

Federal System of Governance is an appropriate system for
South Sudan

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1.0. Introduction

The Background to the Study

Federalism had been presented as the best system of governance in South Sudan since 1956, when the British administration left Sudan and gave the rights of Self-determination to the Sudanese people to govern themselves. However, differences emerged between the political actors from northern Sudan and Southern Sudan on how the country should be governed (Johnson, 2014).

Subsequently, South Sudanese proposed federalism as a way to keep the union of Sudan in place. This proposed federal system of governance faced a lot of resistances from various political parties involved in restructuring and reconstituting the newly independent country.

Although the south Sudanese people have always demanded this federation throughout their struggle for independence, the efforts exerted to that has been thwarted by the successive governments in Sudan. Failure in implementing the proposed system has been ascribed to lack of trust between Sudan and South Sudan.

In 1930, the British Administration in Sudan left an option for South Sudan to decide whether or not should join the British East Africa and be administered under different system (ibid). This option did not work well for South Sudan due to the fact that Egypt that was a junior partner to Britain in running the Sudan administration was in favour of united Sudan and expected to be left in charge of running it (Sudan Administration) when the British left the country (ibid. P.6).

However, it was also believed that Egypt's support of the union of Sudan had a lot to do with its interest in the Nile water. Meanwhile, the quest for federal system reemerged when the nationalist movements in Sudan began to fight for the rights of Self- government in the country that was

jointly administered by both Britain and Egypt where it played a role of a junior partner, following 1939 condominium agreement.

In consequence, an intransigent position of the Sudanese political parties in the Northern Sudan forced the British administration to adopt closed districts ordinance for South Sudan, which allowed the region to exist as a separate entity (Hakim, Et al 2014).

In practice, federalism was not implemented in South Sudan as demanded by the people, but, it found its way to the system of governance as early as 1947. In the same year, South Sudanese educated class held a conference later known as Juba conference where they demanded federal system to be adopted as a system of governance in Sudan. As a result, this conference had to explore possibilities of having federal states within the united Sudan, where the system would allow citizens to participate in running of their own affairs.

In 1948, South Sudanese politicians were appointed to the parliament to represent their respective communities or constituencies pursued the agenda of change that would result in taking into consideration the system of governance deemed appropriate to foster unity among the people of Sudan and South Sudan. The list of the members of parliament from South Sudan included Buth Diu, Edward Odhok Dodigo from Upper Nile, Stanislaus Paysama and Paulino Cyer Rehan from Bahr El-Gazal and Benjamin Lwoki and Andrea Gore from Equatoria.

In 1950, Northern Sudanese political parties made a move on the issue of self –determination for the people of Sudan. So south Sudanese in the parliament refused to support their counterparts in Northern Sudan because they realised that their case had been left out of the parliamentary debates.

In the years that followed, South Sudanese political parties were formed to present the issues of major concern to the British administration in

Sudan. On the other hand, this federation was presented as the only way through which the union of Sudan could be maintained.

Thus, the political trajectory in Sudan changed suddenly with the support northern Sudan was getting from Egypt. In fact, it also influenced the other agreements signed between the other colonial administration and Egypt on Sudan. In consequence, the governor general of Sudan had to reserve some powers over South Sudan that underpinned the closed districts ordinance (Kimenyi, 2014).

In response to this, Northern Sudan's political parties excluded South Sudanese politicians in constitutional review because of the fear of being rejected by them.

The formation of Southern political parties happened before 1953, general elections in Sudan. This was followed by south Sudanese demands for the rights of Self-determination for the three southern provinces namely, Bahr El-Gazal, Equatoria and Upper Nile provinces.

This quest of Self-government threatened the unity of Sudan as a whole. Therefore, the central government in Khartoum had to give autonomy to South Sudan as a way of maintaining union of Sudan and South Sudan, which deterred annexation of the region (South Sudan) to the British East Africa (Johnson, 2014. P.6).

1.0. The Purpose of the Study or Statement of the Problem

South Sudanese have been demanding adoption of federalism since 1947. The demand for federalism came as a result of marginalisation of southern Sudan by the north Sudanese in Khartoum. The members of parliament repeated this call for federal system in 1955, which did not work well for them (South Sudanese), as it was resisted by the central government in Khartoum.

