ELECTORAL GOVERNANCE IN ZANZIBAR: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF POWERSHARING DYNAMICS AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

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Article Info	Abstract
	Zanzibar, since the reinstatement of its multiparty system in 1992, has grappled with a recurrent wave of election-related turmoil, characterized by a disconcerting frequency of killings, injuries, and societal unrest. This abstract endeavors to provide an in-depth exploration of the intricate dynamics underlying the tumultuous electoral landscape in Zanzibar, shedding light on the pervasive mistrust, accusations, and challenges that have marred each election cycle. Citing John (2020) and the insights of Minde et al. (2018), the narrative unfolds against a backdrop of unadjusted electoral practices within the multiparty system, attributing the recurring tragedy to systemic shortcomings. The competing political entities in Zanzibar's elections, comprising both incumbent and opposition parties, find themselves ensnared in a cycle of mutual accusations, further

exacerbated by a pervasive questioning of the electoral process itself. This perpetuated mistrust becomes the breeding ground for calls to secure a free and fair electoral process, invoking both soft and hard power. The abstract accentuates the consequential impact of this mistrust on Zanzibar's political landscape, which becomes overwhelmingly dominated by electoral violence. The oscillation between demands for electoral transparency and the visceral contestation of election outcomes paints a vivid picture of the underlying tensions. By elucidating the multifaceted interplay of mistrust, accusations, and demands for electoral integrity, this research aims to contribute to a nuanced understanding of the complex challenges faced by Zanzibar in fostering a stable and democratic political environment.

As Zanzibar continues to grapple with the persistent specter of electoral violence, the abstract lays the groundwork for future investigations into potential mechanisms for conflict resolution, institution-building, and

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the cultivation of an electoral culture grounded in trust and transparency.

INTRODUCTION

Since the multiparty system was reinstated in Zanzibar in 1992, there has been tumultuous election-related strife. Every election cycle saw a high number of reported occurrences of killings, injuries, and social unrest (John, 2020). Minde et al. (2018), state that the multiparty system's unadjusted electoral practices caused this tragedy. All competing parties and players in the Zanzibar election have continuously accused each other. During the elections, the incumbent and the opposition parties have questioned the electoral process. This mistrust generates the demands to ensure a free and fair electoral process through soft and hard power. As a result, Zanzibar's political life is dominated by electoral violence. In the effort to solve such electoral-related conflict, in 2010, the then two contested political parties' leaders, Amani Abeid Karume of Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and Seif Sharif Hamad of Civic United Front (CUF) declared the agreement to end the pro-long electoralrelated conflict in the Island (Bakari and Makulilo, 2022). The understanding of the parties' leaders made the birth of Power-sharing, a new governance system. In a unique case, Zanzibar Power-sharing was adopted through referendum and subsequent constitutional change before the 2010 general election. The aim was to stabilize power sharing to enhance two interconnected goals: stability and democracy. The power-sharing operated for five years before collapsing in 2015. It returned in 2020 after the general election, which records some killings, injuries, and violence as used before the power-sharing (Council of the EU, 2020; Minde, 2021). The re-emergence of electoral violence in 2020 attracted academic debates on the capacity of powersharing institutions to manage the pro-long electoral conflict on the Island (Bakari and Makulilo, 2012; John, 2020; Minde et al., 2018). Therefore, this paper analyzes the extent to which power-sharing institutions are set to manage the electoral-related conflict in Zanzibar. The study analyses power-sharing institutions based on the capacity and autonomy of the institutional setup, rules, and regulations.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Power-sharing as an electoral conflict management mechanism

