| 5      | Political analyst 1                     | 18 June 2019      | KMTC Guest House     |
| 6      | Political analyst 2                     | 19 June 2019      | Windhoek, Namibia    |
| 7      | Focus group discussion (3 participants) | 28 June 2019      | Wanaheda, Windhoek   |

#### BDP (Botswana)

| Number | Informant           | Date of interview | Place of interview   |
|--------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1      | Political analyst 1 | 19 July 2019      | Tsholofelo, Gaborone |
| 2      | Political analyst 2 | 19 July 2019      | Grand Palm, Gaborone |
| 3      | BDP member 1        | 20 July 2019      | Grand Palm, Gaborone |
| 4      | Former BDP member   | 21 July 2019      | Bontleng, Gaborone   |
| 5      | BDP leader          | 21 July 2019      | Game City, Gaborone  |
| 6      | BDP member 2        | 22 July 2019      | Grand Palm, Gaborone |

**Appendix B: The top Leadership of the SWAPO Party**



**Appendix C: The top leadership of the BDP**

