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The Role of Public Opinion in Africa's Third Term Bids

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we show that public opinion variables have predictable effects on the outcomes of the third term bids that have occurred in the post-transition period in Africa. We focus on three public opinion variables that we believe to be critical in explaining variation across these outcomes: popular opposition to authoritarian rule, presidential popularity, and popular trust in the president.

We use simple case comparisons to explain the effect of these variables on third term bids in Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia, and are able to predict outcomes based on the independent variables in all the countries except Uganda.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Power, and its exercise, is a central concern of political theory. Liberal scholars, exemplified by Locke and Mill, argued for the need for institutional arrangements to limit the tyranny of power. Informed by the historical experience of absolute monarchs classical democratic theorists proposed *demos kratia*, “government of the people,” but they also worried about how to constrain the power of elected leaders especially the case of executive leaders who could claim a popular mandate (Federalist 10, 51).

Presidential term limits are the contemporary solution for countries who desire a strong, effective executive, but who are wary of allowing such power to be exercised indefinitely by the same person (Linz, 1991). Term limits prescribe a set period of time during which a president can serve, typically two consecutive terms.

The United States was the first Presidential constitution in the world and also the first country in the world to introduce presidential term limits. While arguments against the despotism of indefinite presidential terms were presented at the constitutional convention, they were rejected in the belief that Washington would be a trustworthy president who would serve indefinitely; yet Washington’s subsequent decision to decline to serve more than two presidential terms (Peabody 2001), created a powerful precedent and longstanding informal norm that was respected until Roosevelt’s decision to seek a third term in 1940.¹ The Twenty-Second amendment to the US constitution which established a formal, maximum two term limit for US presidents was subsequently passed in 1951.²

¹ Roosevelt was elected to four terms, the last beginning in 1944.

² Source: http://www.termlimits.org/Current_Info/22nd-Amendment-text.html. Accessed October 2005.

In sub-Saharan Africa, most of the new democratic regimes created after 1990 included term limits in order to break the cycle of strong neopatrimonial systems of perpetual “big man rule” that became the norm in post-independence politics. Yet in Malawi, Namibia and Zambia Presidents Muluzi, Nujoma and Chiluba respectively, campaigned to amend their country’s constitutions to secure third terms. Their actions had a seismic effect on the political landscape, evidenced in party squabbles that led in all three countries to rifts between senior party members, and in Malawi and Namibia to the creation of new opposition parties from splinter groups of the ruling party (Baker 2002; VonDoepp 2005). The furore over term limits had hardly subsided in Malawi, Namibia and Zambia, when President Museveni of Uganda and President Obasanjo of Nigeria mooted third term bids in their own countries.³

Public opposition to third terms in Africa has been led by a coalition of civil society organisations that had previously agitated for democratic reforms before democratic transition. The opponents of third term bids argue that they represent the slippery slope leading to the indefinite presidential autocracy that was the norm in post-independence Africa.

Attempts to amend constitutionally mandated term limits are an example of the overreach of power contrary to democratic principles, but the paradox is that amendments can be done in accordance with the stipulations of the constitution. While van de Walle argues that the crux of the push for democratization in these hybrid regimes is epitomised by “the fight against rent-seeking and official abuses of power” (2002: 69), Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi assert that “in Africa today, civilian leaders who ignore the constitution pose a more insidious threat to democracy than coup plotters in the military” (2005: 1).

Our research interest in third term situations comes from the belief that attempts to amend term limits are inherently undemocratic even though third terms are permissible

³ Because these countries had two term limits for presidents, the issues raised have come to be called Africa’s third term debates (Baker 2002; VonDoepp 2005).

provided the constitution is amended, a conundrum that illustrates the difficulty of trying to resolve normative political questions.

