POLITICAL PARTIES AND INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY IN EAST AFRICA

From Representative to Participatory Democracy

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List of Abbreviations

ASP	Afro Shirazi Party
CCM	Chama Cha Mapinduzi
CHADEMA	Chama Cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo
CP	Conservative Party
CUF	Civic United Front
FDC	Forum for Democratic Change
FORD	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy
KANU	Kenya Africa National Union
KADU	Kenya Africa Democratic Union
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
NRM	National Resistance Movement
NAK	National Alliance of Kenya
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition
NCCR-Mageuzi	The National Convention for Construction and Reform
NEC	National Executive Council
NEC	National Electoral Commission
NDC	National Delegates Conference
NIMD	Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement
PNU	Party of National Unity
TANU	Tanzania African National Union
TLP	Tanzania Labour Party
UDP	United Democratic Party
UPC	Uganda Peoples Party

1   INTRODUCTION

This research seeks to investigate how processes of participatory democracy within political parties influence intra-party democracy in East Africa. The exercise is anchored in the wider literature on *democracy* and more specifically *participatory democracy* which can be described as a process that emphasizes the broad participation (in decision making) of citizens in the direction and operation of political systems. Membership participation in political parties occurs through processes such as policy formulation, leadership and candidate selection as well as their role in party organs at all levels of the party structure (Wanjohi 2005). The extent to which this is possible depends largely on both formal and informal institutional structures built into the political party systems.

The interaction between these formal and informal processes determines the level of internal democracy within a political party. For the purposes of this research, intra-party democracy (IPD) refers to the extent to which political parties' decision making structures and processes provide opportunities for individual citizens to influence the choices that parties offer to voters and eventually to determine the type of government formed (Scarrow 2005). Intra-party democracy is essential for the creation and growth of well functioning and sustainable democratic institutions. Firstly, it encourages a culture of democratic debate and deliberation of critical issues and therefore collective ownership of decisions. Secondly, it promotes party unity through reduced factionalism and/or fragmentation. Thirdly, it creates legitimate internal conflict management systems. Fourthly, it reduces opportunistic and arbitrary use of delegated authority.

The attainment of intra-party democracy as outlined above depends on the extent to which processes of effective membership participation are formally stipulated and practically implemented in the party's organisational rules and procedures. When there is ineffective enforcement, or complete absence of such rules, the party may be faced with significant operational challenges including centralised decision making and coalition negotiation processes, non-inclusive leadership and candidate selection processes, undemocratic conflict management mechanisms and unconstitutional or illegitimate party conventions.

These challenges often result in undesired outcomes such as lack of cohesion, factionalism and instability leading to resignations and/or expulsions, declining membership and electoral support as well as weak coalitions. These factors ultimately undermine political parties' effectiveness as agents of democracy.

1.1 Statement of research problem

Democratic theorists and policy makers generally concur on the critical role that that political parties play in providing a link between their membership and elected representatives. In addition, it is incontrovertible that no contemporary democracy has excelled without political parties (Teorell 1999). This notwithstanding, political parties across the globe continue to grapple with institutional and structural challenges with the potential to compromise their legitimacy, effective functioning and eventual survival. These challenges include declining membership, poor institutionalisation, weak internal organisation, serious internal conflicts and inferior electoral performance (NIMD 2004).

Consequently, the popularity of political parties may be waning, characterised by declining membership, general public disaffection and the rise of partisan identification (Hopkin 2004). Concern with these negative developments has spurred a resurgence of political party reform initiatives aimed at avoiding stagnation, regaining legitimacy, improving internal functioning of political parties, and enhancing their survival both in and outside government. This reform agenda has the objective of equipping political parties with the capacity to carry out their societal functions which include: augmenting citizen participation in the political processes, widening aggregation of diverse political interests, facilitating orderly and democratic transfer of political power, promoting government accountability, and imparting legitimacy to the political system (Matlosa 2005). In order to effectively carry out these functions, political parties' reform process has to include aspects related to the internal organisation such as intra-party democracy (NIMD 2004).

There is however a wide gap between the existence of formal organisational structures of political parties and actual democratic practice in East Africa. This is generally symptomatic of emerging democracies globally, characterised by a variance between the established formal rules stipulated in party documents and the practical reality in the functioning of political organisations.

This among other intervening factors contributes to the persistent lack of cohesion and internal unity, discord and disintegration, diminishing popularity and electoral losses among political parties (Meinhardt and Patel, 2003: 33).

In East Africa, political parties are characterised by a top-down organisational structure where power and decision making is highly centralised. This leaves little room for deliberative decision making processes involving party membership. This rigid organisational structure is in part inherited from the colonial legacy where colonial administrators and political elites dictated to,

and made decisions on behalf of the native populations without consultation (Kanyongolo and Malyamkono 2003:273). Political parties therefore tend to be autocratic or oligarchic in their organisational structures where conformity is preferable to critical debate of issues, and is enforced through covert and overt pressure, and illegal sanctions including suspension and even expulsion from the party. These practices lead to severe limitations on processes of inclusiveness and transparency while breeding patrimonialism and hence compromising intra-party democracy.

1.2   Research hypothesis, objectives and questions

1.2.1   Hypothesis

This research is designed to generate further empirical evidence to support the hypothesis that decentralised and inclusive institutional processes enhance intra-party democracy. The dearth of a detailed and extensive body of research on intra-party democracy presents a number of challenges regarding the operationalisation of the concept. Just as there is no universally accepted definition of 'democracy', there is little agreement on exactly what intra-party democracy entails. Three conceptual categories of *inclusiveness, (de)centralisation* and *institutionalisation* have been advanced as general criteria or indicators for determining levels of intra-party democracy (Scarrow 2005). This hypothesis is therefore based the assumption that intra-party democracy can be enhanced through processes of Institutionalisation, Inclusiveness and Decentralisation.

Additionally, this research is based on the assumption that intra-party democracy is a desirable ideal for political parties themselves. This assumption is based on the premise that increased intra-party democracy leads to more party effectiveness and subsequent electoral success on the one hand, and the strengthening of democratic culture in the wider society on the other (Scarrow 2005). The choice of variables and analytical design therefore depends on whether the emphasis is on *process* oriented (relating to membership participation) or *outcome* oriented (related to party effectiveness) approaches.

The operationalisation of the concept of intra-party democracy through an outcome oriented approach is still problematic owing to the lack of sufficient evidence that increased internal democracy necessarily leads to better electoral performance and political party success (Scarrow 2005:3). It can be argued however that the appeal of intra-party democracy lies in adopting a process oriented approach whose value lies in its ability to increase citizens' participation in government and hence promote democracy in the wider society. This research therefore takes a *process* oriented approach based on three distinct variables of:

a. Institutionalisation
b. policy formulation
c. membership participation
d. leadership selection

All three variables are individually sufficient but not jointly necessary to determine the extent of intra-party democracy. Conversely, there is less emphasis on the *outcome* oriented approach which would require the development of measurement techniques to determine the causal linkages between intra-party democracy and party effectiveness measured through electoral success for instance. This leads to the development of three sub-hypotheses that:

a. The more institutionalised party structures are, the higher the levels of intra-party democracy
b. The more inclusive and participatory the policy formulation process is, the higher the levels of intra-party democracy.
c. The more institutionalised and genuine the membership participation processes are, the higher the levels of intra-party democracy.
d. The less centralised and more inclusive the leadership selection is, the higher the levels of intra-party democracy.

1.2.2 Research question

This exploratory research is guided by the main question:
How do the institutional and organisational processes of policy formulation, leadership selection and membership participation enhance intra-party democracy in East Africa?

This research in grounded on theories of participatory democracy hence measurement variables that indicate the degree of inclusiveness and participation are utilised to determine levels of internal party democracy. The concept of intra-party democracy is therefore operationalised by examining three major processes of membership participation in political party activities. Three sub-questions were subsequently developed:
a. How do levels of institutionalisation enhance intra-party democracy?
b. How do processes of policy formulation enhance intra-party democracy?

c. How do processes of leadership and candidate selection enhance intra-party democracy?

d. How do levels of membership participation enhance intra-party democracy?

The research also seeks to determine how these processes are interrelated both internally and externally in the wider political context.

1.2.3   Research objectives

The objective of this research is therefore to expand the body of knowledge on intra-party democracy by providing empirical evidence for the understanding of the functioning of political parties in East Africa. It seeks to establish the relationships between processes of institutionalisation, policy formulation, membership participation and leadership selection and intra-party democracy and by so doing provide a basis for examining possibilities of increasing the legitimacy of political parties in the region.

1.3   Motivation

Contemporary research and policy discourse on democracy in Africa tends to focus more on socio-economic and political benefits accruing from recent developments in democratisation on the continent. This developmental perspective seeks to establish causal linkages or correlations between democratic gains and socio-economic progress through such concepts as good governance (Berendsen (Ed) 2008). It argues that participatory democracy plays a central role in increasing citizens' involvement in policy development, decision making and generally empowering them with the means to hold their leadership to account, thus producing more responsive governments.

The complexities and sheer size of modern societies, bound under the unitary notion of the nation-state, do not however make for effective and efficient participatory democracy in the ideal sense of Athenian direct democracy. The limitation of direct democracy as a viable model of contemporary governance has therefore led to a shift in favour of representative democracy. The choice between direct and representative democracy is however still contested in comparative political literature (Teorell 1999). Consensus is however emerging in the majority of research on democracy in Africa in favour of representative democracy and the role of political parties as key actors in the democratisation process (McMahon 2001). Political parties however face a credibility challenge as argued above. Internal democracy is therefore indispensable if political parties are to fulfil their role as legitimate and credible agents of democratisation in the wider society. This research seeks to expand existing knowledge on intra-

party democracy in East Africa with specific reference to how processes of centralisation, inclusiveness and institutionalisation influence levels of participatory democracy.

A wealth of research and a significant body of theory has been developed on intra-party democracy in western societies based on the study of political party systems and party politics in such countries as the United States, Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries (Scarrow 1999). There however seems to be a gap in empirical research and general body of knowledge regarding intra-party democracy in Africa. To the contrary, The highly internally democratic systems in Switzerland with its relative preference for direct democracy in the form of regular referenda has been contrasted with the less internally democratic and interest based party politics in the U.S for instance (Anstead 2008, Ladner and Brandle 1999).

In Africa, little research has been done to investigate internal aspects of political party structures, functioning, and institutionalisation in general and processes of internal democracy in particular. Only recently has some exploratory work been done on certain aspects of intra-party democracy if only from an institutional and capacity building perspective as opposed to a real focus on the process oriented approach that prioritises and strengthens membership participation. Recent work by Mohamed Salih (2007) and Michael Chege (2007) under the auspices of IDEA, only begin to scratch the surface of an increasingly complex and pertinent area of inquiry.

Similarly, political pluralism tends to be equated with the presence of multiple political parties contesting elections without regard to the political environment in which they operate and the internal institutional structures and processes by which these parties offer real choices and options to the electorate. It is this realisation that has sustained the long fight for constitutional and political reform in all three East African countries to provide a level playing field for all political parties (Musambayi 2003). Increased civic awareness from mass civic education programmes especially since the late 1990s may have increased voter turn out and participation in elections, but this is more a reflection of the voters' faith in the electoral process as a means of changing leadership, as opposed to faith in political parties as institutions of democracy (Chege 2007).

There is therefore a need for more detailed and comprehensive research into processes of intra-party democracy among African political parties that goes beyond mere analysis of African political party systems. This research attempts a preliminary step in this direction by seeking to investigate the state of intra-party democracy among political parties in the three East African countries of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The next chapter presents a review of the literature that provides the theoretical underpinnings

of intra-party democracy and seeks to contextualise it in the research setting within African political parties. It examines varying theoretical approaches to the question of intra-party democracy in general followed by specific references to its application in the region under investigation. Chapter 3 explains in detail the methodological considerations that informed the entire research design and process. It sheds light on processes of case selection, data collection tools and parameters of data analysis.

Chapter four situates the research in context. It examines the overall external environment in which political parties function in East Africa. It pays particular attention to the legal and regulatory mechanisms as well as the prevailing party political environment and how the role of the state impacts the functioning of political parties. Chapter five provides an analysis of the empirical findings regarding intra-party democracy in East Africa along a set of the key indicators and processes of institutionalisation, policy formulation, membership participation and leadership and candidate selection. Finally, chapter six sums up the main theoretical arguments and empirical findings, and advances a set of policy proposals and suggestions regarding further research into intra-party democracy in Africa.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Political parties in democratic theory

Political parties are pre-eminent institutions of modern democratic governance. The general consensus in comparative political thought and among policy makers is that political parties play a central role in deepening and fostering democracy in both established as well as emerging democratic polities. This is aptly captured by the assertion that 'political parties created democracy and modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the political parties' (Schattschneider, 1942: 1). The relevance of political parties in the organisation of modern politics and governance is not a recent phenomenon of contemporary societies. Political parties have been part and parcel of political organisation since the creation of the nation state.

This chapter seeks to establish a working definition of political parties as institutions of political organisation. It explores the various conceptions of political parties in comparative political thought and literature and contextualizes this within the broader debate on democracy and more specifically participatory democracy. It pays particular attention to the historical, socio-economic and cultural determinants of the evolution and development of political parties. This approach in my view is relevant in distinguishing characteristic variations between political parties within and between emerging African democracies and those pertaining to established Western democratic polities. Political parties are essentially products of social organisation for political power and are best studied and understood in juxtaposition with the social-historical forces at play providing the context in which they emerge and operate.

2.1.1 Definitions

As early as the 18th century, Edmund Burke described a political party as 'a body of men united for promoting, by their joint endeavours, the national interest upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed' (Churchill, 1963). Modern political parties however exhibit three distinct characteristics lacking in Burke's definition. First, they have become more organised and centralised institutions with bureaucratic structures, secretariats and paid staffers. Secondly, modern parties do not necessarily work towards a national interest, but any kind of interest including regional, ethnic, racial, religious or economic objectives.

Parties are not organised along a 'particular principle' as many manifest a conglomeration of varying interests, ideologies, principles and objectives. Third, political parties are largely organised with the sole objective of competing for and capturing political office (Hague and Harrop 2007). The nature, forms and functions of political parties have continued to evolve in response to socio-economic and political changes in society. Earlier conceptions of political parties have therefore demonstrably changed over time.

The element of competition and striving to govern is a central component of modern political parties. Sartori aptly describes a political party as 'any political group identified by an official label that present at elections, and is capable of placing through elections, candidates for public office' (Sartori 1976: 63). This definition however still falls short of capturing the organisational as well as interest aggregation and articulation dimensions of political parties. It is thus preferable, for the purposes of this discussion, to adopt the definition by Maliyamkono and Kanyongolo (2003:41) that 'a political party is an organised association of people working together to compete for political office and to promote agreed-upon policies'.

2.1.2 Political parties and normative utilitarianism

The foregoing conceptualisation of political parties is derived from a general consensus on the utilitarian and functional view of their perceived 'usefulness' in modern democracies. According to Diamond (1997:23) the importance of political parties lies in the functions they perform in modern democracies by linking citizens to government. These include the articulation and aggregating of diverse interests, recruitment and preparation of candidates for electoral office, crafting policy alternatives and setting the policy agenda, organising and participating in electoral competition and forming effective government and thus integrating groups and individuals into the democratic process.

Consequently, political parties not only provide the means by which citizens can participate in the governance process, but also structure the political landscape to enable competition between varying interests and policy objectives. This characterises the classification of political regimes advanced by Robert Dahl (1971) which categorises democratic processes along the two dimensions of political competition and political participation.