It has been argued that federalism comes with economic benefits to the citizens of the country. Now after the independence of South Sudan from Sudan in 2011, attempts to adopt federal system has been faced with challenges from opponents who feel that when the federalism is adopted, it disadvantages some states that do not have natural resources.

Some studies carried by Johnson (2014) and Kimenyi (2014) confirmed that most economically developed nations and politically stable countries in the world are federal states. For example, the United States, Britain, Germany, South Africa and Australia have adopted the federal system.

In addition to this, countries such as Canada, the United States, South Africa, Australia and Ethiopia have tested federal system to solve their ethnic divides and have succeeded. This study investigates the creation of federal system of governance in South Sudan.

1.1. The Research objectives

- Look at the history of South Sudanese Political thought in Sudan and South Sudan since independence.
- Examine the development of political institutions in the post colonial Sudan and their impact in shaping and influencing the political identities in the two countries
- Assessment and investigation of current restructuring of political institutions inherited from the colonial administration

1.2. The Significance of the Study

The current political system in South Sudan divides power between the central government in Juba with the president as the head of state and the states' governors. The second level is the state government headed by the governors, where the system divides powers between the governors and the county commissioners.

While this current system has a structure that looks exactly like the federal system of governance, the level of control from the central government does not give chance to the country to adopt federalism. The reason being that the ten states of South Sudan have no defined powers and functions enshrined in the country's constitution to handle their issues or affairs independently without interference from the central government.

1.3. The Research Question

Based on the goals of this study of federal system of governance in Sudan and South Sudan and the use of the available literature and the review of related literature, the following research questions are formulated:

- Can adoption of federal system of governance reduce the political and ethnic divides in South Sudan?
- How can federal system influence the political leadership of the country?
- Can federal system shape the political institutions in Sudan and South Sudan and work as a road map towards democratic transformation?

1.4. The research Methodology

Concentration of powers in the central government increases the demand for the federalism in South Sudan. Thus, this study will examine merits and demerits of federal systems (1) this begins with development of research strategy,

2. Evaluation mechanism to deal with multiple challenges in the country that has been faced with wars, cultural diversity and lack of media infrastructures.

3. While attempting to measure research problems caused by fear adopting a new system, political scientists never find it easy to answer the obvious questions on federalism.
4. In looking at merits and demerits of Unitary and Federal systems in South Sudan and Sudan, the most fundamental questions need be asked; which range from politically related questions to systems of governance.
5. Other fundamental questions, which need to be answered in this study, are: unitary systems have produced high levels of inequalities and marginalization of vulnerable groups.
6. Secondly, concentration of powers in the central government enhances the ability of political elites to redistribute income in their favour in Sudan and South Sudan, as has been the case in other African countries.

1.5. The Research Design

Earlier studies conducted on federal system become valuable in terms of compilation of relevant data in this study. This study adopts comparison mode focusing on various styles of presenting the collected data. This research design will be qualitative in nature, since the collection of the relevant literature and data will include primary and secondary sources. In addition to this, the process will encompass photocopying relevant materials from the libraries and search of academic journals from electronic libraries.

- The researcher must follow research techniques which give priority to circulation of the questionnaires to research participants.
- To identify research participants
- To ensure that open ended questions and close ended questions are structured to get the right answers from the respondents.

In addition to this, selecting experts must ensure validity of findings or sampling practitioners to create checks and balances, as well as cross checks the questionnaires and answers.

The research design will be made in such a way that its structure will help the respondents to answer promptly.

1.6. The Data Analysis

Based on the literature studies undertaken, the data that will be collected and shall be tested using variables. This data will be analysed by applying hypothetical data distribution whereby the number of responds will automatically be tested against the questions. The researcher can either choose descriptive methods of data analysis that will reduce interpretation of it, in which case, the researcher can decide to pick randomly the sample of the participant's questionnaires and draw a conclusion. Or choose statistical methods whereby the data collected will be arranged in such a way that it becomes easier to identify by type.

1.7. Bibliography

1. Hakim, E (2014); Negotiating Peace through Federalism: A Proposal for Good Governance in Post-conflict South Sudan: unpublished research Paper
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3. Kimenyi, M (2014), Making Federalism works in South Sudan. Brooking Institutions. New York