The electoral conflict has attracted local and international attention due to the violent outbreak in many countries. Globally, more than 4,223 cases of deadly electoral conflict have been recorded from 1989 to 2017. Of 4,223 violence cases, 1955 cases were recorded in Africa and 1644 cases in Asia; more cases have increased recently (Fjelde and Ho, 2022). Around sixty percent of all African elections led to conflict, even though only twenty percent caused large-scale causality (Straus and Taylor, 2009). Again, one-fifth of all global elections cause violence (Norris, 2019). The problem's magnitude necessitates local and international stakeholders to find a mechanism for managing the conflict. Functionally, the electoral conflict is mainly associated with violence, which aims to influence some electoral results. Höglund and Jarstad (2010) mention four categories where actors can use electoral conflict related to violence to influence the outcome. Firstly, the whole election; this means the actor can use violence in any election. Secondly, the actors will violently contest a specific electoral contest. Thirdly, actors accept electoral competition but conduct violence to influence the result. Lastly, the actor uses violence to overturn the proclaimed result. Again, the electoral conflict mainly occurs with time. The conflict before and during the election aims to foster the vote share of the political parties, while those post-electoral conflicts aim to challenge official results (Dunaiski, 2015). Therefore, conflict management scholars treat electoral violence as the aftermath of defeat in the race. Those who are defeated become frustrated and sense the need to propel conflicts (Madalina, 2016). Scholars believe that electoral conflict or violence is a "strategic manipulation" used by politicians to shape the election in their favor (Dunaiski, 2015).

At this point, the weaker parties use electoral violence to challenge the result and sometimes to have a slice of the national cake. The stronger party may use electoral violence also to maintain superiority when things change. In this situation, the win-win alternative becomes the most suitable approach. According to Mares and Young (2016) and Collier and Vicente (2012), election-related violence is generated from election irregularities, fraud, and corruption in the electoral process. So, managing electoral conflict must go directly to enhance free and fair elections with quality democracy. These outlooks made the policymakers and political practitioners consider the management of the elections, including the alternative strategy of a win-win mechanism (Höglund and Jarstad, 2010). Power-sharing between the major parties helps to make elections out of violence in this situation.

Thus, power-sharing was introduced as an alternative after the winner-take-all-all approach seemed to leave large groups outside the leadership system, specifically in a society where political groups match the numbers of followers (Lijphart, 1977, 1969; Wolf, 2018). In the "Winner takes all," "simple majority system," or "first past the post," the candidate wins as long as he gets the highest score of the vote. This means the candidate can win the seat even if they score 51 per cent over 49 per cent of their opponent in the general ballot. Some majority systems involve the win with at least half the score (50%), but others only take the highest score. For instance, in the Turkish presidential election 2023, the Erdogan party- *Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi* (AKP), won 52.18 over 47.82% of his opponent's party (Supreme Election Council, 2023). Thus, the isolated group with related supporters competed with the other synonymous group. So, Power-sharing helps to cool the pressure of the contested groups as all are represented in government institutions. Zanzibar is not alone, of course, in adopting power sharing to solve the electoral violence. In Lebanon, for example, which also suffered from First Past the Post, the Taif Accords adjusted the rules so that, in any constituency which said 50, 25, 25 between Sunni, Shia, and Maronite, respectively. Every party had to nominate four candidates in the same ratio of 50, 25, and 25 religious affiliations. So, regardless of the party they supported, every voter consistently voted for two Sunnis, one Shia, and one Christian (Calfat, 2018; Salamey, 2009). Papua New Guinea also suffered from majoritarianism because many political parties were tribal. So, to manage the tribal conflict, they adopted the preferential alternative vote, stipulating that, for the vote to be valid, a voice had to consist of at least three preferences. In other words, the voters were asked to cross the sectarian divide (Kivimaki and Thorning, 2002). The approach has become more commonly used to solve the erupting electoral violence in Africa. Zimbabwe, Kenya, South Sudan, and, in a unique case, Zanzibar, have been used to solve the erupted electoral violence at different times. Power-sharing increases the chances for popular representation as all segments of society are represented (Bochsler and Juon, 2021). However, it excludes other minority groups, such as women and lower income groups, but these groups belong to a particular ethnic-racial group represented in sharing institutions. While the approach continues to be adopted in many societies with some success in solving political problems, it is a quietly skeptical question on the effectiveness of enhancing democratic practices in the community (Hartzell and Hoddie, 2003). Again, in power-sharing, the public is more passive in democratic participation instead of majoritarian. In power-sharing, the elites enter into the negotiation and frontier of the implementation with little consideration of mass (Carboni, 2020). Thus, the reemergence of electoral conflict continues to be noticed in communities. This is because some institutions are neither established nor designed to promote institutions for free and direct participation. Instead, decision power rested on elites hands. There is a need to have strong institutions that consider people-centered power-sharing as necessary instead of having an elite-project powersharing design (Bakari and Makulilo, 2022).