Political parties as forms of social organisation continue to evolve or emerge in response to changing socio-economic and political realities. Modernisation theorists such as Samuel Huntington (1968) argue that the significance of political parties goes beyond the mere utilitarian function of contesting and capturing or retaining political power. According to this theory, political parties are necessary and crucial

institutions in the construction of a stable and participatory political order as well as ensuring progressive modernisation and development. Huntington sees political parties as serving the important function of interest aggregation, channelling disparate social groupings and interests into a common socio-political platform and thus providing a stabilizing effect to an otherwise fractious society (Manning 2005:717).

Normative approaches to party politics are particularly popular among policy makers, democracy building advocates and democracy assistance programmes in emerging or post 'Third Wave' democracies (Huntington 1991). These programmes are often carried out by surrogate institutions of established political parties or political order in western democracies. They often propagate the view that their form of political organisation is the ideal to which emerging democracies ought to emulate. Modernisation theory's appeal therefore lies in the perceived ability of political parties to provide a unifying force in the face of deep rooted and pre-existing social cleavages such as ethnicity, regionalism, caste, racism, clannism or religious differences that often ignite social tensions and in some cases civil conflict. In order to fulfil these normative functions, Manning (2005) argues that political parties are expected to have a 'strong social base, offer distinctive platforms which appeal to a core set of voters and be able to attract and retain party activists and potential leaders'. This implies a certain level of organisational strength and complexity, institutionalised mass support and strong linkages to broad social organisations such as labour unions and peasant organisations (Huntington 1968).

2.1.3 Political parties in historical perspective

The large body of knowledge, theoretical assumptions and models of interpreting political party systems have largely been developed from western experiences. Consequently, the normative conceptualisation of political parties draws largely from studies based on social and political developments in western societies. Political parties in the classical sense are a product of the industrial revolution characterised by rapid socio-economic developments and attendant social and class conflicts arising from cleavages between the ruling class and the workers. These tensions provided for the development of distinct social movements with clear ideologies and interests. Political parties thus emerged out of mass social organisation to meet the challenges of the day.

In the post World War II and Cold War era, the role of ideology has become less important, prosperity became more widespread, socio-economic disparities waned and religious convictions and cleavages gave way to increased secularism in Western Europe. This evolutionary path led to the transformation of the original twin 'mass' and 'cadre' (elite) parties into what Kirchheimer (1966) calls the 'catch-all-party' which seek to govern in the 'national interest' instead of representing particular social groups or interests.

These rapid socio-economic changes led to a transformation of the political system where governing became more technical and the mass media became the main medium of electoral communication. Consequently, party cadres and membership became increasingly redundant as party leaders by-passed them and communicated directly with the electorate (Hague and Harrop 2007).

The historical, social, economic and political realities shaping the development of African political party systems are however markedly different and require a new set of theoretical tools and approaches in order to fully capture the essence of their role in African polities. Normative approaches to the study and analysis of political parties in Africa tend to assume prescriptive perspectives that imply some sort of structural imposition as opposed to appreciation of organic development of parties (Janda 2005). These approaches are therefore not best suited for the study and analysis of political parties in emerging democracies in Africa. This position is further compounded by the fact that debate still abounds even in established western democracies regarding the effectiveness of political parties in enhancing democracy in the wider society. As van Biezen (2004) argues, 'their increasing inability to perform many of the functions seen as essential to a healthy performance of democracy' has been the subject of heated debate among comparative political scientists.

2.1.4   African political parties: From oligarchy to internal democracy

African political parties are products of distinct historical, socio-economic and political conditions that influence their character and functioning different from those prevailing in western democracies. The only somewhat parallel historical point with the European model was the immediate pre and post independence period when African political parties were broad-based mass liberation movements embodying a single ideology of liberation from colonial rule. Independence political parties, formulated under the single ideology of majority African rule provided a unifying force among societies that were historically antagonistic along ethnic lines.

Unlike the majority of their western counterparts almost all African nation states (with the exception of countries such as Somalia) lack in distinctive cultural or ethno-linguistic homogeneity. They are highly heterogeneous along ethnic, regional, religious or clan cleavages. Although western European polities such as the Netherlands may have had rifts encompassing Calvinists, Socialists, Catholics, western entrepreneurs, southern small farmers etc, they remained relatively stable and political competition was contained within established structures and traditions (NIMD 2008). African societies on the other hand lack in socially entrenched and institutionalised political, social and governance structures along which political competition can be channelled. They are therefore highly fractious and fragile. Political

competition and organisation tends to follow these pre-existing fault lines which in turn determine the structure of political parties. Manning (2005:718) characterises African parties as 'not [being] organically linked to any particular organized social group, and so have often resorted to mobilizing people along the issues that are ready to hand – ethnicity, opposition to structural economic reform – without regard for the long-term consequences'.

Modernization theory to this extent therefore, falls short of capturing the essence of post third wave African political parties. Instead of providing stability and ordering the political system, reigning in divisive and potentially explosive social forces, African political parties and the elites that control them tend to play on these very social cleavages to gain power through inherently undemocratic means. This characterization seems to affirm Robert Michels' (1968) assertion that political parties have an inherent tendency towards oligarchy. According to this approach, not only do political parties develop undemocratic characteristics in the way they control and manipulate social cleavages, but also in their internal organisation and decision-making processes. According to Michels, the more parties become organised institutions, the less democratic they become. This structuralist approach contends that regardless of a political party's formal rules about internal checks and balances, organisation led to centralisation of power, oligarchy and the decline of internal democracy (Kavanagh 2003).

The paradox of the majority of African political parties is that most of them are poorly organised and lack institutional capacity, their decision making processes are unstructured and power often lies in the hands of the party leader and a few of his cronies who are usually wealthy enough to bankroll the party (Wanjohi 2003). The role of the party membership is reduced to a bare minimum, usually to endorse decisions already made by the elite. Political mobilisation assumes the form of personality cults and loyalty is often to the party leader as opposed to the party as an institution. This encourages the politics of 'party hopping' where leadership disagreements may lead to one leader jumping from one party to another and carrying his supporters with him/her.

On the other extreme are the well organised, highly centralized and structured parties that have been in power since independence such as CCM in Tanzania. Centralisation then takes away decision making power from lower party organs and branches and concentrates it on a core group of party oligarchs such as the Central Committee of the CCM. Such parties are usually found in single-party regimes where the party and the state are so fused that they became indistinguishable from each other. Whatever the case may be, both categories of parties, either by default or design, are considerably lacking in internal democracy.

Other approaches advanced to explain the democratic deficit between African political parties and a truly representative democracy include developmental theory which argues that certain minimum socio-economic pre-conditions are necessary for democracy to thrive. It further argues that the low socio-economic condition of the African polity and the distinct lack of clear ideological foundations, allow for the development of clientelist and patronage based political structures through which access to, and distribution of state resources can be channelled. While describing the socio-economic basis for the lack of intra-party democracy in western societies, Otto Kirchheimer (1966) aptly captured a picture that is as much applicable to modern African political systems. In his view, contemporary political parties are characterised by the decreasing influence of individual party members, lack of specific class appeal in favour of other pre-existing social cleavages in order to appeal to voter support base, increasing autonomy of the leadership from internal checks and balances, and the complete lack of ideology in the parties' programmes.

In Africa especially, the continuing debate on the sequencing of democracy and development as well as the developmental prerequisites for democracy is more pertinent. Some African leaders such as Kenya's former President Daniel Arap Moi have advanced similar arguments to explain their preference for single party rule (The Standard, July 22, 2008). Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni imposed a total proscription of political party activity on the grounds that political parties breed conflict in fragile nation states; they are authoritarian, urban based groupings of small elites; they are corrupt; they have no clear policies; there is a lack of a middle class to support their existence; they are manipulated by external actors to achieve neo-colonial or imperial interests by proxy; or that other systems are more democratic than multiparty systems (Okuku 2002).

While some of these attributes may apply to some political parties in some African countries, it is certainly not the case that they are an accurate characterisation of political parties across the continent (McMahon 2004). It is arguable that political parties may not be the cause, but rather a reflection of pre-existing social cleavages and proscription or restriction of political party activity may not be the solution to these problems. Counter intuitively, effective and well functioning political parties can serve as a pressure valve by which social tensions and frustrations can be channelled through peaceful means. The importance of well functioning, effective and internally democratic political parties cannot therefore be overstated. Political parties that guarantee a degree of effective and transparent membership participation in deliberation of policy, leadership selection and overall decision making can instead provide avenues for social cohesion, minimise possibilities of open conflict and facilitate peaceful resolution of conflict.

2.2 Intra-party democracy in theoretical perspective

The primary democratic function of political parties is to link the citizenry with the government (Sartori 2005:11). In order to play this role effectively, political parties have to provide opportunities for effective participation by party members, activists and leaders in the party's decision making processes. Debate continues among scholars and theorists of comparative politics and democracy regarding the desirability and feasibility of intra-party democracy.

2.2.1 Definition

German scholar Robert Michels (1962) famously advanced his 'iron law of oligarchy' which argues that political parties are inherently undemocratic and have a tendency towards oligarchy where the party elite and leadership assume control of the party at the expense of the party membership. According to this argument, intra-party democracy is therefore inconsistent with the elite preference for highly organised, structured and institutionalised party systems. Oligarchic political parties tend to have highly centralised and non-inclusive decision making processes and are therefore not internally democratic. This view thus proposes that intra-party democracy is a prerequisite for a democratic state.

This thesis has been refuted by those who argue that intra-party democracy weakens political parties and is therefore undesirable. Proponents of this view argue that 'in order to serve democratic ends, political parties themselves must be ruled by oligarchic principles' (Teorell 1999: 364). These two positions represent the deep divide and debate that surrounds the very normative and prescriptive approach to intra-party democracy. This section seeks to examine both arguments in detail and argues for the desirability and feasibility of intra-party democracy as a means to increase democracy in the wider society. Taking into account the nature of African party politics as discussed above, intra-party democracy would play a significant role in processes of consolidating and entrenching a democratic culture in African societies.

2.2.2 Intra-party democracy: A case for oligarchy?

Intra-party democracy is not a universally popular notion and several arguments have been advanced against it based on the assumption that democratic decision making processes are prone to inefficiency. Too much internal democracy, it is argued, is likely to weaken the ability of a political party to compete against its opponents.

> Democratic principles demand that leadership at all levels be elective, that it be frequently renewed, collective in character, weak in authority. Organized in this fashion, a party is not well armed for the struggles of politics. (Durveger, 1954: 134)

Empirical research on political parties in countries such as Switzerland (Ladner and Brandle 1999), United Kingdom (Anstead 2008) and Australia (Gauja 2006) seems to generate similar conclusions with regard to the weakening effect of intra-party democracy on political parties albeit with some minor positive effects. According to Anika Gauja (2006), intra-party democracy impedes decision-making within parties, precludes parties from choosing candidates they regard as most appealing to the electorate and transfers key political decisions to a small group of activists at the expense of the broader party membership. Opposition to intra-party democracy is based on a key characteristic of western political parties faced with ever declining membership and the increasingly central role that party activists take as a result. The assumption is that party activists tend to take more extreme ideological positions than the party leadership or the electorate.

Intra-party democracy is also seen as lessening party cohesion while increasing the risk of internal dissention. This impinges on party efficiency as more energy and time is spent on internal competition and conflict resolution as opposed to concentrating on the core priorities of electoral and governmental success. This may seem to make oligarchy a more appealing option for presenting a united front, both to the electorate and the opposing parties (Wright 1971:446). Representative democrats are therefore likely to defend oligarchy as the best means to allow pragmatic party leadership to have direct access to and representation of the electorate thus by-passing party activists.

Proponents of the competitive model of democracy (Schumpeter 1942; Dahl 1956; Downs 1957 Miller 1983; Sartori 1987), argue that a system of competitive political parties is necessary for effective interest aggregation and the channelling of those in competing for government. Competitive democrats therefore view intra-party democracy as threatening the efficiency and compromising the competitiveness of political parties and thereby threatening democracy itself.

Comparative political approaches to democracy such as competitive, representative or deliberative democracy seem to present compelling arguments against intra-party democracy in favour of oligarchy. The discourse hinges on the normative choice between direct (participatory) democracy and representative democracy. What institutional safeguards can be built into representative democracy in order to guarantee acceptable levels of citizen participation in the absence of direct democracy? How can intra-party

democracy fill this gap without compromising the effectiveness and efficiency of political parties? Proponents of direct democracy who favour direct citizens' participation in governance processes decry the failure of representative democracy conducted through the political party system as an ineffective alternative. Hence the preference in Switzerland for example for direct democracy exercised through referendums (Ladner and Brandle 1999).

In the most part, African political parties are not characterised by the presence of an influential core of party activists. Consequently, such a theoretical basis for the arguments against intra-party democracy developed in the west doesn't apply. To the contrary, the fractious nature of African societies and the poor institutionalisation of political parties can be advanced as key arguments against intra-party democracy. The threat of internal discord, leadership wrangles; party splits and in some cases open violence present real challenges for intra-party democracy in Africa. These factors further weaken largely unstable African political parties, compromise their ability to select credible candidates, compete in elections and govern effectively and in some cases lead to the total collapse of political parties.

The majority of African political parties are therefore more oligarchic than democratic in practice. Most do not have membership lists and when they do, these are not necessarily exclusive. Voters tend to have multiple party memberships and party loyalty fluctuates significantly. Allegiances are usually to the party leader as opposed the institution of the party. The lack of strong party affiliation and weak institutionalisation promotes a culture of political tourism and party hopping depending on the whims of the party leader or political expediencies. The foregoing arguments against intra-party democracy may seem plausible enough to warrant no further discussion on the matter. There are however compelling reasons to consider intra-party democracy desirable, not only for political parties but in the interest of democracy in the wider society as well. The next section will examine some of these arguments.

2.2.3   A case for intra-party democracy

Arguments in favour of intra-party democracy derive from the appeal of democracy in the wider sense as a system that 'facilitates citizen-self rule, permits the broadest deliberation in determining public policy and constitutionally guaranteeing all the freedoms necessary for open political competition' (Joseph 1997: 365). This approach combines perspectives of participatory and deliberative democracy that emphasise the central features of participation and contestation. The case for intra-party democracy depends on whether one adopts a liberal or participatory democracy perspective.

Liberal democratic theory does not place a high premium on intra-party democracy since according to this approach, the political leadership plays the most important role while the citizens' participation during elections is merely to accept or reject their leaders (Sartori 1965). For the liberal democrat, democracy is not an end in itself, but is only important in so far as it safeguards liberty better than any other system (Katz 1997: 46). In order to bolster the argument for intra-party democracy therefore, we have to look elsewhere.

The more compelling arguments for intra-party democracy can be found in participatory and deliberative democratic theories. Participatory democrats place a high premium on citizen participation in political processes and a sense of civic responsibility. According to van Biezen (2004) only then can a political system warrant the label of a 'democracy'. McPherson (1977) develops this argument further by proposing a pyramidal system of intra-party democracy 'with direct democracy at the base and a delegate democracy at every level above that' supplemented by a system of competitive political parties (Teorell 1999:368). Since a truly participatory model of democracy in the form of direct democracy is not feasible in modern large and complex societies, political parties bridge the gap between citizens and government by providing avenues for citizen's participation through effective intra-party democracy.

The deliberative theory of democracy has of late gained ground by emphasising that democracy is a product of deliberation among free, equal and rational citizens (Elser 1998). This approach sees democracy as a process rather than an outcome. Dryzek (2000) concurs that democracy is thus a process of 'deliberation as opposed to voting, interest aggregation, constitutional rights or even self government.' This approach emphasises the process by which opinions are formed, policies formulated and programmes developed. It incorporates certain aspects of participatory and representative democracy as means to achieve its end. Participatory and representative aspects of democracy therefore provide the mechanisms, institutions and processes by which deliberative democracy can be realised.

