Popular Support for Political Parties in Sudan 2013

Elmogiera Elawad (PhD.)
Qatar University- Qatar

Rehab ALsharief (PhD.)
Gezira university – Sudan

Gefari Elawad (MSc.)
Sudan Polling and Statistics Center
Email:Elmogiera@qu.edu.qa

Sudan witnessed democratic traditions since mid-forties of the last century, during which many parties were registered and their partisans and associates were organized and listed. Some of these parties gained entrenched experiences and had to deal with the successive Sudanese governments since independence. Previously, it was pretty much easy for these parties to know, with a reasonable degree of certainty, the exact level of support it enjoys among the populace. Region, religion, age, sex, social backgrounds and educational levels and the like were the crux of these calculations. Accordingly, it was relatively easy for these parties to advocate policies in their campaigns pertaining to ensure followers' support and to attract others.

In the previous few years, however, a growing controversy developed between the myriad political opposition organizations and the ruling party in the Sudan over the previous elections and its outcomes, only to add to the already complicated political scene. It became as well, difficult for interested observers, researchers and academics to estimate the actual size of these parties among the public.

This study is the first of its kind, we claim, to discuss the issue of political parties' allegiance in contemporary Sudan. It is conducted by independent research center and aiming at identifying popular interest in political issues in general among the Sudanese population and the relative weighs they give to each of the competing parties aspiring to win their support. The study tackles, moreover, the social characteristics of each of the main parties' supporters in the political arena.

Public opinion survey method is used to highlight political and social issues in the Sudan whereby 5000 Households were covered in 2013 in all the Sudanese states.
Introduction

Political Party’s Concept

A political party is an organization with certain principles, the most important among them according to its definitions, is that it aims at attaining political power in order to implement its political program and not just aspiring to influence or exert pressure.

Many studies define the elements of political party concept from the perspective of the new developments in the partisan experience and political theory evolution in the context of the liberal paradigms according to western democracies, the standards and components of which are not symmetrical to developing countries’ realities and the circumstances surrounding the establishment of political parties therein. Most studies of the political parties in those countries, therefore, had concluded that the political parties in these countries suffer from the weakness and fragility of its civil society organizations forces. In many cases in these countries, political parties are merely tools in the hand of the state and other marginal entities, rather than well established institutions to regulate citizens' participation in political life according to specific intellectual frameworks and distinct political programs. There is another theoretical approach to political parties in the developing countries that adopt the approach that these parties deepen dependency and inherited lack of freedom, especially the ideological and tribal ones. In such parties, there is a usually hegemony of a minority over the deprived majority.

Notwithstanding the above observations, there are also those who justify the establishment of political parties in these countries on the pretext that they link between the rulers and the ruled and that it serve as a guarantor against the rule-inheritance and thus lead to the stability and check anarchy. These parties also perform important functions like training cadres and providing opportunities for different views to be expressed. In some countries, political parties are mere extensions, in way or another, of the forces of conventional formations (family, ethnic, tribal, religious, sectarian etc.). As to the Sudanese parties, some scholars believe that they are just political associations or seasonal gatherings; they look similar to other institutions that have moved into Sudan.
from abroad like modern educational institutions, military and civil service, due to the absence of what distinguishes these parties themselves in the realm of democratic manifestations and their failure to fulfill basic democratic functions. From its very inception, the Sudanese parties were associated with colonialism that is why their basic demand was to eliminate it. And despite the legitimacy of such a demand, the lack of vision for the post-colonial era has had a profound impact in the reduction of their viability and ability to deliver, especially when coupled by the lack of programs and agenda that further national interests which are supposed to be propagated by these political parties.