Historicizing elections and electoral Zanzib conflict in fiercely competitive elections have characterized anzibar since pre-independence to the current multiparty elections. The polls have produced mistrust, political diversity,

and a big crack in society. The worst thing about these elections is that they competed with an ethnic and racial base under the umbrella of the political parties (Koenings, 2018; Sheriff, 2001). Neither the colonial multiparty nor post-independence elections solved the ethnic-racial electoral competition in the Isles (Bakari and Makulilo, 2022). The Island continues to experience social exclusion in the name of election competition, where race and region become the tools of those exclusion practices. The works of literature argue that the formation of political parties that compete during the pre and post-independence elections have been formed to fulfill the need for racial and Identity representation in the political activities in Zanzibar (Killian, 2008; Matheson, 2012). Historically, Zanzibar, a semi-autonomous political entity in the United Republic of Tanzania, conducted four multiparty elections during the colonial period. The first election was in 1957, the second and third were in 1961, and the last in 1963. In all these elections, the parties represented the requirement of related ethnic and regional Haji and Kessy identity affiliations. For instance, the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP) originated from African and Shirazi natives, mainly from Unguja and Mainlanders. In contrast, Zanzibar and Pemba People Party (ZPPP) and Zanzibar National Party (ZNP) originated from Arab and foreign genesis and were primarily settled in Pemba Island (McMahon, 2012). These identity-affiliated parties were a decent of the economic associations formed in the late 1930s. The Africa Association was created to represent the African and Zanzibar natives' interests. The same associations were the Indian National Association and the Arab Association to safeguard the Indian merchants' class and Arabs' land-owned class, respectively (Throup, 2016). Ethnic-racial parties enter the elections to protect their group's economic interests. This situation formed a heterogeneous pluralistic society where society was divided along the ethno-region base. As a result, the elections become the tools for struggling among the groups' members of the community. The native Africanrelated parties represented the Africans working for independence through elections, while the Arabs and Indian-related parties protected their ownership, colonial supremacy, and status quo (Killian, 2008). The ethnic-region base of the 1957, 1961, and 1963 elections competed with the purely identity-related parties of ASP, ZNP, and ZPPP. Among the most debatable issues in that election was the electoral process, including the structure of the electoral commission and its functions. The 1957 election was conducted with a sensational motion of voters, whereby most registered voters participated. It constitutes two main political parties, ASP and ZNP, and other minor parties, including the Muslim Dominant Indians Association party. The results made the ASP win five out of the six contested seats. One seat goes to the Muslim-dominated Indians Association party (Sheriff, 2001). This election result made the ZNP party feel defeated by their subordinate as long as the ZNP was the Arab party that favored their land ownership and supremacy (Matheson, 2012). It was derived from Lasswel's (1936) definition of politics as *who gets what, when, and how*; the Sultanate government under the British protectorate amended the constitution in 1960 to continue holding power. The amendment allows the increase of 22 seats for contestation. However, such centers create claims to the ASP as the constituents favor the ZNP (Bakari, 2005). For instance, the Stone Town area was given two seats with a small size and population, with Makunduchi constituents in Kusini Unguja. Such structural change in the electoral process made the January 1961 election consist of 22 seats with three significant parties: ASP, ZNP, and ZPPP. The ASP won 10 seats, ZNP won 9 chairs, and ZPPP won 3 seats. However, the ZPPP seats divide one heart to ASP and two seats to ZNP. This made ASP have 11 seats, as well as ZNP. This result made the re-election of June 1961 to be held in Zanzibar. The competitive elections with a small margin of votes continue to dominate the Island in each election. In June 1961, the election was conducted to include the same three giant parties: ZPPP, ZNP, and ASP. However, the structural change of the constituent was held to add Mtambile constituents in Pemba. This addition was done purposively to make ZNP get many seats over ASP because ZNP has more support in Pemba than in Unguja (Koenings, 2018). The June election resulted in bloody riots which started in the polling