All these models present various normative approaches to the concept of intra-party democracy. They are by no means conclusive or incontestable, but chart the broad parameters within which more refined and context specific structures and processes can be advanced in favour of intra-party democracy. These theoretical models can however be further problematised on the basis of practical feasibility and questions arise as to whether theorizing on democracy can sometimes be increasingly detached from political reality.

Away from normative prescriptive theorizing, empirical research on intra-party democracy tends to focus on a utilitarian perspective that seeks to establish ontological or causal relationships associated with

processes and indicators of intra-party democracy. Previous research remains inconclusive on whether and to what extent parties need to be internally democratic in order to promote democracy within the wider society. According to Scarrow (2005) political parties that practice intra-party democracy…

> …are likely to select more capable and appealing leaders, to have more responsive policies, and, as a result, to enjoy greater electoral success… (and) strengthen democratic culture generally (Scarrow 2005:3)

Other arguments in favour of intra-party democracy suggest that it encourages political equality by creating a level playing field in candidate selection and policy development within the party; ensures popular control of government by extending democratic norms to party organisations such as transparency and accountability; and it improves the quality of public debate by fostering inclusive and deliberative practices within parties (Gauja 2006:6).

In Africa, political parties are perceived more as vehicles for contesting and attaining public office as opposed to institutions of democratic consolidation. The desirability of intra-party democracy is therefore more likely to be viewed in terms of its usefulness in improving the overall effectiveness of the party against its competitors. This denotes an outcome oriented approach, but as the discussion above suggest, this liberal view of democracy is incompatible with intra-party democracy viewed from a participatory perspective (Wanjohi 2003, Salih 2003, Oloo 2007).

The success of intra-party democracy in Africa therefore lies in a normative approach that seeks to change attitudes towards a process oriented approach. This is the more pertinent in light of the weak social base on which democracy is founded in most of the continent's polities.

Attention should thus be paid to processes that entrench a democratic culture by increasing citizens' participation or what Scarrow (2005) terms as 'incubators that nurture citizens' political competence.' In such polities where levels of civic awareness are extremely low, intra-party democracy provides opportunities to expand civic education and awareness through participation while at the same time devolving power and decision making processes to broader sections of society.

2.3 Conclusion

From the foregoing, it is arguable that there is a crisis of legitimacy among African political parties characterised by a lack of internal democracy and poor institutional development. This may well explain the failure to further consolidate initial democratic gains in the majority of African polities. Still, political parties continue to play a central role as pillars of democracy in the wider society. The gains made after the initial wave of democratisation in the early 1990s, characterised by the collapse of single party autocratic or dictatorial regimes may thus be waning (Makinda 2003). The challenge now is whether

progress can be made in the substance as opposed to the form of democracy. Democracy in Africa has become synonymous with multiparty elections without regard to whether the institutions of democracy such as political parties offer real choices and provide truly democratic processes of citizen participation.

Intra-party democracy can be a highly subjective construct and may not be easily measurable. The operationalisation of these concepts can thus be problematic in empirical research. Variables may be assigned to indicators such as processes of institutionalisation, centralisation and inclusiveness, but these are purely arbitrary and highly context specific. The next chapter provides a detailed explanation of the methodological considerations of the research project.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section provides an outline of the research design, methods, tools and sources of research data collection, targeted groups and organisations where data was collected. It further discusses how the data were processed and the tools used in the analysis. The section concludes by highlighting key challenges in the research process and how these were circumvented. This paper is based on empirical research into intra-party democracy conducted in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya from September 2007 to January 2008. In a wider sense, it is a case study on intra-party democracy in Africa and seeks to expand on and add to already existing knowledge and literature on intra-party democracy.

3.2 Case selection

The three East African countries were selected for several practical and methodological reasons. Firstly, the choice was made based on the researcher's professional and personal familiarity with the region, knowledge of its socio-political history, good command of the local lingua-franca Kiswahili, and their geographical proximity for logistical reasons. Secondly, in terms of considerations for internal and external validity, the cases were selected on the basis of a typical set of values representative of the wider population of post 'third wave' African countries that have or are undergoing democratic transition since the late 1980s and early 1990s (McMahon 2004, Joseph 1997, Braton and van de Walle 1994).

Table 1: Party-political trends in East Africa since independence

	Parties at Independence	Single party rule	Multi-party elections	Registered parties as of Jan 2008	Parliamentary Parties as of Jan. 2008
Uganda	1962-3	1969-2005	2006	35	6
Tanzania	1961-6	1964-1992	1995, 2000, 2005	19	5
Kenya	1963-3	1964-66, 1969-1991	1992, 1997, 2002, 2007	144	23

Source: Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

The three countries share a common political and historical legacy: they were either British colonies or protectorates; at independence, they had more or less comparable multiparty parliamentary political systems; and post-independence, they all transformed into single party regimes. Since the early 1990s,

both Kenya and Tanzania have undergone pluralist democratic reform processes that ushered in multiparty politics, with Uganda joining later in 2006. The cases therefore represent what might be termed as typical cases (Gerring 2006:86) of the wider population of African states.

In each country, four leading political parties were selected based on their parliamentary strength in numbers. The selected cases (countries and political parties) therefore provide the possibility for a synchronic cross-case, and within-case analysis of the concept of intra-party democracy both at the party level and national level. The parties are compared with each other on the extent of internal democracy within each party. On a secondary level, the research design encompasses a comparative study of intra-party democracy among political parties in all the three countries with a view to establishing wider generalisations regarding intra-party democracy in Africa.

Table 2: Sample of Political Parties studied per country

Country	Party	Year Founded	No. of MP's	% in Parliament
Uganda				
	NRM	1986	211	64.3%
	FDC	2004	38	12%
	UPC	1955	9	2.8%
	DP	1954	8	2.5%
Tanzania				
	CCM	1977	264	81.5%
	CUF	1992	30	9.3%
	Chadema	1992	11	3.4%
	UDP	1994	1	0.3%
Kenya				
	ODM	2005	102	46%
	PNU	2007	46	26%
	ODM-K	2007	17	7.6%
	KANU	1960	16	7.2%

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union

3.3   Data collection

The research used both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. Since the research design is more of an exploratory nature, most of the empirical data collected is qualitative since the responses could

not be fully predicted. These were elicited from primary sources through open-ended questions as can be noted from the Research Questionnaires in Annex 1. In cases where the variables and concepts were predetermined and developed at the design stage prior to data collection, the data collected was of a quantitative nature. This was obtained largely through secondary sources in already published materials.

Primary data was collected from two groups of informants: politicians and party technocrats on the one hand, and experts and commentators on the other. The bulk of detailed party information on internal structures, decision-making processes and institutional set-up was obtained through a structured in-depth questionnaire distributed to selected political parties and filled out by party technocrats and/or politicians. The questionnaire was aimed at getting inside information from respondents on specific aspects of intra-party democracy within their political parties. The data obtained was supplemented by follow-up face-to-face interviews with leading party officials and representatives or spokespersons.

For each political party, an attempt was made to interview at least four officials. Attention was paid to sampling varied perspectives from the youth, women, and other party organs such as the parents association for CCM. This was however not possible in some cases. In Tanzania for instance, the youth and women's representatives appeared too timid, afraid to talk, or were not given the opportunity by the party leaders to appear for the interviews. This is partly due the fact that some parties do not have any functioning youth organisations. CCM for instance has a well-established youth wing whose officials gave very comprehensive responses during the interviews. This was in contrast with Uganda and Kenya where party youth were given the opportunity to speak freely while the women leaders were confident, assertive and held real power within the political parties.

Unstructured interviews were also conducted with experts such as political commentators, critics, writers and academics with a view to obtaining alternative information, views and perspectives outside of the political actors in order to increase the validity of observations and conclusions drawn in the research.

Table 3: Primary Data Sources

	Politicians	Non-Political	Men	Women	Youth	Total
Uganda	19	6	18	7	6	**25**
Kenya	8	8	11	5	3	**16**
Tanzania	15	10	19	6	3	**25**
Total	**42**	**24**	**48**	**18**	**12**	**66**

Secondary data was obtained from published research, articles, country reports and official documents such as the constitution, bills and Acts of Parliament. This is a rich source of both qualitative and quantitative data that provided background information in the country context and history of political parties and party systems. Party documents such as constitutions, manifestos, rule book, strategic plans and annual reports supplemented data obtained from the structured questionnaires especially elaborating on institutional structures and formal procedures and processes within the political parties. The information collected provides insights into the relationship between institutions and intra-party democracy and supplement empirical results from primary data. For example, where a political respondent did not know any formal institutions within her/his party, the researcher consulted either the party constitution or profile.

3.4 Challenges and shortcomings

First, it is worth noting that this methodology is heavily top down and the data collected largely presents official party positions which may be lacking in objectivity and independence. This may to some extent compromise the reliability and in some cases validity of the findings and any inferences or conclusions drawn on the basis of the data available. Perhaps a more objective result would have been obtained by counterbalancing the official party line with that of ordinary party members to gauge the view from the bottom. Considering the limited scope of the research, it was however not possible to take this extra dimension into account.

Secondly, the entire research was carried out in the main cities of Kampala, Dar es Salaam, and Nairobi. This sampling process may have resulted in a somewhat elitist perspective of the political processes in the countries under review. A more comprehensive approach would extend the scope of the research to the rural areas sampling responses from different regions and districts in all three countries. This was however not possible within the scope of this research.

A third factor to be taken into consideration is that some of the respondents to the questionnaire did not have access to all the party records in order to complete the questionnaire comprehensively. Such sensitive matters such as financial records were not available to some of the respondents and in some cases the political parties were reluctant to divulge their financial information for confidentiality reasons. Some interviews especially of youth and women representatives were in most cases conducted in the presence of other senior party officials. The respondents appeared to feel intimidated and showed lack of confidence in responding fully to some of the questions.

Finally, the timing of the fieldwork in Kenya between December 8, 2007 and January 30, 2008 fell right in the middle of an election which was held on December 27, 2007. The volatile political situation and the violence that erupted after the general elections seriously compromised the research exercise. Following the election and the disputed results, the country degenerated into civil strife with high levels of insecurity. It was virtually impossible on some days to venture outdoors and when it was possible, public transportation was scarce, few people turned up for interviews at their offices and some were still stuck up-country in their rural villages where they had gone to vote and couldn't ravel back to the city. The researcher's own security was not assured and safety precautions meant there was little opportunity to carry out the research according to schedule. The state of social chaos and disruption of normal life made it impossible to gather as much data as would have been sufficient to make conclusive determination of the subject with regard to Kenya. It was therefore extremely difficult to access as many respondents, especially politicians who were too busy with campaigns ahead of the election. Collection of secondary data such as research reports, publications and other documents were seriously hampered as many offices remained closed for an extended period after the elections.

3.5   Data analysis

As argued above, this research adopts a process oriented approach, hence intra-party democracy is analysed, not as a single outcome or YES/NO variable, but as a process that exists in a continuum. It is therefore possible to establish an ontological relationship between the four variables of in*stitutionalisation; policy formulation; membership participation; and leadership and candidate selection* such that they can be determined to be individually sufficient, but not jointly necessary to realise the variable of intra-party democracy.

As shown in Figure 1 below, a secondary level of analysis was developed by further conceptualising different measurements for the primary variables. For instance, *leadership and candidate selection (X1)* could be further determined by analysing the role played by factors such as *quotas for minority groups*, *internal structures, rules and regulations*, as well as *dispute resolution mechanisms*. Secondly, *policy formulation (X2)* was further measured through the processes of *opinion polling and surveys*, *petitions and submissions by members*, as well as *accountability mechanisms*. Finally, *membership participation (X3)* was determined though levels of *participation in party primaries*, their role and voting power in *National Delegates Conferences* as well as involvement in *party activities at the local/branch level*. The variables at the secondary level have a direct causal relationship with the primary level variables and just as at the

primary level, the relationship at the secondary level is largely one of *equifinality*, in that the secondary variables are individually sufficient, but not jointly necessary for the realization of the basic variables.

This research seeks to develop more knowledge on intra-party democracy among political parties in East Africa. Consequently, it adopts an exploratory and descriptive as opposed to an explanatory or normative approach. Exploratory research is conducted into an issue or problem where there are few or no earlier studies to refer to. Whereas there is overwhelming research done on the role of political parties and democratisation processes in Africa, little work has been done on intra-party democracy in the region of interest. The focus is therefore on gaining deeper insights and generating more knowledge to build upon for later investigation. Secondly, it is descriptive in the sense that it seeks to describe the phenomena of intra-party democracy as it exists in practice.

In the course of the research, it was possible to establish, through the data collected, some correlations between levels of internal democracy and electoral success in terms of a party's numerical representation in local councils and parliament or even by votes garnered in local council, parliamentary and presidential elections. This was however insufficient to establish any direct causal relationships and/or strength between the variables indicators of intra-party democracy and party effectiveness. The research design does not make it possible to attribute with any degree of certainty that intra-party democracy *(X)* had any direct influence on electoral success (*Y*), hence its unsuitability for hypothesis testing.

Figure 1: Two-Level Theories: Internal Party Democracy

Symbol	Meaning
→	Conjuncture of non-causal necessary conditions
⇒	Conjuncture of necessary causes
....	Ontological
*	Logical AND
+	Logical OR
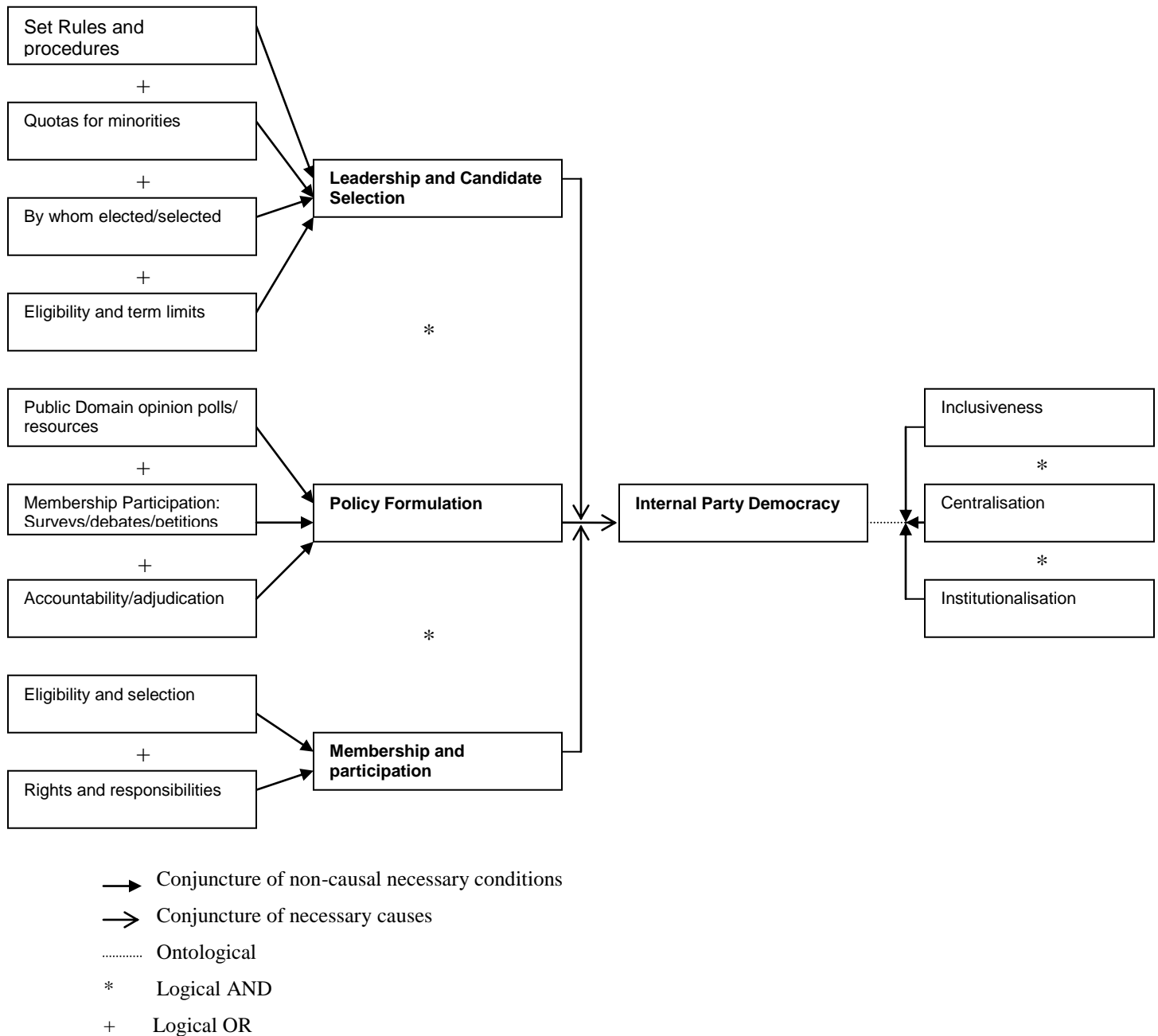
Intra-party democracy is however a much more complex process. It can be influenced by multiple causal mechanisms external to the political parties and their internal institutional structures and processes. The interplay of external factors such as historical and cultural backgrounds, socio-economic conditions, electoral systems and types of government could easily influence the character and behaviour of political

parties and eventually determine the degree of intra-party democracy. This is clearly the case in this research where the three different countries, though having a similar political history, at independence adopted different socio-economic strategies, embraced divergent ideological platforms and had to grapple with dissimilar external international influence and internal heterogeneity based on ethnicity and regionalism that ultimately had significant influence on the character, composition and behaviour of political parties in each country.