The Functions of Political Parties

Most studies that have addressed the issue of political parties in the modern world confirmed some of the distinctions and differences in the functions performed by political parties in the developing countries compared to those traditional functions performed by their counterparts in the stable western democracies. Some significant features of these functions are to assemble interests, express and participate in decision-making policies, monitor and implement the recruitment of the political cadres for government positions. These parties also articulate the relationship between the ruler and the ruled, or between society and the state, and bring them together into conformity and thus contribute to political socialization. Moreover, there are the functions of political mobilization, regulation and control function, and legitimacy conferring role played by these political entities. Political parties are considered, consequently, the channels through which distribution of resources and benefits are usually taking place. One of the main roles of political parties is their advancement of political development by contributing to solve the crisis of both political participation and political legitimacy. With our acknowledgement of the fact that the functions of political parties in the developing countries varies in the degree, from one country to another and from one party system to another, however the roles of political parties undoubtedly affected the contexts in which they were found. It is also noticeable, especially in the Sudan, that these parties did not achieve the hopes that had been hung on them on the eve of independence namely; to contribute to the performance of its functions and to deliver for its promises. Had they perform these
functions well, they would have won the satisfaction and full support of the Sudanese general public.

**Contemporary Political Parties Map in the Sudan**

Sudanese political map is multiple and dynamic one. It continually shows new and myriad political forces in western and eastern Sudan in addition to the traditional and modern parties and political organizations. These intricate and fluid entities could be classified as follows: Periodical parties and organizations traditional and sectarian parties, ideological, racial, and other modern entities resembling the newly formed Sudanese nationalism.

1- **Sectarian parties:** the larger political units which have had a prominent role in the political life of the Sudan are both the Khatmiyya and the Ansar sects. Through these sectarian channels, the party is usually entrusted, on behalf of these two sects, to design and manage the country's economic and political affairs. These two sects are represented by National Unionist Party, Democratic Unionist Party (Khatmiyya) and the Umma Party (Ansar).

2- **Ideological parties:** divided either to leftist gatherings (Sudanese Communist Party), or republican or Islamic (Muslim Brotherhood in their different developments and shapes (Sadiq Abdullah Abdel-Majid group, National Congress Party and Popular Congress). There are also some other Islamic entities with an impact on the contemporary Sudanese political arena, but they do not fall within the political party definition; such as the Ansar al-Sunnah and different Sufi orders.

3- There are also the **ethnic and regional parties:** such as the Beja Congress (BC): as it is obvious from its name, its overwhelming membership comes from the Beja people in Eastern Sudan and has no specific political program or any engagement in the national history and often work under the umbrella of the Umma Party within the successive parliaments.

**Nuba Mountains General Union:** mainly representing the Nuba ethnic groups living mainly in South Kordofan State. It was led by the late Father Philip Abbas
Ghaboush, one of the leaders of the Nuba Mountains. This party is with no specific program.

**Nuba Mountains Democratic Forum**: a political organization fighting for the rights of the Nuba people of Nuba Mountains in South Kordofan, like its above counterparts, and led by Suleiman Rahhal, as president and Noor Tawir as a deputy.

4- The periodic parties: the Sudanese arena witnessed the birth of many parties in response to the rise of other political entities some opponents consider as a threat to the country as they perceive it. Some of these parties were established, however, because of external players’ instigations, so as to preserve the balance of power in the Sudan or as a result of alliances dictated by political interests and ambition of its leaders.

A) **National Democratic Alliance** (NDA): it contains an agglomeration of parties agreed to oppose the current government and even resolved to follow military means to achieve their purposes. It held its first conference in London in February 1992. Some later political developments, nonetheless, weakened it notably; the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on 9 January 2005 between the Government of the Sudan and Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement, shortly after which the NDA lost one of greatest driving force.

B) **Ashiga Party**: it is a party which was quite firm on the issue of the unity with Egypt.

B) **The Republican Socialist Party**: it is an Islamic party which propagates a progressive orientation within a modernizing form of Islamic thought.