station. This riot continued within a week and caused 68 deaths and 381 injuries. With blood riots, the combination of ZNP and ZPPP won the election by 13 seats over ten seats of ASP. Despite the majority of seats won by ZNP/ZPPP, the ASP won the total vote of 45,172 against 44,092 of the ZPPP/ZNP (Bakari, 2005). This result leaves doubt on the claims of ASP, who argued for the legitimacy of the ZPPP/ZNP government. The turbulent politics continued after the 1961 violent election, where the British government proposed forming a coalition government under Sultanate kingship. The winning Parties of ZPPP and ZNP offered three ministerial posts out of nine to the ASP, but ASP rejected and demanded free and fair elections (Brown, 2010). The search for free and fair elections was the most required aspect of the ASP and its allies. They argued that the British rules and regulations on the elections gave Sultan's parties (ZPPP and ZNP) victory without considering the majority of the vote won by African native support (Throup, 2016). What is noticed was the continuity of colonial politics through ballots. Again, in 1963, Zanzibar conducted an election that was named to be an independence election. The election comes after the amendment of the constitution to allow the division of Zanzibar into 31 constituents. Moreover, this election was termed the pick point of self-government by abolishing the colonial acquisition. As for all previous elections, the ASP party, which many African natives supported, won the majority votes by 54.3%, while ZNP fell by 29.8%. However, the seats won by ASP were 13, while the alliance of ZPPP and ZNP was 18 seats (Ali, 2013). With those results, the coalition formed a government and gained independence on 10 December 1963. Majoritarian ASPs and their allies did not recognize such independence, arguing that the ASP votes were more than other party votes. These phenomena resulted in the bloodshed of the Revolution, which marks the current society's political division between those who agreed with the 1963 independence and those who agreed with the 1964 revolution. As a result, the main political parties that participated in the 1995 election were decent of the previous pre-independence parties (Haji, 2023; Matheson, 2012; Mukangara, 2000). The 1963 Independence and 1964 Revolution marked the end   of the colonial period in Zanzibar. The self- governed government was formulated on 12 January 1964, where the Afro Shiraz Party led the government in a mono-party system. At that time, one party ruled the country where the previous opposition parties were suppressed, and some of their leaders flew outside the country. On 5 February 1977, the ASP was united with Tanganyika Africa National Union (TANU), a party on the other side of the United Republic of Tanzania, to make CCM. This unification gave power to the former ASP and completed the burial of the ZNP and ZPPP political parties, though their believers were exited. The new wave of democratization in the 1990s aimed at increasing democracy through fair elections, transparency, accountability, and the rule of law (Markoff, 2015). In Zanzibar, such an assumption seems to be far from being reached. The multiparty system, which began in 1992, awakened Zanzibar's pre- and postindependence political practices. The multiparty system became a revenge tool for the defeat of the 1964 revolution in Zanzibar. The pre-independence election tragedy continued during the post-multiparty elections that began in 1995. The political parties contested during the colonial periods seem to represent the current political parties. The main contested political party, Civic United Front (CUF), primarily represents the local Arabs and natives of Pemba, and Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) represents the Unguja natives and Mainlanders (Longman, 2013). These current party genes reflect the previous parties of the ZNP and ASP parties. As a result, identity contestation via political parties continues in the new era of multiparty elections. The 1995, 2000, and 2005 election results clearly show that Pemba Island is the base of the opposition casting all seats. Such opposition nature to the CCM, the ruling party, made Pemba suffocate from political and economic exclusion (Killian, 2008). Such exclusion influences the Pemba native struggle for economic and political equality. As a result, Pemba natives became the most affected area of electoral violence. For instance, in 2001, the electoral conflict caused many deaths, injuries, and displacement (Nassor and Jose, 2014). Concerning

election violence in every general election and the small margin between the two big parties (CCM and CUF) in the 1995, 2000, and 2005 elections, the idea of forming a power-sharing government becomes necessary. However, what comes to the head of people, including scholars, is the ability of the power-sharing electoral institutions to solve the electoral problems on the Island. Such an argument comes as a reflection of the failure of the previous institutions to utterly provide mutual trust among the contending parties and citizens at large (Roop et al., 2018). Again, another question was about Zanzibar's political culture and the sharing of government political posts. Previously, the literature tells us there was weak political trust and tolerance among the parties' elites and citizens (John, 2020). This provides the challenges for the formed power-sharing electoral institutions to solve the pro-long electoral conflict.