The next chapter explores in detail the external factors that impinge on intra-party democracy in East Africa. These include firstly the similarities and divergences of political histories of the three countries as well as ideological and policy choices in the post independence period and beyond. These choices determined not only the forms of governance and socio-political organisation, but also had significant impact on developmental trajectories that had significant impact on social consciousness, mobilisation as well as the role and nature political parties. Secondly an examination of the resultant socio-economic conditions is relevant in determining the ability of the citizenry in the three countries to engage in the political process and their relationship in comparison with political parties. Thirdly, we look at the contemporary political, legal and constitutional framework within which political parties operate and how this impacts the structure and behaviour of political parties.

4 INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY IN CONTEXT

4.1 Political Party Systems in East Africa

An analysis of political party systems is relevant in establishing the form and substance of political competition among parties that in turn determines the way in which parties organise internally and present themselves to their opponents and the wider public. A party system refers to the classifications of internal and external networks and relationships of political parties. They comprise 'the alliances, coalitions, negotiations and debates' that political parties engage in and that form the 'crucial aspects of political life, the structure of the governing polity and the nature of political stability' (Salih and Nordlund 2007: 43).

The political composition of parliament and indeed the parties that form the government are largely determined not only by the electoral system, but also the prevailing political party system. This determines the number of political parties that form a government, the relationships that exist between them and subsequently how such a system can be classified. This section explores the structure of political party systems across the three countries.

4.1.1 Historical development

While all three countries can be classified as having multiparty democratic systems, this has not always been the case. They started out at independence with pluralist political systems. This rapidly changed immediately after, resulting in the clear differences in the political party conglomerations that exist at present. The nature of the prevailing systems are very much a product of the countries' socio-political histories. Political parties in the region arose as a result of social mobilisation against repressive and undemocratic British colonial administrations based on segregation. These liberation movements were initially isolated, ethnically based protest movements that coalesced into mass political parties, pushing for political independence and majority African rule. In Kenya, such ethnic movements as the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA), the Kavirondo Association and others coalesced into the Kenya African Union (KAU). KAU later transformed into the Kenya African National Union (KANU) which, under Jomo Kenyatta, led the country to indepedendence in 1963 and ruled until 2002.

In Tanzania, the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) emerged as the leading pre-independence party after its leader Julius Nyerere gained the confidence of a number of fragmented ethnic based political movements. The party gained even more credibility and wider support from trade unions and agricultural cooperatives (Temwende, 2005).   Similarly in Uganda, the formation of the main

independence party Uganda Peoples Congress resulted from a merger between the Uganda National Congress and Uganda Peoples Union to form the UPC. It sees itself as a liberation party, guiding the country to independence from British colonial rule.

After independence however, the common bond of decolonisation and nationalism quickly disintegrated and the political elite quickly abandoned their nationalist politics and relapsed into ethnic, regional or religeous sub-nationalisms. The lack of a strong sense of national identity resulted in a relapse to pre-colonial and colonial identities and political competition took an ethnic dimension and these cleavages only deepened with time with disatrous consequences for multiparty democracy. Some social groups perceived themselves excluded from power, government, or access to the 'fruits of independence' and sought to reassert their political identity through the revival of ethnicaly based political parties or movements. This was especially the case in Uganda and Kenya. Tanzania managed to escape this downward spiral through its adoption of the philosophy of African Socialism or *Ujamaa* which fostered a strong sense of national identity and de-empasissed ethnic or regional identities.

This was however not the case in the other two countries. Politics of coersion, repression, patronage and clientelism took over as the only means to retain power. In Kenya for instance, the ideological divide between Vice President Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, an ethnic Luo, and President Kenyatta from the dominant Kikuyu tribe over the redistribution of land and other resources led to a political fall-out. Odinga formed the opposition party Kenya Peoples Union (KPU) adopting a more socialist approach against Kenyatta's firm liberal policies. This became the genesis of the political divide between the country's two major ethnic groups the Luo and Kikuyu that exists to date.

The ruling elites perceived this growing intra and inter party rivalry as a threat to their hold on power and reacted by ochestrating events leading to the institutionalisation of one party regimes soon after independence. In Uganda, right from 1964 opposition political parties were ruthlessly suppressed and undermined, floor crossing became the norm as MP'S were bribed, threatened and induced with cabinet positions and in 1966 the state of emergency was used "to completely emasculate what had remained of the Democratic Party"(Tusasirwe, 84-86). Finally in 1969, political parties were banned by statutory instrument, such that by the time Idi Amin Dada overthrew Obote and instituted his brutal military regime; political parties had virtually ceased to exist and did not come to life until 2005 (Okuku, 2002).

In Tanzania, a *de facto* single party regime was in place from 1965. The country was technically under the control of two political parties; TANU in the mainland and Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP) in Zanzibar.

TANU's merger with the Afro-Shirazi Party in 1977 resulted in the consolidation of all political forces and power in the country under one party, CCM, as the *de jure* single party. The country then formally became a one party state and all policy and decision making power was centralised within the party which became the supreme organ of governance. Parliament was then transformed into a committee of the party and there was no distinction between the party and the state (Nyirabu, M. 2002).

Kenya's slide from a two party system into single party dictatorship started right after independence. The only opposition party, the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU), voluntarily dissolved itself and crossed the floor to join the runling KANU party at independence in 1963. There was a brief attempt to launch an opposition party, the Kenya Paoples Union (KPU) in 1966. This experiement was short lived as the party was banned in 1969 and its leaders including then vice Jaramogi Oginga Oginga were detained. Kenya then became a *de facto* one party state until the status quo was legislated in 1982 paving the way for a *de jure* single party system (Musambayi 2006).

The institution of single party regimes were characterised by a fusion of the party and the state into one entity. This led to the creation of 'highly structured internal organisations characterised by the principles of democratic centralism' (Heywood 2002). In Kenya and Tanzania for instance, the ruling parties that developed out of independence movements cited the compelling need for nation-building and economic development as the core argument for the consolidation of the party state. The CCM party in Tanzania was organised along the strict ideological and disciplinary principles of most socialist/comminist parties.

KANU in Kenya became a highly regimented institution of state control of the society demanding unquestionable loyalty and in the process undermining any form of internal democracy. Dissenting voices were shunned and expelled from the party if not detained or assasinated. In Uganda, NRM transformed itself from being a military resistance movement into a mass political movement that was a single party in all but name. Its rationale for banning political party activity was the same: national cohesion, unity and development. Political parties were in this case seen as divisive, parochail and harmful to the very principle of democracy as a process of governance based on the stable ordering of society and political competition (McMahon 2001: 300-3001).

Single party regimes were therefore characterised by the fusion of the party and the state with no clear separation between them. The party became a parallel bureaucracy to the extent that key administrative positions in government were held by party bureaucrats. For instance in Tanzania, the Regional State Commissioner was the party regional secretary, the District Commissioner was the party district secretary

and the National Executive Committee of the party became more powerful than the cabinet while the parliament was reduced into a committee of the party. According to Prof. Othman of Dar es Salaam University, the national assembly became a committee of the party and members of parliament automatically became delegates of the national party conference whose role was to legitimise party directives.[1]

A key pillar of democracy is thus compromised as the legislative arm of government loses its sovereignty and with it the ability to hold the executive to account. The party entrenches itself in virtually all structures of government and public service such that there is no distinction between the party and the state. Patronage is dispensed along party structures. Access to positions in government at all levels meant that one has to toe the party line. That is why there was a high degree of fusion between the government and the party such that party officials considered themselves as government officials and government officials considered themselves as party officials, whether formally or informally (Nyirabu 2002:101).

These institutionalised organisational characteristics developed during the single party regimes are still evident especially within the ruling parties CCM and NRM. These 'older' parties therefore gain undue competitive advantage over newly created political parties following the re-introduction of multy party systems. What then is the contemporary party political environment in the region? The next section examines the prevailing political systems in the region with a view to establishing the external characteristics that determine interanal structures and functioning of political parties in the three countries.

4.1.2   Contemporary political party systems

Just like most other African countries, Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya can be classified under the new post 'third wave' democracies. The tag 'democratic' however needs to be qualified as refering to countries that have undergone transitions into multiparty political systems and hold regular elections. These East African countries however exhibit significant variations in their political party systems.

Uganda and Tanzania can be described as one-dominant-party systems where both CCM and NRM have enjoyed electoral victories and prolonged periods in power. Neither party has been voted out of office since their inception. Kenya on the other had has a two dominant party system since the 2002 elections. The party political environment was then dominated by KANU and the National Raibow Coalition

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[1] Prof. Haroub Othman, Interview

(NARC) which dethroned KANU from almost 40 years of uninterrupted rule. The NARC coalition was however to disintegrate two years later and by the 2007 election, another coalition configuration had emerged pitting the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) against the Party of National Unity (PNU). After the disputed 2007 general election, the two parties formed a coalition government leaving virtually no opposition except for the United Democratic Movement (UDM) with only one member of parliament.

Uganda has six political parties represented in the country's parliament, Tanzania five and Kenya no less than twenty three (23) almost all under either the PNU or ODM umbrella parties. While Kenya has held competitve multiparty elections since 1992 and Tanzania since 1995, Uganda has only had one in 2006. Its pluralist politcs is therefore still infantile and can be described as a dominant authoritarian party system. Whereas political parties form the mainstay of political organisation and representation, the level of institutionalisation of political parties as instruments of contesting for and attaining political power is still relatively weak. In such circumstances, dominant party systems have a negative effect on competitive politics.

In Uganda for instance, opposition political parties operate under severe constraints imposed by President Museveni and his authoritarian government (Chege 2007). The lack of institutionalised structures within political parties leads to the development of personality cult politics. Makerere university political scientist Dr. Ssali Simba argues that for instance, president Museveni does not even respect the party he has created by virtue of the fact that during the 2006 elections, he set up parallel structures for his campaigns, ran by close associates from the military. It is these parallel structures, other than the civilian party taskforce that are credited with ensuring his victory in the elections.[2]

Similarly, President Kibaki in Kenya abandoned his sponsoring party NARC and set up a new political party the PNU just three months before the 2007 December general elections. His campaign secretariat was run by professionals drawn from the private sector while politicians associated with his coalition partner parties were shunned leading to numerous complaints, discord and disorganisation.[3] This portrays a system where political elites have scant respect for political parties and only see their value as convenient tools for contesting elections and can be discarded once they have served their purpose. Political parties therefore tend to be dormant after elections only to be revived at the next cycle (Chege 2007: 25).

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[2] Dr. Ssali Simba, Interview Sep. 13, 2007
[3] Daily Nation December 1, 2007

Table 4.1: Part Systems in East Africa as of January 2008

	Parties at Independence	Single party rule	Multi-party elections	Registered parties	Parliamentary Parties	Party System
Uganda	3	1969-2005	2006	35	6	One-Dominant Party
Tanzania	6	1964-77-1992	95/2000/2005	19	5	One-Dominant Party
Kenya	2	1964-66, 1969-1991	92/97/2002/2007	156	23	Two-Dominant Party

Dominant party systems also pose a challenge to democracy in general and may lead to less intra-party democracy since they dominate the legislature and monopolise the law making process to promote their interests. In most cases, parliament loses its sovereignty as an independent arm of government; it simply exists to rubberstamp and legitimises decisions by the Central Committee of the ruling party.

This scenario is made worse in simple majority or First-Past-The-Post electoral systems that prevail in all three East African countries. In a situation where the vote is divided between numerous parties, it is possible that a party can form government with a minority of the vote. This was the case in Kenya after the 1997 elections in which KANU formed the government with less than 36% of the total votes cast. A proportional representation system would therefore help to redress some of these short comings.

Governments formed by dominant party systems can be less accountable to the legislature and the wider electorate while the opposition is too weak to hold it to account. Party technocrats in Uganda such as DP's Deo Njoki and UPC's Chris Opoka-Okumu argue that the greatest need is to rebuild political parties along sound ideals and principles, to give its new following a clear world view and direction by entrenching these in clear and relevant ideologies and party programmes as well as building strong structures of inclusion and effective representation. Jimmy Akena, a leading UPC Member of Parliament and son of Uganda's first president Milton Obote stresses the need for a major shift in the social consciousness of Ugandan civil and political classes to truly embrace a multiparty democracy. What he argues for Uganda could apply to the rest of the countries in the region that it will take time and hard work to build a truly democratic pluralist political culture in a society that has been without functioning political parties for more than 20 years.

4.2   Political party systems: Legislation and institutionalisation

Political parties are by definition voluntary citizens' associations based on free exchange between individual citizens and various communities. Based on the common assumptions under girding the distinction between the state and society, such forms of association should not normally be the object of government interference (Karvonen 2007:437). In democratic states, detailed legislation defines the spheres of state organs, public bodies and general public power on the one hand while protecting civil liberties and the private sphere of life on the other. The subject of legal regulation of political parties remains a contested matter. Liberal democrats see political parties as an aspect of civil society organisation based on the free exchange between individuals and various communities that should not be the object of government interference.

In non-democratic societies however, state power frequently extends over large parts of the civil society sphere. The borderline between state and society is blurred or vanished all together and in some cases totalitarian order prevails (Linz, 2000: 66). Although East African states characterise themselves as democratic, their treatment of political parties tends towards the undemocratic and authoritarian category as opposed to the democratic. Political parties and party activities are often severely limited, their rights abrogated and in some cases outlawed by archaic public order legislation especially during election campaign periods.

The stated goal of political parties to contest and capture public office and form government differentiates them from other civil society organisations. They therefore constitute a zone of transition between the state and civil society (Lipset 2001: 1-3). Given this ambiguity, public regulation of political parties varies greatly across the continent and East Africa is no exception. All three countries have political parties' acts as part of their constitutions that were amended, repealed or wholly introduced with the transition from single to multi-party rule.