1) **Modern forces**: The so-called "Tawali law", launched by Al-Inqaz Revolution at one of its sages when it became more open and rejected its previous totalitarian orientation, created various entities and organizations. When the previous law was ratified, many new organizations have appeared, including some civil society organizations, like diverse civil society Organizations and, for example, the Sudanese Organization for Rights and Development, The United Sudanese National Party and HAQ Movement. See figure (1) 1986 election result.
In 2013 there were about 90 registered parties in Sudan, the most important of which include:

- Democratic Unionist Party (Al Hizb Al-Ittihadi Al-Dimuqrati)
- Umma Party (Hizb al-Umma)
- Umma Party (Reform and Renewal)
- National Congress (Al Muttamar al Watani)
- Popular Congress (Al-Mu'tamar al-Sha'bi)
- Sudanese Ba'ath Party (Hizb al-Ba'ath as-Sudani)
- Sudanese Communist Party (Al-Hizb al-Shuyui al-Sudani)
- Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party
- Liberal Democratic Party, Sudan
- Liberal Democrats (Hizb Al-Demokhrateen Al-Ahrar)
- Sudanese Socialist Democratic Party
- Sudanese Unity National Party. (S.U.N. PARTY)
- Others
In previous decades, it was easy for political entities and parties in Sudan to know the levels of support amid the masses (See table 1) and knowledge of the properties of supporters by region, age, sex and educational levels, allowing them to develop policies and plans to attract political and electoral campaigns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>1953</th>
<th>1965</th>
<th>1986</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Umma Party</em></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Unionist</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Front / National Congress</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other parties</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>97</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Depending on the political situation in the past few years from a mismatch between the opposition and the government on the election and its outcome, it was difficult to find interested parties and observers of the political in Sudan to obtain data lead them to see the size of these political entities in the street and among the masses.

II Study Objectives

In general this study aim to enlighten the public opinion poll in Sudan, as one of the most important tools that’s can measure the voice of public empirically, as a platform for political expression, also aims to raise awareness of the need to adopt polls in the plans and strategies of entities and political parties in Sudan.
On the other hand the study aims to identify to:

- 1 To explore public opinion about their interest of political affairs
- 2 To recognize the existence of political parties in the Sudanese street
- To identify demographic characteristics of the supporters of parties
- 4 Attempting to estimate the rates of participation in the upcoming elections
- 5. Trying to figure out the characteristics and factors affecting the political participation

III Methodology

As part of the longitudinal study, public opinion survey was conducted aimed to find out the opinions of Sudanese about some of the economic, social and political issues at the local level in May 2013; the sample was designed to ensure that the statistical results of the study represent the Sudanese community

Using two stage stratified cluster sample and equal sample allocation for each stratum, about 5000 selected households in whole Sudan has been visited, the method of interviewing was Paper & pencil personal interview PAPI, 18 years and above household member was randomly selected using random table to complete the interview. Margin error of this sample were + - 2.8, about 100 data collectors and field supervisors we assigned to perform the study in all Sudan states.
Table (2) sample allocation in each state (strata):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>No of Interviews</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gezira</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khartoum</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gadarif</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alshimalyah</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red sea</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue nile</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kassala</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nahr alnil</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Darfur</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Kordufan</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sennar</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Darfur</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Kurdufan</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Darfur</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Nile</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2365</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VI Result:
20.1 % of the respondent stated that they are very interest in political affairs in Sudan and 42.5 % they mentioned that they are somewhat interest, only 32.2 they said that they either not interest or not interest at all, see figure number (2):

Figuer (2):
All respondents were asked about if they are support of a particular political party, 41% of them they said yes, versus 56% they said no they have not political party to support. This percentage is not significant difference between women and men, but there is different between rural and urban area see figure (3):

Among those who stated that they have apolitical party support it, we as them the following question:

If there were a general election will take place tomorrow, any of the political parties do you think you mostly will be support?
The result shown in figure No (4):

According to figure (3) It is clear that the National Congress has a majority of supporters among respondents where his supporters were 65%, the second party in the order was the Umma party with 13.4%, followed by democratic unionist party with 10.5 %, many parties from about 80 party were appear in the answer like public congress and community party and other party registered in Sudan.