DATA AND METHODS

The study needs to understand how the electoral institution is arranged and functions to hold the ethos of electoral conflict in Zanzibar. Thus, it needs to analyze the election's setting, rules, and regulations and understand how the electoral body performs its duty. Therefore, this study requires the review and analysis of rules and regulations of the election formulated after the power sharing. Thus, the review of documents such as constitution of 2010, the Zanzibar Referendum Act of 2010, the Zanzibar Electoral Commission Act of 2010 and 2018, and the parties' official records from 2010 to 2022. These documents are rich to provide how electoral institution is set and works. To understand the performance of the electoral institution under power-sharing, this study selects respondents who were involved in the formulation and implementation of power-sharing arrangements to gather their experiences and opinions. The respondents include politicians from both the ruling party, CCM, and the opposition party, ACT Wazalendo, with equal numbers to prevent political bias. These respondents include leaders of power sharing government, political elites and the government officials. Citizens are the most affected group of electoral violence and they are the one who accept power sharing in 2010 with the expectation that it will cure the problem. Thus citizens opinion and comment concerning with the performance of electoral institution after power sharing is very important. This study opt respondents from three districts namely; Mjini, Micheweni, and Kusini to participate in interview. These districts were chosen explicitly because they politically had a memorable experience. Micheweni represents the strong opposition base. Kusini represents a ruling party base, while Mjini is a fifty-fifty of the ruling and opposition base. The total sample of 28 respondents was included. The respondents were interviewed to get the understanding on the performance of electoral institutions include how the powersharing institutions of Zanzibar operate, (ZEC and House of the Representatives). Thematic analysis was used to analyze data starting from sorting data, coding and generalized data to answer the respected question. All respondents from all categories were assigned codes based on their unique positions rather than their names, preserving the anonymity and safety of the respondents.

FINDINGS

Capacity and autonomy of the electoral institutions, rules and regulations

This part of the study examines the capacity and ability of the electoral institution to uphold the problem of legitimacy and non-credibility of the vote. The result of this study shows that for ten years of its operation, power-sharing has been unable to exercise elections without violence in Zanzibar. The institutional arrangement did not fill the thirst for electoral integrity in Zanzibar. Electoral institutions are highly dependent on the decisions of the top hierarchy of the incumbent party and not through negotiations. The institutions that depend highly on the rules to produce a high electoral standard are criticized for being biased and calculative. As a result, unequal treatment among the sharing parties developed and, hence, mistrust. This study seems to continue the previous political practices on the election in the current politics in Zanzibar.

Structurally, Zanzibar power-sharing adopts the National Haji and Kessy

Unity governance model, where the two winning political parties share power in the government institutions. Section 9 of the Zanzibar constitution provides the structure of the Zanzibar government. It reveals that the Zanzibar government will be National Unity to foster unity and democracy.

 "The structure of the Zanzibar government will be in the form of national unity, and its function will be to ensure unity and democracy is enhanced."

The Government of National Unity (GNU) consists of two political parties that win the majority vote or seats in the general election. Section 39 (1, 2, and 3) of the constitution provides the procedures that the first and second winner parties share power in the GNU. The section stipulated that;

"After the seven days of appointment, the President will appoint the First and Second Vice President…, the first vice President comes from the second winner party and the second vice President comes from the winner party……. Except if the second winning party boycott s the government, then the First Vice President post will be given to the other second opposition party on the seat of the House of Representatives (HoRZ)."

Again, section 42 (2) provides the procedure for Ministerial post selection. The selection of Ministers depends on the number of seats each of the two big parties got in the general election.

The President, within fourteen days immediately after appointing the First Vice President and the Second Vice President, in consultation with all Vice Presidents, will appoint Ministers from among the Members of the House of Representatives based on the ratio of seats in the states to the political parties in the House of Representatives.

This means that the election is the base of power-sharing in Zanzibar. If that is the case, a fair electoral process is essential to avoid fiercely competitive elections. This means that the functionality of power-sharing in Zanzibar will depend on how much it solves the electoral problems, including transparency in the electoral process and equal treatment of the party.