In Kenya, the government bowed to internal and external pressure and reluctantly restored political pluralism through the constitution of Kenya Amendment Act, 1991 (Musambayi 2006:31). It was not until 2007 that the Political Parties Act No.10 of 2007 was passed by parliament. In Tanzania, multipartysm was introduced in 1992 by way of a constitutional amendment by which the government created institutions to manage the democratisation process. It became the first country in Africa to enact a political

parties' act providing guidelines for the registration and conduct of political parties. Act No.5 of 1992 established the office of the registrar of political parties and Article 74(1) established the National Electoral Commission (NEC) in 1993.[4]

In Uganda, a referendum to return the country to a multiparty political system was held in July of 2005 and subsequently, parliament ratified a constitutional amendment by enacting the Political Parties and Organisations Act number 18 in November of the same year. In general, party law across the three countries provide the constitutional framework within which political parties can function; it spells out the legal guidelines and safeguards underpinning their operations. For instance, it sets conditions and procedures for the registration, regulation and monitoring of the conduct of political parties.

The desire to regulate political parties stems in part from an inherent fear of competition from the political opponents on the part of the ruling party and a desire to manage the transition process by ensuring a stable and orderly transition in order to avoid potential social division and disintegration of the fabric of the state. This was more evident in Tanzania and Uganda that still exhibit strong party-state tendencies under a one-dominant party system. This seems to contradict the very tenets of democracy which ought to promote free and fair competition among equal political forces in society. In Kenya, the enactment of the Act more than 15 years after the introduction of multipartysm seems to be motivated by a desire to provide some form of order in a seemingly chaotic party political environment. The country has no less that 300 registered political parties many of which are personal 'briefcase' parties registered for commercial purposes only to be sold at election time to the highest bidder looking for a convenient vehicle with which to contest and seek political office.[5]

In Kenya and Uganda, the registration and management of political parties fall under the Electoral Commission while in Tanzania, the act created an independent office of the Registrar of Political Parties answerable to the prime minister. Under the provisions of the act in Kenya and Uganda, the Electoral Commission has the power to deny registration or in effect recommend deregistration of a political party if it does not comply with the requirements provided under the act. The act also spells out the code of conduct for political parties including stipulations for internal organisation, holding of regular elections, declaration of assets and liabilities and filing of annual financial returns.[6]

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[4] Act No.4 of 1992., The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, p. 14.
[5] see Ohito, David. Anxiety over new party law, The Standard June 27, 2008
[6] See The Political Parties and Organisations Act, 2005. The Uganda Gazette No. 74 Volume XCVIII dated 21st November 2005.

In light of the weak institutional and organisational capacity of political parties in the region, legal regulation is seen as likely to encourage intra-party democracy by fostering processes of accountability and transparency through regular elections, financial accountability and inclusiveness. Party law also serves to encourage institutionalisation and organisational capacity of political parties in order to improve their competitiveness in elections. Regulation encourages parties to offer better policy options and more capable candidates emerging from competitive and credible selection processes. It may also increase party responsiveness and accountability to its membership and raise levels of membership participation in party activities and programmes thus reducing oligarchic tendencies and the overwhelming powers of party leaders.

In Tanzania and Kenya, political party laws provides for public funding of political parties. This has been the practice in Tanzania for more than ten years now and is only coming into force in Kenya in 2008. In Tanzania, funding was first restricted to parliamentary parties, but was later extended to include those that won seats in local government or council elections. With certain qualifications, all political parties will benefit from a percentage of the fund, the bulk of which is distributed proportional to the number of votes a party gets in a general election. At the time of writing, the government of Uganda has tabled "The Political Parties and Organisations (Amendment) Bill 2008" which is meant to introduce public funding for political parties. Its preamble states its purpose being to "enable the political parties be funded in some way so that they can strengthen their bases to provide good governance"[7].

Legal regulation of political parties is therefore becoming a standard norm in the region and is widely seen as a positive development especially where public funding of political parties in concerned. This strengthens the competitive capacity of opposition parties against the ruling parties which often rely on state resources that give them undue advantage over the opposition. The constitutional framework as depicted in the party laws however contains significant short comings regarding the independence of the regulatory bodies and the possibility of state interference in the discharge of their supervisory roles.

A sticking point remains the powers vested in the presidency to appoint senior officers to the national Electoral Commissions and the Registrar of Political Parties without reference to any other regulatory mechanism such as parliament. This casts in doubt the independence of these institutions which are perceived by the opposition to be partisan and pro-government and likely to owe allegiance to the appointing authority which happens to be the leader of the ruling party against whom they have to compete in an election. A case in point is the recent example in Kenya where the Electoral Commission is

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[7] Uganda The Political Parties and Organisations (Amendment) Bill 2008

perceived as having been complicit in the mismanagement and fraudulent conduct of the 2007 general elections in favour of the incumbent (E.U. 2008). This is likely to compromise principles of democracy in the wider society by impeding free and equal competition among political parties.

Table 4.2: Summary of Party Law in East Africa

	Kenya	Tanzania	Uganda
Name of Law	the Political Parties Act, 2007	The Political Parties Act	**The Political Parties and Organisations Act 2002**
Year Enacted	2007	July 1, 1992	**17th July 2002**
Year Amended		1994, 1995, 2006, 2006	**2005**
Registration requirements	Yes-provisional and full registration	Yes-provisional and full registration	**Yes-provisional and full registration**
Internal regulations e.g. elections	Yes- regular, periodic and open election of its office bearers.	Yes- submit report on the constitution, office bearers, membership and finances.	**Yes-Internal organisation shall be based on democratic principles enshrined in the constitution**
Prohibition of certain parties, names and symbols or discrimination	Yes- ethnic, age, tribal, racial, gender, regional, linguistic, corporatist, professional or religious or if its structure and mode of operation are not national in character.	Yes-parties prior to Union, without discrimination on account of gender, religious belief, race, tribe, ethnic origin, profession or occupation.	**Yes-Gender, ethnicity, religion and other sectional division**
Public Funding	Yes-Political Parties Fund, administered by the Registrar.	Yes-Annual subventions to political parties	**Yes-to be provided for in proposed bill**
Party Finance, property and accounts	Yes-accounts to be audited by the Auditor-General be forwarded to Parliament and the Registrar	Yes-disclose funding, sources and annual accounts to registrar	**Yes-Required by law to account for use of their funds and assets**
Coalitions	Yes	No	**Yes***
Dispute resolution	**Yes- Political Parties Disputes Tribunal.**	**Registrar of Political parties**	**Electoral Commission**

The current legal provisions are also restrictive in terms of the formation of political coalitions in Tanzania and Uganda where existing parties are required to dissolve themselves before joining or forming a coalition. The situation is worse in Kenya and Tanzania where independent candidates are prohibited by law and one can only contest an election through membership of a registered political party. These shortcomings have led to calls for far reaching constitutional reforms especially from among the political opposition and civil society groups across all three countries. Although recognised by governments and

relevant bodies as necessary, implementation has been contentious to say the least. The constitution review process in Kenya has had many false starts culminating in the defeat of a divisive government sponsored draft in 2005.

In Tanzania, the registrar of political parties and the electoral commission recognise these shortcomings and have pledged to push for the reform of electoral laws. The office of the registrar of political parties is in the process of amending the law to allow mergers and alliances between political parties to be recognized in law (Tendwa 2007).

4.3   Conclusion

Prevailing political party systems have a significant impact on the structure and conduct of political parties. They determine both formal and informal strategies as well as organisational structures that parties adopt in order to enhance their competitiveness in the party political environment. All these factors do influence the status of intra-party democracy. The shared political, cultural, economic and social fabric that forms the East African region undoubtedly imbues the party political environment in the three countries under review. Still, the unique developmental, ideological and socio-economic trajectories that the three countries adopted after independence have led to markedly unique contemporary party political environments.

The distinction between the one-party dominant systems in Uganda and Tanzania are in sharp contrast with the vibrant multi-party environment in Kenya. Opposition and ruling parties therefore adopt different strategies of internal organisation, membership mobilisation and coalition formation in order to remain relevant, competitive and either gain or retain power. These factors not withstanding, most parties are characterised by low levels of institutionalisation, high centralisation and less inclusiveness to varying degrees which are explored in detail in the following chapter.

Party law has been enacted in all three countries to regulate the party political environment based on varying motivations and with varying results. Party law is by no means a panacea for low intra-party democracy or weak democratic institutions in the wider society. In weak democracies with hegemonic parties, the state machinery can still be employed to thwart the interests of democracy. In countries undergoing democratic transitions however, party law can be useful in the consolidation of democratic gains and strengthening democratic institutions. The following chapter examines in detail the evidence based on empirical findings in order to determine the various factors that influence intra-party democracy in East Africa.

5 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS: STRUCTURE AND SUBSTANCE

This chapter presents the empirical findings of the research that form the basis of the main arguments advanced in this research. The evidence from the date collected is analysed with a view to either support or refute the claims made in main hypothesis. The chapter is structured along the lines of the four sub-hypotheses based on the postulated processes that serve as indicators of intra-party democracy viz: Institutionalisation, policy formulation, leadership and candidate selection and membership participation.

5.1   Institutionalisation: organisational rules and regulatory framework

Political parties are by definition membership organisations whose procedures for the conduct of their affairs are stipulated in the articles of association usually deposited with the registering authority. Almost all political parties in East Africa have developed party rules and regulations governing the conduct of party affairs. These are usually contained in basic party documents such as the party constitution. Additionally, some parties have such other documents as the party rule book, as well as manifestos and strategic plans. The conduct of internal party affairs are also legally regulated by national legislation in form of political party Acts and other constitutional provisions governing the conduct of political parties.

Political Parties Acts do provide some general guidelines regarding expectations of internal democracy within political parties. These include requirements for regular and democratic internal leadership elections, evidence of national representation, sanctioning of discriminatory practices and guarantees for democratic membership participation. Political parties usually adopt these regulations in their own party documents with minor adjustments.

In Tanzania for instance, the Political Parties Act (1992) Section 2(e) stipulates that a party shall not be eligible for registration if it does not allow periodic and democratic election of its leadership. Additionally, parties are required to demonstrate that they draw sufficient support from across the country by giving evidence that they have at least 200 members aged above 18 years and have support from at least 10 regions, two of which must be from Zanzibar and Pemba.
Parties are also required to submit names of their parties' national leaders, one from the Mainland and the other from Zanzibar.

Despite the existence of these regulatory mechanisms, there still exists in practice a wide gap in implementation. As argued above, African political parties are generally characterised by low levels of institutionalisation and East Africa is no exception. Political parties' Acts do not do not for instance define

what it means by 'periodic and democratic' elections, leaving a wide and open room for interpretation. Additionally, there are hardly any provisions for monitoring and verification. Political parties are therefore left to define how and to what extend they adhere to these regulations. In Uganda, the Electoral Commission charged with the regulation of parties concedes that it could not enforce compliance when the ruling party itself had not complied.

This suggests a weakness among the very structures meant to monitor and foster the institutionalisation of political parties (Jabweri 2007). In Tanzania, there seems to be an effort to encourage compliance. Observers from the office of the Registrar of Political Parties are sent during party elections to ensure compliance with acceptable standards without which the new leadership would not be accepted and parties would be required to repeat the exercise where necessary (Tendwa 2007).

Party documents such as a constitution, election manifestos, policy and operational guidelines provide the organisational and philosophical framework underlying their operations. Virtually all registered political parties in the region have, at least on paper, basic party documents that espouse and guarantee processes of internal democracy through leadership election, membership participation, selection of candidates, policy formulation and finances. Most of these documents have undergone frequent reviews and reflect a number of amendments to the original constitution. In Tanzania, the most recent CCM constitution for example is dated May 2005. It is the 11th edition since it was drafted in 1977. CUF has a 2003 edition, TLP 2005 and CHADEMA 2006. These changes reflect a constant struggle by political parties to overcome recognised institutional challenges through processes of change and constantly re-inventing themselves where necessary.

Most political parties, especially the opposition have been criticised for failing to offer fresh and alternative organizational and hierarchical structures that are more responsive and representative of the aspirations of the party rank and file and the wider public. Most have adopted the same top-heavy leadership structures as their predecessors during the single-party systems such as CCM, NRM and KANU from which most opposition party leaders broke away.

Most of the new political parties do not have proper party structures or offices across the country. Most are confined within the main urban centres and where they do penetrate to the villages, it is usually in regions where they enjoy substantial support based on ethnic, regional or other parochial cleavages (Oloo 2007). It is this lack of national outlook and representation that gives the incumbent parties such as CCM and NRM the ammunition against opposition parties branding them as tribal outfits that only serve to

divide the country. This realisation that no single party could convincingly win an election and govern spurred the formation of pre-election coalition pacts in Kenya in the 2002 and 2007 general elections.

Characteristically, such coalitions were also structured along ethnic and regional lines. The post election violence that broke out in Kenya following the 2007 election was also characterised by regional and ethnic cleavages pitting the dominant Kikuyu ethnic group supporting president Mwai Kibaki under PNU against the Luo, Luhya and Kalenjin who coalesced around Raila Odinga under the ODM umbrella. More often than not, these coalitions are fragile power-sharing pacts as opposed to well negotiated agreements based on principles of sound party ideology and programmes in the interest of the party membership and/or the electorate. The weakness of these structures was evident soon after the 2002 elections in Kenya. The opposition victory was almost immediately followed by infighting within the ruling NARC coalition and its eventual collapse in 2005 over breach of a pre-election memorandum of understanding (MOU). The fall-out was based on perceptions that the LDP wing associated with Raila Odinga was short changed by the NAK wing associated with President Kibaki on government and civil service appointments as agreed in the pre-election MOU which was never made public.

A similar process seems to be unfolding at the time of writing in Kenya again. The PNU coalition that was quickly put together by president Kibaki in order to find a convenient vehicle to contest the election seems to be unravelling. Attempts to cajole coalition partners to abandon their individual parties and join the PNU instead threatens to dismantle the very coalition that the president is seeking to strengthen in the face or a strong and united coalition partner, the ODM. Members of parliament from the PNU coalition parties have threatened to revolt as they all jostle for positions within their own parties for the succession battle when Kibaki's second and final term ends in four years (Sunday Nation, July 20, 2008)

In Uganda, the older parties specifically DP and UPC have faced internal and external criticisms for poor, unresponsive and unrepresentative leadership, inability to build effective party structures, and failure to elect representatives in all parts of the country. This may as well be true for the other two countries. While this may be the reason to cast some parties as sectarian, DP president John Kizito dismisses such accusations. "I don't think that if one party has got strength from one region, that should not be a reason to condemn it because you start building a base from where you are best known. Even in Europe, you can say SPD is very strong in Bavaria, but are you talking about Germany as being sectarian?" His organising secretary Deo Njoki concedes that there are significant challenges in this area.

"We however have some gaps in the structures, but are conscious of these gaps and limitations and are working backwards to close these gaps. Immediately we finished our elections, we came up with a five year strategic plan which we are implementing gradually. Key of which is to revive our constitution, now awaiting promulgation. Then we are embarking on membership recruitment. With the amendments made, we are going to begin again a fresh. In a year's time, we want to have an NDC to elect a new set of leaders at national level or renew the mandate of the current leadership (Njoki 2007)."

FDC secretary General Alice Alaso concedes that the parties lack the capacity to spread out its structures down to the village levels. "The trouble is that we have been hampered in setting up our structures, so in some villages the structures do not exist. Therefore adequate mobilization has not been done for women and the youth effectively, but we try." In their defence, political parties in Uganda and Tanzania cite state harassment, intimidation and bribery of branch level party activity and officials as well as the lack of adequate funding to hold recruitment drives, pay party officials and maintain party offices down to the village level. According to the DP president, most parties depend largely on the sale of party cards to raise funds, the high levels of rural poverty makes it difficult to raise sufficient funds to finance most party programmes as "most members would like to have party cards free of charge, so we find it difficult to organise as well as we should".