The distribution of supporter is differs between regions and states the data show that the opposition parties get more supporters in Darfur and Middle regions see table(3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distribution of parties’ supporters according to the region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darfur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khartoum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurdufan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle (AWAST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regression:

A study looks at factors that influence the decision of whether the respondent interest in the political affairs or not, we run ordinal regression to predicting political interest with other independent variable (work status, Gender and live mode urban rural), the result of the regression shown in

In the output shown in table (4), we can see that the predictor variables of employment and gender are significant. However, the p-value for live mode (Urban and Rural (0.204) is greater than the alpha level of 0.05, which indicates that it is not statistically significant

Regression coefficients represent the mean change in the response variable for one unit of change in the predictor variable while holding other predictors in the model constant.

The estimating odds ration comparing men odds political interest with that for women holding all other factor constant is 1.415, we would say that if you are a male gender with 0.34 ratios you are more likely to be concern about political issue in Sudan.

The estimating odds ration comparing unemployment odds political interest with that for women holding all other factor constant is 1.326, we would say that if you are employed with 0.282 ratios you are more likely to be concern about political issue in Sudan.

Table (4) regression analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables in the Equation</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Exp(B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>.097</td>
<td>8.448</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>1.326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live mode</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>.094</td>
<td>1.611</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.204</td>
<td>1.127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.347</td>
<td>.097</td>
<td>12.929</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.280</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>12.260</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.324</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Employment, Urban, Sex.
Conclusion

From the results of this study, we can summarize the following points:

- 6 out of 10 of the Sudanese at the age of 18 years stated that they are concerned about political affairs in Sudan,
- About 41% they mentioned that they support particular party
- Almost 72% of respondents said they would vote if there was an election will take place, and this was a high percentage of intent
- National congress party (NCP) has a clear majority among supporters during the study periods ranged between 56% and 65% for the years 2011 and 2013 respectively, when aggregating all the supporters of the opposition parties, the proportion of supporters of the ruling party will become 50% versus 50% for the opposition parties
- The opposition parties Concentrated in the middle region and Darfur while the ruling party supporters (NCP) concentrate North Kordufan and north state
- Opposition parties received backing more from females than men while the distribution of gender supporter of the (NCP) was symmetric between males and females
- Half of the supporters of the National Congress (NCP) fall in the age group 31-50 years
- Employers supports the ruling party also more than those who are unemployed 60% versus 40%, a statistically significant result
- Men and Employed people more likely to be concern about political issue in Sudan
References
Ibrahim, Haidar, "the Sudanese parties; reality and the future," (Cairo, Sudanese Studies Center. 2001).

Babiker, Mohamed Toum, "political parties between legality and the lack of it" (Khartoum: Public Establishment for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, first (ed.), 1999).

Abdel-Rahman, Hamdi, "the Epitaxial method for political change: a study of the Sudanese case (89-1993)" (Cairo: Cairo University - Faculty of Economics and Political Science, 1994).

Al-Nagib, Khaled, "Clash of the tribe and the state: The Kuwaiti tribal state," (Dar Al-Saqi, no dated of publication).

Scientific journals:
Abdel-Gawad, Gamal. the Crisis of national integration in the case of South Sudan, the Arab Journal of strategic thinking, Vol. 29, (Beirut: Arab Development Institute, July 1989).


Scientific Theses:

**Research and Studies:**


Al-Sharif, Rehab Abdulrahman. The experience of the parties arising from the Islamic Movements in the Sudan: possibilities and obstacles. Research presented to the workshop on parties with Islamic reference: reference: roles and destinations, Cairo, the center of civilization for Political Studies, June 2012).

History the parliamentary elections in Sudan. The history of parliamentary elections in Sudan, an introduction about the history of the most important Sudanese parties and their origins. One page and a half and then add to in these tables and graphs.