In tackling the mistrust and claim of secrecy on the electoral process, the electoral body of the Government of National Unity of Zanzibar involved two big parties (ruling and opposition) in the electoral commission.

Section 119 (1) (b) and Section 119 (1) (c) said;

"...Two members will be selected by the President from the leader of the government in the House of Representatives and two members under the recommendation of the opposition party…."

Including the two giant parties' members in the Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC) provides the outer cover of how the power-sharing of Zanzibar is inclusive. Thus, it was expected to cure the non-transparency of the ZEC and, hence, cure mistrust. However, the question remains whether this commission arrangement is enough and capable of solving the electoral problem.

Drawing from the electoral body set, which includes members from the opposition, this study found the imbalance of the members in ZEC. Adding two opposition members to ZEC does not add value to establishing equality and justice in the electoral process as long as the majoritarian decision remains centred on the party (ruling party), which, by principle, has a majority of members in ZEC. Section 119 (1) said

"… (a) Chairman will be selected by the President using his desired procure.

(b)   The President will select two members from the leader of the government duty in the House of Representatives

(c)   The President will select two members under the recommendation of the opposition party in the House of Representation

(d)   One member of the High Court judge (e) The President will select one member as he wishes…."

The head of decision in ZEC is a chairman, directly appointed by the President. Technically, only two of the remaining six appointed members are from the opposition. Only two members in section 119 (1) (c) allow the President to set two members with consultation from the opposition party. The President chooses the remaining members without being obligated to seek consensus from the opposition party. This means the President will appoint the remaining members to favour him and his party. Consequently, the opposition party feels to be a minority in ZEC. The interview by the member of the reconciliation committee denotes;

"....There are no differences in the electoral process except the inclusion of the two members from the opposition. If you look at the ZEC structure, you will find that the decision-making is set to favor the ruling party. With this situation, do you think ZEC will make a fair decision...?

From the structure of the ZEC, the unbalanced situation of the members of the ZEC indicates that power-sharing was not aimed at solving the ZEC mistrust claimed by the political parties since 1995. Instead, the ZEC controlled and worked under the influence of one side's interests, which is a majority in the ZEC. This made the ZEC have less autonomy in exercising its work. In the interview, one of the political activists commented that

"....The main problem is not about including the opposition member in the electoral commission; the problem is the lack of freedom of the electoral commission in exercising its work. Still, the ruling party handles the commission's rules and functions. The President appoints all-important top staff in the commission, including the Chairman and four commissioners out of six. So, how the fairness of the commission could be reached.....?

As part of the appointment of the commissions of the ZEC, the daily operation and functions of the commission include drafting the electoral regulations, constituents' boundaries, voters' registration, and education of the director of the commission. This entire task is done by the director and his staff, whom the President of Zanzibar also appoints. Section 13 of the act of the ZEC establishment in 2017 gives the President power to appoint the Director of ZEC. This director's appointment mode has already evoked many questions on the fairness of the director's function in the electoral commission. On 10 November 2022, the President of Zanzibar, through his authority, re-appoints Mr. Idarous Faina to be the director of the ZEC. This appointment caused a misunderstanding in the GNU after the opposition party opposed the designation. The opposition party wrote a letter to the President opposing the appointment of Faina. The letter titled *"ACT Wazalendo Yapinga Uteuzi wa Ndugu Thabit Idarous Faina kua Mkurugenzi Wa Tume Ya Uchaguzi Zanzibar,"* which is translated as "ACT Wazalendo Opposes the Appointment of Thabit Faina to Become a Director of ZEC" was written on the same day of the appointment to the President.

This claim is the continuation of the mistrust of the commission by the opposition following the result of the 2020 general election under the same director. The opposition claims that Faina alleged the result to favor the ruling party, whereas the opposition got 19.87% of the vote only. This result is far contrary to the previous results, where the margin of the vote between the opposition and ruling parties was minimal (fifty by fifty). This situation indicates that the mode of selection of the member of the ZEC is not healthy for managing electoral violence because it leaves the parties not trust to the ZEC staff and method of choice.