The issue of funding will be explored in detail later in this paper. For UPC's Patrick Aroma however, the road to an effective party structure is to have a vibrant party base. "Once the district structures become empowered and the youth structures also get empowered, it will help to check that kind of thinking and cause certain re adjustments in terms of management and focus (Aroma 2007)."

Despite attempts by respondents to present their parties as following democratic procedures in decision making and leadership election processes, the party structures outlined in their constitutions are heavily top-down and concentrate immense power at the top organs of the party. As discussed above the national delegates' conferences in most cases only serve to endorse decisions already made by the top party organs such as the central committees or the NECs.

Party leadership across the board is characterised by personality politics encouraging and entrenching a personality cult where the exclusive power is concentrated in the hands of the party leader. Consequently some party leaders have created parallel informal structures alongside the formal party structures to entrench close and trusted loyalists in influential party positions. This tends to create friction within the party resulting in power struggles and in some cases eventual splits. The run-up to the 2007 general elections in Kenya saw such intense power struggles over leadership within several political parties. The

FORD Kenya split resulted in the off-shoot New FORD-Kenya, while contested internal party elections led to the breakaway faction of New KANU from the original independence party KANU. This was the case with the split of NCCR-Mageuzi in Tanzania when a sizeable section of the party broke away to join TLP.

In terms of ensuring ethical conduct, party documents have elaborate disciplinary mechanisms and procedures but most parties are more concerned with recruiting and retaining members than seeking to discipline errant ones, simply because there is no capacity, manpower and resources to engage in the exercise. Due to the elite control of party organs and activity, there are hardly any structural provisions for the party membership to hold the leadership accountable. All parties therefore prioritise membership recruitment drives, mobilisation and sensitization, and policy propagation as a key element of their strategic plans.

In the absence of sound institutional structures and political mobilisation based on clear ideologies, mere coalitions for the sake of getting sufficient numbers to win an election may not be the solution. It is also evident that the problem lies less in legislation and more in the implementation of existing provisions within the party documents. While all the parties have internal constitutional provisions for structures that guarantee intra-party democracy, it is often the case that these are not effectively implemented in practice. Party ideologies and policies that emerge through such structures also tend to be unrepresentative of the views of wider party membership, thus compromising the effectiveness of a party as a mobilising force and a focus for aggregation of wider social concerns and aspirations.

Given these institutional and structural weaknesses, what then is the place and role of party membership in such political parties? What are the members' rights and responsibilities and how are these safeguarded and guaranteed if at all? In short, how do these conditions influence membership participation in political party activity in East Africa and Africa in general? The next section seeks to find answers to these questions. What is the state is state of affairs regarding party structures and institutions, the following sections examine in detail the practice of intra-party democracy in leadership and candidate selection processes and how these are impacted by the nature of the structures that exist within the political party systems. These failures subsequently impede on the degree of intra-party democracy hence compromising the quality of the party leadership.

5.2   Founding principles, orientation and ideology

The majority of independence parties in East Africa were founded upon a liberation ideology of African Nationalism. Structurally, they were organised as mass movements embodying the aspirations for majority African self government and liberation from colonial rule (Wanjohi 2003). These parties constitute what can now be term as the 'old' parties such as UPC and DP in Uganda; KANU and KADU in Kenya; and TANU and ASP in Tanzania. The 'new' post single-party-rule political parties of the early 1990's were essentially anti-establishment, pro-democracy movements   created as a response to and means of resistance to the excesses of the authoritarian one-party state (Oloo 2007).

These were formed largely out of civil society and pressure groups that fought for political pluralism during the single-party regimes and later coalesced into political parties. In this category fall such parties as the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD) with its subsequent splinter off-shoots in Kenya; Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) in Uganda; as well as The National Convention for Construction and Reform (NCCR-Mageuzi) and CUF in Tanzania. Once the constitutions were repealed to allow re-entry of other political parties, another category of parties formed as alternatives to the ruling parties emerged (Wanjohi 2003). In this category are parties such as the Democratic Party (DP), Social Democratic Party (SDP) and Kenya Social Congress (KSC) in Kenya, CHADEMA, United Democratic Party (UDP) and Tanzania Labour Party (TLP) in Tanzania, and Conservative Party (CP), Justice Forum (JEEMA) and others in Uganda.

A relatively new 'third' category of 'coalition' political parties is emerging in Kenya. These are umbrella parties in which membership is corporate as opposed to individual and are usually pre-election pacts formed by parties that agree to field a single presidential candidate for the purposes of winning the presidential vote and forming a government. The run-up to the 2002 general elections saw the creation of NARC and in 2007 ODM and PNU as the main coalition parties going into the elections.

These categories seem to represent the evolutionary trajectory of political organisation in East Africa since independence from political pluralism, single-party autocracy and back to multipartysm. Each category of parties exhibits in their internal organisation and external rhetoric the different shifts in 'stages' of democratic growth. The NRM seems to be an anomaly in this case since it emerged two decades after independence as a revolutionary movement with an ideology of nationalism similar to that of the

independence parties. Though not rooted in the ideology of liberation from colonial rule, it was based on a similar appeal for nation building, national unity and cohesion following years of political turmoil, social disintegration and civil conflict (Mafabi 2007). The Movement was reorganised and re-branded as a political party in 2003 following the reintroduction of multiparty politics in Uganda. It can therefore be classified under the 'post movement or post single-party-rule category' although it still retains the characteristics of most 'old' parties and is viewed as a continuation of the movement ideology simply re-branded as a political party (Oloka-Onyango 2007).

The ideological foundations of the independence parties have not changed much despite the passage of time and societal changes. Such parties as CCM still exhibit immediate post independence organisational characteristics of strong centralisation associated with autocratic tendencies designed for the consolidation of power. This is often characterised by deliberate stifling of both internal and external criticism, dissent and opposition. Such ideological positions have been sustainable in some parties such a KANU in Kenya which disintegrated in the run-up to the 2002 general election. It is likewise detrimental to the development of a culture of intra-party democracy. The central committee of the CCM for instance still has overwhelming power in deciding succession strategies within the party and consequently the country's leadership. As will be discussed later, the party membership and organs such as the delegates' conference only endorse decisions made by the central committee.

Both old and new parties, whether in or out of power, have had to contend with myriad challenges of sustainability (Wanjohi 2003). Their institutional weaknesses have often led to factional infighting characterised by the inability to organise, have elections and change leadership. In the case of Uganda, UPC and DP did not change leadership for almost 20 years (Oloka-Onyango 2007). On the other hand CCM in Tanzania developed a highly regimented and centralised organisational and decision making structure. As a socialist party, its founders saw it as representing the interests of the peasants and workers, hence a mass party for all Tanzanians. This ideological position accounts for the parties continued support among the majority rural populations and still informs the party's rhetoric to date. In practice however, it is increasingly seen as corrupt, elitist and out of touch with the aspirations and realities of the common people (wa Kuhenga, 2007).

The reintroduction of pluralist politics saw the emergence of new political parties shaped by social and political forces different from those driving the formation of nationalist liberation parties. While most of the new parties and the older ones not in power espouse principles of human rights, fundamental freedoms and genuine democracy, they have in practice largely been motivated by a single issue; the removal of the

incumbent ruler and their party from power (Wanjohi 2003). These parties generally do not espouse any distinct and identifiable ideologies different from the independence parties. They are characterised and easily recognisable largely by their ethnic, regional or religious affiliations and the social cleavages they represent as opposed to any distinct policy and ideological positions (Oloo 2007, wa Kuhenga 2007).

Consequently, their internal organisation and institutional structures do not reflect principles of intra-party democracy. In Uganda the DP is perceived as historically representing the interests of the Buganda (central region) and Catholics, while UPC is associated with protestant leanings and drawing the bulk of its support from the north and eastern parts of the country (Ogutu 2007). The outcome of general elections in Kenya since the introduction of multipartysm shows a clear trend in which parties and candidates draw support and win elections based on regional and ethnic the support bases or strongholds. Party alliances have also been forged along ethnic lines (Oloo 2007). Not all parties however conform to this model. In Tanzania, opposition party members and leaders refute these claims and argue that over time, they have broadened their support base. This may be the case for such parties as FDC in Uganda which although drawing the bulk of its support from urban populations, this seems to cut across ethnic or regional cleavages.

In Tanzania, CHADEMA has steadily gained in popularity ratings and electoral victories since the last election in 2005 and in the process acquired a more nationalist character (Komu 2007).

The continued dominance of the NRM in Uganda and CCM in Tanzania is partly due to the perception in rural areas and their own rhetoric, that they represent and protect the interests of all communities. The idea of inclusivity is however more rhetorical than ideological. The success of incumbent parties lies more on their access to state resources, patronage and clientelism as opposed to genuine ideological and programmatic appeal or indeed practices of intra-party democracy (Mvungi 2007).

Policy development under such circumstances is mostly a centralised and top-down process. Policy documents are mostly drafted by departmental heads, national executive committee members, or consultants at the national level, they are then presented at party secretariats for discussion and improvement and then ratified at a delegates' conference.. This is the general trend accross all parties in all three countries. Interviews with KANU, CHADEMA and FDC officials indicate that members play a minor role in the initial stages of policy formulation. This is contrary to party documents such as manifestos and constitutions that talk of membership consultation through workshops and conferences to initiate policy development.

For CCM for instance, the process is initiated by the central committee, then approved by the NEC and eventually adopted by the national delegates' conference. Most parties follow the same pattern that lacks inclusivity of members views, contributions and participation in the development of such crucial party documents as strategic plans, campaign manifestos and party platforms. Particupatory democracy, a central component of intra-party democracy is thus compromised.

This perhaps explains why overall policy statements of all the parties surveyed were very similar. Almost all parties express commitment to improve social service delivery especially in the areas of health, education, unemployment and combating corruption. Apart from these general policy goals, there is little detail outlining specific measures by which they can me realised. Some parties namely CHADEMA and ODM have demonstrated committment to change the centralised administrative structures inherited from the colonial governments in favour devolved a federalist systems of government. Slight country variations appear where in Tanzania, all parties refer to streamlining the country's mining and natural resource industry while Ugandan parties tout the ability and resolve to decisively end the civil war in the north and committ to a peace process with the LRA. Generally all parties show a commitment to the development of a strong economic and political base that is both self-sustaining and responsive to the needs of the majority of the country's people, particularly the poor and marginalized groups.

Most parties indicate the use of both party specific and public domain opinion survey resources for policy formulation. These include research findings and publications from such research centres as REDET in Tanzania and the private polling and research firms in Kenya such as The Steadman Group. Although all the parties indicate the availability and use of surveys among members, opinion polling and other public domain surveys and barometers, they could not provide specific examples of the use of any of these instruments. Similarly, some parties such as CHADEMA claim to carry out internal polls within their membership, but these claims could not be verified.

In general the use of opinion polling is a relartively new phenomenon and this is not restricted to party membership, but general public opinion polls the results of which give general public perceptions but do not necessarily reflect the wishes of the party membership. There is no evidence therefore of intra-party democracy in ideological and policy formulation processes within political parties in the region. In principle, the national party leadership is answerable to its membership through the national delegates' conference which serves as the highest decision making organ of the party. In practice however, there is hardly any accountability to party membership since they do not participate in the policy formulation processes in the first place. Lower party leadership levels are expected to be accountable at their

respective levels to the party organs under the supervision of immediate higher organs, but lack of accountability at the national level often deters committment to accountability in the party branches.

This creates a situation where there is a lack of a sense of loyalty and ownership of the party by the members. Conversely, parties hardly have any real memberships, but simply supporters. The leadership is the party and they are accountable only to themselves. In theory, any leaders or members who are in violation of party decisions or rules are subject to disciplinary proceedings involving ethics or advisory boards or committees at all levels of the party structures. In practice however, disciplinary mechanisms within the party are often used to exclude critical voices instead of holding party officials accountable. Overall, the poor state of institutionalisation of political parties in the region accounts for the discrepancy that exists between the structures, rules and procedures in the parties' documents and the reality and practice of intra-party democracy.

The strategic plans of virtually all the parties with the exception of NRM and CCM concentrate more on aspects of internal organisation, institutional restructuring and broadening and strengthening the membership base, fundraising and undertaking a clear definition of the parties' policy and ideological positions. Most opposition parties seem to recognise the need to change and transform in order to be more appealing to the electorate as well as being more efficient in contesting and winning elections. In so doing, parties attempt to reconcile the ideals that inspired their initial foundation with the realities of a modern and ever changing political environment.

5.3   Membership

The conceptualisation of political parties as instruments of collective human action, mobilisation of social forces and aggregation of diverse interests implies a significant place for party membership within its organisational structures, activities and orientation. In East Africa however, political parties are more creatures of political elite to control government and the masses. Consequently, the role of party membership is secondary to that of the elites. One of the significant challenges to the institutionalisation and democratisation of political parties in Africa in general is the lack of distinct and disciplined party membership (Oloo 2007). Political parties are characterised more by supporters as opposed to card holding registered membership. Party affiliation is thus fluid and membership participation in multiple parties is not uncommon. In most cases card carrying membership ended with the demise of autocratic single party rule where card possession was proof of political loyalty and patriotism. Membership was in

most cased through coercion hence the negative attitude towards registered and card-carrying membership.

Intense competition for votes and support among the multitude of new political parties also places a low premium on the restriction of participation in party activities to registered members. Party elites fear alienating potential voters should they restrict participation for instance in party primaries only to registered members (Muite 2007). Party law across the region does not make any stipulations regarding party membership and although almost all parties have regulations on party membership, these guidelines are often ignored.

Various party instruments such as party constitutions set out members' rights, responsibilities and obligations and the parties studied refer to the existence of a membership register organised at three levels; Branch, District and National level or head quarters. Interestingly though, none of the parties could actually produce any documentation to support the existence of a membership list or give exact figures.

In Uganda for instance, despite the alleged existence of a national data centre, the NRM could not produce any figures to support this. Some of the figures given are completely arbitrary. The DP in Uganda for instance cites a membership of a hundred in 1962, three hundred in 1980 and a thousand in 2005. FDC on the other hand estimates its membership at seventy thousand and assumes that the 37.5% of presidential vote it received in the 2005 election is a fair reflection of its membership, which may not necessarily be the case. UPC concedes that its membership has declined significantly over the years when parties were prohibited from engaging in political activities including mobilisation and membership recruitment drives. Accordingly, several reasons are given for the dismal membership levels compared to the vibrant 1960's and 1970's. Opposition party officials cite the defection of many older members to the NRM for economic reasons due to increased poverty and dependency on state patronage. In some cases, individuals even to date are expected to show NRM membership cards in order to get employment or recommendation from district government officials for employment in the civil service or government sponsored projects (HRW 2006).

Declining and low party membership on the part of old and new parties respectively can be attributed in part to their lack of capacity to carry out effective membership recruitment drives. The parties are limited by their lack of institutional structures and resources for mobilisation and penetration countrywide. With the exception of the ruling parties NRM and CCM, most opposition parties charge a minimum fee for basic membership (either annual or one-off subscription). It is worth noting however that due to massive

rural poverty, many voters can not even afford to pay the membership fee and the practice in Kenya for instance is for prospective candidates to buy cards from the national secretariat for distribution among intended supporters in the grass-roots. In Uganda, opposition parties complain about the practice by the ruling NRM to give out its membership cards for free as a further strategy to undercut their appeal among the masses (Njoki 2007).