Apart from the biased structural arrangement of the electoral body, the decision is not by consensus among the sharing parties but rather by a majority decision. This type of decision of the commission is made by the majority members, which is by structure, obviously will be the ruling party wins the decision in the commission. Section 119 (10) of the constitution said that,

"The ratio of the ZEC meeting will be of Chairman or Vice-chairman and four members; each commission decision must be supported by a majoritarian."

The majority decision in the electoral commission gives majority power to the ruling party and automatically leaves the opposition party powerless in ZEC. This made all ruling party agendas pass in ZEC. For instance, the early voting bill in Zanzibar was carried out through majority decisions in the cabinet but was highly opposed by the opposition parties. The opposition claimed that allowing early voting in Zanzibar would lead to vote rigging and other malpractices. This situation erupted violently during the early vote day in 2020 as the opposition party motivated their followers to go to the polling station. This created mistrust, and the opposition followers rallied to oppose the election results. As a result, the state forces used firearms to control the protest and caused some killings and injuries. This situation was due to the majoritarian decision within power-sharing. Once it was a consensus decision, the opposition could not protest the early voting practices. Again, the majority decision decreases the value and integrity of power-sharing as long as one side's decision becomes the rule. This situation also affects political activities, including the election, which is the source of the problem in Zanzibar. For instance, the result annulment in 2015 was due to the majority decision of ZEC. The then commissioner of ZEC, Jecha Salim Jecha, used the majority decision in the commission to terminate the result. Consequently, the opposition boycotted the GNU. The opposition and international observers highly claimed the termination of the announcement of the election results. They argued that the Chairman had done it purposively to give the President's party a victory. Once a time, the head of the opposition party used to say that;

"... The Chairman does what the top hierarchy of CCM assigned him. The system decided to annul the result because it was in opposition favor...."

Despite many claims from witnesses from different angles on the weaknesses of the rules and decision, especially in the 2015 election result termination, the principle adhered to the constitution of power-sharing seems innocent. The constitution remains clear and calm in what is happening because it was stated. For instance, the CCM followers support the Chairman's action of vote termination as prescribed in the rules and regulations.

The interview with the former ZEC chairman denotes;

".... Terminating the results in 2015 followed all the processes and was a ZEC decision. The Chairman himself cannot alone cancel the result without majority acceptance. So, the ZEC rules and regulations canceled the result, not Jecha...."

The chairman stand was also supported by the top former GNU leader from the CCM party as he denotes;

"... The ZEC works independently, and even the President cannot interfere with its operation. The opposition will always comment negatively on the electoral commission until they get a victory. This is the nature of opposition we have...."

The interpretations of the above comments indicate that the reality of the ZEC operations and functions is defined through political affiliation. This study found that most claims about the electoral procedures and process come from the opposition side. What is noticed is that the ruling party is fabulous with ZEC as it gives results that favour them. This finding is compiled with the study of Wall et al. (2014), which assert that; "In many but not all cases of disputed elections, a major complaint is that the electoral commission is somehow or other operating in the interests of the ruling party." This situation contradicts the principle of electoral integrity, where the electoral commission is purposed to be non-partisan, and its decision does not benefit any political party. Again, the selection of the Chairman and commissions of the ZEC by the President, who is from the ruling class, gives some doubt to the fairness of the results.

Consequently, the opposition did not believe in the trueness of the result in every election despite including their members in ZEC. This situation leaves the previous danger of eruption of violence as the opposition followers reject the ZEC result. A typical example was in the 2020 election, the head of Opposition from ACT Wazalendo,

Seif Sharif Hamad, organized a rally to oppose the election result. This resulted in the eruption of violence, where several citizens were injured, and some death was noticed.

Despite the electoral institution's structural and operational weaknesses, the rules claim to be independent and perform their operation without interference. Section 119 (12) stipulated that;

"In performing its duty according to this constitution, ZEC will not be obligated to follow any command from the person, institution, and political party."

The above section gives autonomy to the ZEC to perform its duty independently. However, in the practical sense, it is challenging for the appointees of the President to work independently without being influenced by his party's decision.

The electoral process in Zanzibar includes many stakeholders; a part of ZEC includes municipal directors, Police, and other forces for peace mission on election days. All these stakeholders are appointed or commanded by the President in their daily activities and during the operation. This made the electoral process challenging, and no transparency could be maintained. The Interviews by the top leader of the GNU from the opposition commented;

".... Nobody couldn't thank his boss who appointed him and assigned a task. How could you expect the ZEC and other electoral institutions to be independent while his staff is directly appointed by the President and tasked…?"