The situation varies slightly in Tanzania where most parties give estimates of party membership, though with difficulties in quoting actual numbers because the figures were continually fluctuating. UDP and TLP for instance could not give an estimate of its membership figures, though an earlier report gave TLP membership estimates at no less than one million in 2005. Chadema gave its membership estimates at December 2006 at about 850,000 on the Mainland and in Zanzibar representing an accelerated increase between 2004 and 2006. This included a membership drive during which no fewer than half a million new members were recruited during 2004 in preparation for the expected election in October 2005(Shayo, 2006). CCM gave its membership strength as having risen from just under three million in 2003 to 3.8 million in 2007, an increase of about 30 percent. Opposition parties however cite allegations of CCM use of state resources and administrative structures for more than 40 years to swell its membership ranks. Further concerns were raised regarding the ruling party's ability to pay its officials and staff much higher salaries compared to the opposition parties (Komu 2007).

Most political parties become dormant after elections and the lack of political activity involving party members adversely affects the external credibility and internal democracy within parties. The role of party membership in the formulation of party policies and selection of candidates is virtually non existent. Although stipulations exist regarding the members' roles, rights and responsibilities, these are not implemented in practice. In Uganda for instance, most parties have had only one delegate's conference since 2005 and these simply served to endorse and legitimise party platforms, election manifestos and office holders who either set up the new parties or those that kept the old ones alive over the years. While membership recruitment is delegated to the branch or district levels, most parties, except for NRM do not have structures beyond the major urban centres and in some cases only in their regional strongholds (DP in central and UPC in the north and east of the country).

Effective communication between the party and its members is also a key component in ensuring a constant exchange and inclusion of members' views in party planning. This is another significant challenge facing African political parties due to the lack of infrastructural capacity. Although some parties give indications of vibrant communication both ways between the party and its membership at all levels,

there is little evidence for this. In Uganda for instance, apart from FDC and NRM; most of the others do not have functioning websites and email addresses by which to communicate with its membership.

Public rallies, party meetings and individual correspondence seem to be the most frequent form of communication between parties and members. In Tanzania, CCM and CUF have party newspapers used for communication with membership and to the wider public. Some parties are slowly embracing new technology such as mobile telephony and internet for communication; about half of the parties studied have relatively good websites containing basic party information, though most of them are not up to date. Advertisements in the media, billboards and leaflets to reach out to the wider public are usually used during election campaigns, but do not form part of regular party communication strategies.

Conversely, members may communicate with the party during public meetings and rallies as well as individual postal mail, petitions and by telephone. Members who have filed petitions against election results communicate with party leaders in order to receive administrative guidance and support. Although parties' constitutions and election manifestos are widely available, most party leaders said that few of their members read these regularly. Intra-party communication more often than not tends to be one way as members rarely take the initiative to communicate with the party or party officials.

With limited resources to hold public rallies and delegates conferences, even physical communication afforded through such forums are limited and sporadic. Party caucuses for special interest groups such as women and youth wings are crucial in achieving greater intra-party democracy. These are however not fully developed and in most cases are not operational in most political parties. Except for the DP's Uganda Young Democrats (UYD), CCM's Umoja wa Vijana (Youth Wing) and Umoja wa Wanawake (Women's wing), there is not much evidence of a strong focus in revamping and strengthening these institutions which are only mobilised during election campaigns and soon after neglected once they have served their purpose.

5.4   Leadership and candidate selection

One of the key processes of expanding inclusiveness in party procedures and decision making is in the recruitment and selection of party leaders and candidates. These processes allow parties excellent opportunities to demonstrate their inclusiveness by providing opportunities to incorporate party members and supporters in these processes. Leadership and candidate selection processes are some of the most crucial undertakings a party can make since the outcome determines not only the party's public profile and

competitiveness during elections, but it also has consequences on members' and supporters' continued loyalty and support.

It is there fore important that parties make choices that make such processes not only inclusive, but also free and fair and to be seen to be so. Considering the high stakes involved, parties have to contend with such questions as, who is eligible to stand as a candidate. What are the qualifications or limitations? Who may participate in the selection process and how can such a process me conducted? How can the process be guaranteed to be free and fair? Who by and how are disputes adjudicated?

5.4.1 Leadership selection

The electoral systems in East Africa as in many African countries are single member parliamentary (constituency) and presidential systems. This means that the selection of a party leader is equivalent to selecting the party's presidential candidate, should the party choose to field a candidate during elections. Whatever the case, the choice of party leader determines the image as well as the course the party will take. This is more so in African party systems characterized by oligarchy instead of democracy. In most cases, overwhelming power and influence is concentrated in the party leader or a few of his cronies who hold significant sway over party policies, programmes and selection of other leaders and candidates.

Technically, almost all political parties surveyed select their national leadership through the delegates conference, a form of party caucus in which representatives from the lower branch or district levels of the party meet at the national level. According to most party rule books, these delegates are supposed to be elected by party members at the branch, district or constituency levels and are supposed to be widely representative of women, youth and other marginalized groups. The delegates' conference or congress is generally described as the highest decision making organ of the party whose decisions are binding to the party.

In practice however, these delegates are usually carefully handpicked by party operatives according to their loyalty to particular party elites from their own regions and calculated to give as much support as possible to the regional party stalwarts. In many cases, with the exception of a few, most parties do not have any real structures at the grassroots from where delegates should be democratically elected. The delegates' selection process is usually yet another demonstration of the politics of personality cults, sycophancy and patronage as opposed to genuine processes of intra-party democracy.

Convening a national delegates' conference is usually huge logistical undertaking for most parties with limited financial means. Coupled with the acrimony, confrontation and friction that the exercise raises, many parties shy away or totally avoid holding such conferences unless they absolutely have to, usually in order to meet legal requirements for the party to continue functioning as a legitimate body. In less institutionalized political parties, party positions are usually divided between the party elites, usually among its founders, chief financiers or regional and ethnic chieftains in boardroom deals. Delegates' congresses are subsequently mere pomp and ceremony meant to legitimise already agreed upon leadership positions devoid of any real participation by party members (Oloo 2007, Wanjohi 2003).

Highly centralised political parties such as CCM equally have less inclusive leadership selection processes. The Central Committee is the most powerful organ of the party with overwhelming power over nomination and recommendation of party members for the positions of chairperson and deputy chairperson of the party; the president of the republic Tanzania; MPs and members of the House of Representatives. Not only does the organ nominate members to contest leadership positions, it also has the supervisory role of monitoring the implementation of party elections as well as appointment of district party leaders. Such a highly centralised system is characteristic of ruling parties in one-dominant-party systems that have often retained power since the era of sungle-party rule. This is the case with NRM in Uganda where the influential National Executive Coulcil nominates candidates for top party positions such as president, chairperson and deputy, secretary general and deputy as well as treasurer. Those nominated are more often than not simply endorsed by the national conference without any alterations.

The lack of inclusive and democratic leadership selection processes with no clear mechanisms for neutral and independent dispute arbitration often has negative consequences for party unity and cohesiveness. Recent legislation of party law to create arbitration offices within the offices of Registrar of Political Parties are yet to bear fruit since they are still at infancy with little structures. There is also lack of trust and confidence in such external bodies which are perceived to be intruments of the appointing autority to adversely interfere with rival parties. Consequently, more often than not, intra-party rivalry spills out into open conflict and sometimes party splits.

Kenya has perhaps been the theatre of the most divisive party wrangles arising from undemocratic and non-inclusive leadership selection processes. In 2002 in Kenya for example, the then ruling party KANU disintegrated after incumbent President Daniel Arap Moi mismanaged his own succession by appointing a relatively untested Uhuru Kenyatta, son of his predecessor and first president Jomo Kenyatta as party leader. Senior party elites who had been witing in the wings and looked to a democratic and inclusive

succession process broke away from the party to form the Rainbow coaliton and teamed with the oppositon to dethrone KNAU from power. Uhuru's leadership of KANU was ridiculed as a failed project. KANU lost massively in the ensuing election and has not recivered ever since. Subsequent wrangles over leadership elections in 2006 saw Uhuru's leadership of KANU annulled in court only to be reinstated later. This was follwed by a split within KANU with the creation of a new faction, the New KANU.

In 2007, Similar leadership wrangles saw the split of no less that four leading parties in the run-up to that year's general election. Some of the parties affected were ODM, FORD-Kenya, KANU and NARC. Disagreements within ODM was over what process of leadership selection to adopt between a delegates (caucus) system or a consensus between the party elites. This eventually led to the split between the two contenders for the party leadership resulting in the creation of ODM-Kenya and ODM Party of Kenya. Disagreements within NARC led to the registration of the splinter NARC-Kenya party while FORD-Kenya split in two leading to the creation of New FORD-Kenya. The blow to FORD-Kenya which had once been the leading opposition party was such that in the ensuing 2007 general election, it manged to gain only one parliamentary seat with its party leader being defeated in his own constitutency.

In Tanzania, leadership rifts in NCCR-Mageuzi led to the departure of charismatic party leader Augustin Mrema and his supporter to join TLP while in Uganda, the DP has had to grapple with intense internal leadership wrangles occassioned by undemocratic leadership selection processes pitting party leaders John Kizito and Kampala city Mayor Nasser Sebaggala. The UPC has however come in for severe criticism both internally and externally for its undemocratic leadership selection. Former president Milton Obote remained party leader for life until his death in exile in Zambia on 10th October 2005. There after, his wife Miria Kalule Obote was elected party leader. This has sparked accusations of nepotism, gerontocracy and dynastic tendencies within the party. Party insiders fear that Obote's son and party MP Jimmy Akena, a member of the central committee is being groomed to take over the leadership of the party. They argue that his mother's elevation to party leader was a ploy to warm the seat while giving her politically inexperienced son ample time to learn the ropes before ascending to the party leadership, thus effectively handing it down from father, to wife to son. A critical party official confided that,

> "…we have managed to transit form the single party movement system. But their [party leaders'] thinking and outlook as individuals, they have not moved and are still stuck in the old way of doing things. The leadership has not yet adapted to the new ways of doing politics in a modern global environment. Secondly, the kind of leadership we are having and their style of management tends to be centred or focused on other interests. They have their own personal interests which may be parallel from those of the party. That's why in my own view, once the district structures become empowered and the youth structures also get

empowered, it will help to check that kind of thinking and cause certain readjustments in terms of management and focus."

Such attitudes portray a party deeply divided within its ranks, not only among its membership and supporters but within the leadership as well. How these differences and conflicts are managed will determine the future cohesion and effectiveness of the party and the extent of membership loyalty.

Undemocratic and unrepresentative leadership selection processes therefore have significant and often negative consequences on party unity and cohesion, its effectivness in contesting elections and where regionalism and ethnicity is the organising principle, wider considerations of national security and stability are at stake. Internal wrangles often lead to weakening of parties, splits, defections and formation of new or revival of moribund parties. This also creates a culture of politcal party speculation in which unscrupulous individual register 'briefcase' parties, waiting for disgruntled party leaders looking for ready-made outfits for sale to which they can defect and use as vehicles to mobilise their supporters and seek political power.

5.4.2   Candidate Selection

Candidate selection is a fundamental process of a political party's engagement with its membership and the wider electorate. The process by which candidates for elected positions are chosen is perhaps as important as the type of candidates selected. The result determines the party's competitive profile against its competitors during elections as well as determining the loyalty of its members and supporters. The degree to which party members and supporters are included in this process is therefore significant in determining a party's success in an election.

The most open and inclusive form of candidate selection is the direct ballot or party primaries where eligible party members or supporters pre-select party candidates through direct elections. There are variations to this model depending who is eligible to vote in the primaries. In most western democracies, participation is restricted to registered party members. This is however not the case with most African parties that do not have any real registered membership. The process is usually open to any registered voters that are eligible to vote during the general election itself.

Before the electorate can participate in the primaries however, there has to be a pre-selection procedure to determine eligibility and how candidates can put their names forward for consideration. The question here then is who determines eligibility for the candidates? All political parties studied have clear party rules

and guidelines on candidate selection. In most cases, en election board is set up to vet interested candidates who must be approved by a party organ before they can be given the green light to contest. The more centralised the party structure, the tighter the control on vetting and clearance of candidates. This then limits the choices available for party supporters to choose from and compromises intra-party democracy. On the other hand, a party needs to ensure that potential candidates are selected on specific criteria that will strengthen the party going into an election. Some considerations include a candidate's ability to finance their own campaigns, party loyalty, electability, adherence to party ideology and platform and ability to work fellow party members.

Eligibility criteria for both parliamentary and presidential candidates closely mirror provisions contained in the various country's constitutions. These include guidelines on age and levels of education. Some parties stipulate certain requirements such as length of membership within the party although these are not strictly adhered to. In most cases, interested candidates collect application forms from the party's national secretariat and pay an application or nomination fee. In Kenya, this is usually a convenient fundraising strategy for the party from where funds for managing the party primaries and campaigns can be sourced. Applications are then vetted and approved by a mandated party organ such as an election board.

Not all parties however follow this pre-selection procedure. Due to the immense logistical and financial requirements for such a national exercise, some parties such as SAFINA in Kenya prefer to have a centralised candidate selection process in which applicants are vetted by the appropriate national party organs and given direct nominations to run as the party candidates in the parliamentary constituencies and civic seats. This is usually the practice with smaller parties with less capacity to mobilise and manage nationwide party primaries. It is therefore a compromise between openness and inclusivity versus efficiency. Though less acrimonious, such a process denies party members any role in the selection of its candidates.

In Kenya, party primaries ahead of the 2007 general elections have been described as being undemocratic and fraught with corruption, violence and outright rigging. In places where primary elections did take place, the process was marred by logistical and administrative shortcomings including lack of sufficient election materials such as ballot papers, untrained and inexperienced election officials and inaccurate reporting of results. The arising confusion was compounded by mistakes made at the national level in issuing of double nomination certificates to party candidates. In some cases, the national party secretariat handed out selective direct nominations to some preferred candidates. This led to protests and allegations

of corruption, nepotism and cronyism leading to defections of potential candidates to rival political parties (Pinto 2007).

The need for inclusivity and openness in party primaries by opening the process to all potential voters regardless of party membership has potential costs to the party. This is often the case in situations where parties have no clear record of membership, or where parties fear alienating potential voters in the actual election by restricting candidate selection to registered members. In such as case as was witnessed in the Kenyan primaries, the use of national identity cards to vote in the nominations resulted in individuals voting in all the different party nominations. This exposed some political parties to infiltration and manipulation of the primary process where some politicians used their supporters to vote against strong candidates in the opposing political parties primaries as a strategy to face weaker candidates in the actual elections (Pinto 2007).

The logistical difficulties, limited financial resources and fear of ensuing wrangles and divisions are just but some of the factors that make party elites fail to carry out open, transparent and inclusive leadership and candidate selection processes. Poor institutional and organisational capacity, inherent structural weaknesses and pre-existing tensions between different camps and loyalties often impede the conduct of free and fair leadership and candidate selection processes. Consequently, these crucial party activities are often carried out by central national party organs and are characterised by careful regional, ethnic and personal power balancing and horse-trading that ensure the loyalty and contentment of leading and influential party figures who often command powerful influences over their regional and ethnic bases. Party leaders often prefer to keep such powerful kingpins in their camps as opposed to having them defect and either pose serious competition to their parties or carry with them a huge chunk of much needed votes come a general election.

Coalition building is also often merely a game of numbers as party leaders seek out partners that are likely to bring with them the largest voting blocks enough to win an election and form a government. Coalitions are therefore not based on any concurrence in ideology or policy positions, but instead are characterised by power sharing pacts and promises of government appointments for party technocrats, financiers and activists even before the first vote has been cast.

All these processes add up to the emasculation of intra-party democracy by alienating party members and reducing then to mere pawns in a high stakes game between party elites. It is not surprising then that in such politics of personality cults, membership loyalty is not to particular parties, but allegiance is instead

paid to particular party leaders usually commanding regional or ethnic bases. This was the case in Kenya where Raila Odinga, considered an undisputed leader of the Luo community since the early 1990's has changed parties five times and each time, carrying with him the loyalty of an entire community. A similar scenario can be attributed to President Mwai Kibaki who since the creation of his own Democratic Party has changed parties five times as well and still commanding a sizeable following among the Kikuyu, the largest ethnic group in Kenya.

5.5 Conclusion

Effective Intra-party democracy is a function of several factors including clear founding principles, a cogent mobilising ideology and distinctive policies around which party membership is mobilised. This clear party identity can then be nurtured through strong and democratic institutions and organisational structures that ensure effective membership participation and the presence of internal checks and balances for accountability.

One of the key functions of political parties is the selection and presentation of credible candidates to the electorate who can adequately articulate their interests both in and out of government. It is important that the process by which these candidates are selected be democratic, inclusive and transparent. This is essential in maintaining membership loyalty to the party and eventual success in elections. Similarly, the process by which parties select its leadership should be inclusive and representative of the views and aspirations of its membership. Where these ingredients are lacking, as is the case with most African political parties, intra-party democracy is severely curtailed and parties fail to deliver on the promise of wider democracy in the society. The lack of structural democratic processes also compromise the legitimacy of the choices that parties offer the electorate in terms of policy and candidates for public office. The next chapter therefore examines the implications of these structural and policy weaknesses in processes of leadership and candidate selection.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions

Political parties are essential institutions for the proper functioning of a democratic society. As social organisations designed for contesting and attaining political power, political parties serve several functions including determining the content of the political order, selecting authoritative leaders, resolving disputes, maintaining order and promoting the various interests of the community among diverse and contending social forces. In order to achieve these objectives, Political parties have to offer genuine avenues for effective membership participation in shaping the content, character and output of political parties. Intra-party democracy is therefore essential for the creation and growth of well functioning and sustainable democratic institutions hence fostering and deepening a democratic culture within the wider society.

Intra-party democracy, as an element of participatory democracy, encourages a culture of democratic debate and deliberation of critical issues and therefore collective ownership of decisions; promotes party unity through reduced factionalism and/or fragmentation; creates legitimate internal conflict management systems and reduces opportunistic and arbitrary use of delegated authority. The attainment of these democratic ideals can only be realised depending on the extent to which processes of effective membership participation are formally stipulated and practically implemented in the party's organisational rules and procedures. While debate continues on how much democracy is good for political party effectiveness, the general consensus is that intra-party democracy is desirable for its role in increasing the levels of participatory democracy in the wider society.

Institutional arrangements are essential for the attainment of intra-party democracy. Although the status in most of the political parties studied suggests that institutional arrangements do exist, they do not satisfactorily influence intra-party democracy. The first sub-hypothesis is thus partially supported in the empirical findings though there is a significant variance between the form and substance of democracy largely owing to the personalised and informal conduct of party political activity in the region due to low levels of institutionalisation. As Wanjohi (2005) explains, there is a gap between the character and attitudes of the political elite on the one hand, and the needs and aspirations of the majority of the people on the other. The situation is as such because the institutional arrangements are either not adhered to, are weakly enforced or simply disregarded by the party elites.

Although African political parties are products of distinct historical, socio-economic and political conditions, they do share certain organisational similarities with their western counterparts in their tendency towards oligarchy and authoritarianism and declining membership. The difference is that while in the west the danger lies in the increasing role of party activists that risks alienating the larger party membership, African political parties are held captive by the personalised nature of political organisation where the political elite and business class have virtual control of parties. Participatory democracy in African political parties is thus compromised as the general membership is rendered ineffectual (Oloo 2003). The lack of intra-party democracy in most African political parties has been correlated with such characteristics as internal discord, leadership wrangles, party splits and in some cases open violence. These factors further weaken largely unstable political parties, compromise their ability to select credible candidates, compete in elections and govern effectively and in some cases lead to the total collapse of political parties.

The prevailing political party systems and the external regulatory and governance environments do significantly influence the internal functioning of political parties and vice versa. In East Africa, both Uganda and Tanzania have a one-dominant party system that tends to disadvantage the opposition parties' capacity to function as effectiveness in the wider political environment. The reverse is also the case in that the weakness of the opposition parties and the resulting inability to challenge the status quo ensures the survival of the existing party systems to the detriment of a truly participatory democracy taking root within the wider society.

Ethnicity and regionalism is a significant factor in political mobilization and hence the content and structure of internal political party organisation in the region, especially in Kenya and Uganda. In Kenya and to some extent in Uganda, the party political environment is characterized by. The resulting coalition building in Kenya is not institutionally structured and is not based on clear ideological and programmatic considerations. They are simply power-sharing deals between the political elites who use the party members as bargaining chips for personal political gains. This was evident in the coalition arrangements which were nothing but power-sharing agreements in Kenya after the divisive 2005 constitutional referendum and the 2007 general elections. In both cases, the substantive socio-economic and political issues behind the constitutional referendum and the post-election violence respectively were not addressed.

Empirical research findings show a varied pattern with regard to the presence of indicators of intra-party democracy among the sample of political parties studied in East Africa. The key indicators of intra-party as outlined in the definition as institutionalisation, decentralization and inclusiveness were measured

according to their presence in such aspects as party institutions, policy formulation, candidate and leadership selection and membership participation. The empirical findings show a mixed pattern in terms of the extent of institutionalisation and adherence among the twelve political parties that were investigated. Several conclusions regarding the four sub-hypotheses can therefore be deduced in relation to the main hypothesis.

Adequate institutionalisation of party structures and processes are necessary in securing and enforcing the principle-agent relationship between party members and the elected party representatives. The deliberative model of democracy advocates that intra-party democracy can only be realised when party decision-making and operational procedures are debated freely and collectively agreed upon among all members as equals. This necessitates institutionalised decentralisation in which lower party organs and members in lower levels of leadership are included in the party's deliberative decision-making processes. This means that the representational capacity of political parties should be institutionalised in such a way that it is geared towards the articulation, realisation and protection of the interests of the membership as opposed to the prevailing situation where elite interests supersede or tramp the interests of wider society altogether.

In order to address some of the systemic, institutional and structural weaknesses of the party political environment, all three East African countries have enacted various legal and constitutional laws most of which take the form of political party laws. Other than reforming the entire party political and electoral systems, these laws are only targeted at the regulation of political parties, laying down guidelines for their registration, funding and conduct. Legal regulation of political parties is therefore becoming a standard norm in the region and is widely seen as a positive development especially where public funding of political parties in concerned. This strengthens the competitive capacity of opposition parties against the ruling parties which often have undue advantage owing to their access to state resources. With regard to intra-party democracy, party laws however contain significant short comings as they do not go far enough in specifically setting out guidelines, requirements, reporting and oversight or supervisory provisions to ensure higher standards of adherence by political parties.

The issue of party law and political party regulation is contestable since political parties lie in the border between civil society and the state. It remains debatable whether indeed aspects of intra-party democracy should be externally legislated by the state or be left to self regulation within political party structures and institutions.

This research also reveals that intra-party democracy is significantly influenced by unwritten informal institutional arrangements, which are value driven. These values are internalised by individuals through

the socialisation process and may include political culture and political legacy, clientelism and patrimony. Not all informal institutional arrangements are necessarily negative and detrimental to intra-party democracy. To the contrary, some informal institutional arrangements can be complimentary, functional and may serve to solve the principle-agent conflicts arising from competing interests of social interaction. This may in turn serve to promote the efficient performance of formal institutional arrangements (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004). Indeed, some informal institutional arrangements may enhance participatory democracy by promoting a culture of debate and consultations within the party thereby promoting intra-party democracy. It is therefore necessary to identify and encourage those informal institutional arrangements that are critical to the enhancement of intra-party democracy while guarding against those that may impede the promotion of intra-party democracy.

The lack of inclusiveness in ideology and policy formulation processes supports the second sub-hypothesis and represents the most significant failing in all three indicators of institutionalisation, inclusiveness and decentralization among all political parties in the region on the . This is one of the most centralised and non-inclusive aspects of most political parties both institutionally and structurally. Party formation and ideological orientation is usually the preserve of a few individuals who characteristically become the party 'owners'. These founders then centralize power and decision-making prerogatives among themselves. More often than not, the process of policy and campaign platform formulation is outsourced to expert consultants more often than not close associates of the party founders or party leadership. The process thus severely compromises intra-party democracy by disenfranchising party members, diminishing the sense of ownership and compromising party loyalty. Such practices only serve to entrench personality politics where loyalty to the party is substituted with personal loyalty to the party leader hence further diminishing prospects for party institutionalisation and overall democracy.

The main hypothesis and third sub-hypothesis is partly supported regarding participation in leadership and candidate selection processes. This conclusion derives from the fact that most parties fail to hold internal leadership elections and although most parties conduct primary elections for the nomination of parliamentary candidates, there are critical deficits. In terms of internal leadership elections, a large number of parties have never held credible elections since their formation and are perpetually led by interim officials. For those that do hold elections, there are significant delays and when held, they are usually marred with corruption, intimidation, bribery, threats and in some cases open violence. Conflicts arising from the undemocratic nature of these processes are so intense that it often leads to party splits or the exit of some leaders along with their supporters to join other parties. Some examples include splits in NCCR-Mageuzi in Tanzania, FORD, FORD-Kenya, KANU, ODM and NARC in Kenya. Newly enacted

party law in Kenya and Uganda and a review of enforcement mechanisms in Uganda are intended to rectify these anomalies.

In terms of candidate selection, there are strong tendencies towards centralisation, imposition of unpopular candidates, automatic nomination by the national secretariat, outright rigging and manipulation rules of procedure. This is despite the fact that although most parties have clearly stipulated internal rules regulating the selection of party candidates in the party law, these are hardly adhered to. The scenario is compounded by the fact that there are no clear, impartial and credible conflict resolution mechanisms. At the same time, there are not external candidate selection rules in the national constitution and where conflict arises, the courts are hesitant to arbitrate preferring to leave such disputes to be resolved through internal party machinery. Only recently have arbitration powers been granted to the registrar of political parties, but these bodies too seem hesitant to interfere. As such, while institutional arrangements theoretically enhance intra-party democracy, in practice, both the absence and, where they exist, weak internal and external enforcement of these institutional arrangements undermine free and popular participation in candidate selection processes. It can therefore be argued that the sub-hypothesis is only partly supported in empirical findings.

Finally, concerning membership participation in party decision making processes such as conventions, the main and sub-hypothesis are only partially supported. Existing institutional arrangements among almost all political parties do not fully comply with internal constitutional provisions and hence fail to fully enhance intra-party democracy.

Party conventions are hardly conducted and when they its usually close to general elections where party leaders use them to endorse already pre-selected presidential or parliamentary candidates. In some cases, delegates' attendance only serves to legitimise undemocratic pre-election power sharing pacts packaged as coalitions. Party conventions are largely held contrary to the timeframes and procedures set in party constitutions. The findings show that in some cases, these conventions have been legally contested in court for being un-procedural such as one that preceded the split of KANU and the creation of New-KANU in 2005 as well as the split of FORD-Kenya and creation of New FORD-Kenya in 2007. Neither the national constitution nor the party law defines clear and enforceable procedures for conventions. Due to these limitations, both the main and sub hypotheses are only partially supported.

With regard to membership participation in the formation and dissolution of inter-party coalitions, there has been a glaring absence of any form of regulation in existing institutional arrangements. This has served to adversely undermine intra-party democracy. Although there are new stipulations in the newly

enacted party law in Kenya, this only serves to institutionalize and regulate the instruments of the coalition with the electoral commission and parliament, but does not ensure and safeguard the interests of party members in the process. It there fore only serves to further legitimises undemocratic decisions made by party leaders to the further exclusion of citizens. Similarly, provisions in existing party laws in Tanzania and Uganda prohibits the formation of coalitions hence denying party members and political parties the free will to decide what form of political organisation best suits their interests. This is a characteristic of one-dominant party systems in which ruling parties enact laws that consolidate their position in power, while weakening the possibility of the opposition to gain enough strength to pose a threat to the hegemony of the ruling party.

6.2   Policy recommendations

Intra-party democracy is both an ideal and pragmatic objective whose desirability largely depends on the perspective from which it is approached, the end for which it is sought and the means by which it is to be realised. From a participatory democracy perspective, the following broad recommendations are proposed for the purpose of effective implementation of measures that ensure the attainment of intra-party democracy in East Africa.

- Party law as enshrined in the various Political Parties Acts and the countries' national constitutions need to be harmonised and/or simultaneously reviewed to ensure that political parties have specific provisions that entrench democracy and ensure the institutionalisation of intra-party democracy. This will serve to promote transparency within the party organisations and provide for internal and external enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance.

- Political parties need to demonstrate a commitment to institutionalisation, inclusiveness and decentralisation through the review and enactment of internal party legislation, rules and regulations that promote and protect intra-party democracy while at the same time ensuring adherence to already existing institutional and organisational processes for intra-party democracy through the widening of membership participation in policy formulation, leadership and candidate selection as well as party conventions.

- Political parties need to decentralise decision making processes through the devolution of power from the national offices to the lower party structures and organs. This can be achieved through the empowerment and strengthening of the capacity of regional party organs and structures.

- Party law and national electoral laws should be harmonised to empower the office of the registrar of political parties and the electoral commission to supervise and ensure the conduct of

compulsory periodic democratic primary elections for political parties, which must be monitored by local independent observers. This will ensure that parties elect their presidential and parliamentary candidates transparently. This process should also provide for independent and credible arbitration mechanisms and where necessary legal redress for violation of such procedures should be attainable.

- Inter-party coalitions and alliances should be guided by democratic processes rules of procedure that involve consent from party membership by way of party referenda or democratic voting in party conventions. This should be enshrined in party law and harmonised in party constitutions. These procedures should instil a culture of consensual pre-coalition consultation among members of a political party. This will increase the legitimacy and collective ownership of coalition decisions and minimise incidences of arbitrary and unilateral decisions by party elites.

6.3   Recommendations for further research

Intra-party democracy is a complex and multifaceted process. It can be influenced by multiple causal mechanisms external to the political parties and their internal institutional structures and processes. The interplay of external factors such as historical and cultural contexts, socio-economic conditions, electoral and party systems and types of government could easily influence the character and behaviour of political parties and eventually determine the degree of intra-party democracy. In view of the limitations in the design and scope of this thesis research, proposals for future research should examine such issues as:

- Institutionalisation: Further investigation should be carried out examine the interplay between formal and informal institutional arrangements in order to examine the extent in terms of where and how they could compliment each other and influence the dynamics of intra-party democracy.
- Membership: Regarding party conventions, further investigation should assess the level of membership participation prior to the convention in preparing the convention agenda and the extent of their power and influence in determining the outcome of the decisions made to ensure that party elites do not use the conventions to legitimise undemocratic processes.
- Decentralisation: Future research could also focus on mechanisms of devolution of power through empowerment and capacity building for party branches to enhance their decision making capacity and inclusiveness of the party lower rank and file in decision making.

- Party Law: To what extent does Party Law, both in specific political party legislation or constitutional provisions influence intra-party democracy? Future research could pay attention to the contentions between external and internal (self) regulation.

- Party funding: Further investigations should examine the role of party funding on intra-party democracy in terms of campaign finance, sources, limits on contributions, membership obligations, disclosure and expenditure limits. To what extent does funding structures affect the personal influence of the party leader of other elites on decision-making procedures?

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