The electoral institution's structure and function in powersharing did not provide the trust of free and fair elections. What is noticed is the continuation of the electoral practices that decreases the electoral credibility and integrity. It has been witnessed that the voting process leaves many eligible voters out of voting. The electoral process in Zanzibar continues to go claims to the opposition party whereby the process begins by acquiring the Zanzibar Residential Identity Card (Zan ID)—the letter for that letter obtained from Sheha, who the Regional Commission appoints. To a large extent, they serve the incumbent party. This made a lot of eligible voters out of the voting process. In the interview, one of the citizens in Micheweni commented that during the election of 2020, a lot of eligible citizens claimed that they did not vote because of the process of acquiring a ZAN ID.

"....I wonder what was negotiated and agreed upon in 2010. Here in Pemba, a lot of citizens did not vote in 2020. It wasn't easy to get the vote identity because the process starts with getting the letter from Sheha[15] to identify you as a Shehia resident. After that, you must go to the District office to get the Zan ID. After that, you have to wait for ZEC to register in the voters' permanent registration book for valid voters. If you see the process begins from the Shehas; these officers are the ruling party's puppet and are purposively set to make numbers of opposition voters low…."

The above interview shows the lengthy procedure set for citizens in Zanzibar to vote. This situation made citizens not trust the electoral process after power-sharing. They argued that the power-sharing setup and regulation continue previous electoral practices with the new system. The ZEC, with government officials, is the one who controls the whole process without consensus from the political parties. This indicates that as power-sharing has been more than ten years, the electoral process's integrity is still questionable.

DISCUSSION

The study was set to examine the electoral institution under power-sharing and its capability of managing conflict in Zanzibar. The electoral institutions are vital in managing competition and maintaining peace and stability. First, the institution creates rules and regulations regulating political elites' behaviors and interests in the shared institution. In the shared institution, each party wants its interest to be fulfilled. Second, the institutions create rules and regulations that maintain equality and fairness in the electoral process. In the case of Zanzibar, we cannot plausibly be proud of the institutional performance in the two tasks mentioned. The only thing that Zanzibar power-sharing could be proud of in the electoral process is the inclusion of an opposition party in the

electoral body (ZEC). The findings of this study show that despite the electoral institution being shared, the incumbent's party interest seems to be much concerned. Primarily, the institutions function on behalf of the incumbent party—electoral rules and regulations set to make the ruling party favored in the electoral process.

Again, this study found that, despite the firm establishment of power-sharing in Zanzibar through negotiation, referendum, and subsequent constitutional change, its institutions don't reflect the need to support free and fair elections. This is because power-sharing functions through majoritarian decisions instead of consensus, as argued by power-sharing principles. The institutions remain ambiguous and dominated by one side of the power-sharing actor. As a result, one side's decision created mistrust in the other side. It made the opposition to power-sharing continue to protest and demand electoral integrity as they used before powersharing. Again, the study found that the rules and regulations are calculative; they did not enhance the conduct of elections with fairness; instead, they were used as another vehicle for electoral fraud and manipulation. As a result, no changes were noticed in the election after power-sharing regarding quality elections and democracy.

The future of electoral conflict in Zanzibar remains unclear with these institutions' rules and regulations of elections. The findings reveal that power-sharing does not play a significant role in solving electoral disputes on its own; it depends on the elites' willingness to practice democratic norms and reform the institution to uphold the duality of parties in power-sharing. Institutional setup and electoral conduct should harmonize for transparency and equal treatment among the shared parties. The institutions must be set so that, regardless of the majority or minority in the electoral institutions, all participating parties have the authority to make decisions. It is advised that ZEC operate on its own. To do this, the commission should be separated from the President's appointment process. All positions should instead compete on their merits. This will help keep commissioners and other staff members more independent from the President's nomination and directives. Once more, adding a veto vote to the election process will aid in reaching a unanimous conclusion rather than a majoritarian one. The veto vote strengthens the decision reached by general agreement, which is essential for expanding power sharing and preventing voter mistrust.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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