With the crest of the third wave of democratic transitions having passed, the focus of democratic scholars has shifted to democratic consolidation, or the cementing of democratic regimes. Diamond (2007) argues that the central question of the field of democratic consolidation is the empirical question posed by Przeworski *et al* (1996): “what makes democracies endure.” The literature suggests that democratic consolidation can take place through institutionalisation, modernisation or legitimation. Though it may seem to be stating the obvious that this study assumes that public opinion is politically important, this is significant, as it reflects on democratic consolidation.

Does presidential respect for term limits in countries with high popular opposition to authoritarian rule provide evidence of the legitimation of the regime through popular consent, evidence that the consideration of public opinion is becoming routinised in the way that we associate with democratic regimes? Or, is it the institutionalisation of the disincentives represented by term limits that ensures they are respected by incumbent presidents?

In shedding some light on institutionalisation, this study also contributes to the debate on whether to classify regimes based on their democratic characteristics, or degree of institutionalisation.⁴ Bratton and van de Walle argue that three critical informal institutions - clientelism, corruption and “big man” presidentialism - “are so ingrained in African political life as to constitute veritable political institutions” (2007: 98). They call these chimeras, states in which informal rules coexist with formal rules, “hybrid regimes” (Bratton and van de Walle 1997; van de Walle 2003). On the other hand, Posner and Young argue that a focus on institutionalization, by which they mean the “constraints on executive power” (2007: 137), rather than a focus on democracy, provides the best way to classify African regimes.

⁴ Since the Afrobarometer surveys on which this research is based are only conducted in countries where eliciting public opinion is not seen as a threat to the regime, it is arguable that the political importance of public opinion is, in and of itself, an indicator that a country is democratic.

It is now customary for countries' democratic practices to be in the international spotlight during general elections, as attention is focused on the expression of the popular will. The same has been true for third term situations. Good governance and the rule of law are leitmotifs for aid donors and democracy practitioners in the field. In increasing our understanding of third term situations, which are a bellwether for the state of democracy, this study will hopefully assert the importance of the will of the people.

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CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

The politics of third term bids have occupied many column inches in newspapers across Africa, yet only a few scholars have explicitly examined presidential behaviour with regard to term limits, or tried to explain the outcomes of third term bids (Baker 2002, von Doepp 2005; Posner and Young 2007, McKie 2008).

The “big man rule” (Mattes, Bratton and Gyimah-Boadi 2005; Hyden 2006) for which sub-Saharan Africa is infamous originated in autochthonous traditions of patrimonial rule (Theobald 1982, Roth 1968) which were co-opted during the colonial interregnum (Mamdani 1996) and remained largely unchanged after independence (Chazan et al 1999; Herbst 2000), as leaders sought recourse to tradition and personal rule in order to centralise and consolidate power and secure legitimacy (Nwabuzue 1974; H. Kwasi Prempeh: 2008).

Not surprisingly the premium placed on authority and legitimacy has influenced the choice of executive in post-colonial and post-transition African states: with the exception of just three parliamentary regimes, Africa’s governments are all presidential regimes. Presidential regimes have a directly elected executive which results in presidentialism, which is national politics dominated both by the institution of the presidency and the individual occupying the office (Linz 1991), or the concentration of power in the hands of one individual (Bratton and van de Walle 1997). Both are agreed, however, on the personalisation of the office of the president.

The overwhelming body of literature holds that personal rule is central to understanding African politics (Bayart 1993; Bratton and van de Walle 1994; Chabal 1994; Chabal 1999; Hyden 2006; Jackson and Rosberg 1984; Kirk-Greene 1991; van de Walle 2003). Personal rule, memorably called “the politics of the belly” (Bayart 1993) and “the

economy of affection” (Hyden 2006), manifests itself in the use of state resources, clientelism, and corruption (Bratton and van de Walle 1997; Bratton 2007). Neopatrimonialism refers to the existence of these particularist practices within the bureaucratic state. Van de Walle (2003) contends that presidentialism and clientelism in Africa’s post-transition regimes mean that these systems are weakly institutionalised, as there is a tension between democratic institutions and big man rule (Joseph 2008; Diamond 2008).

Since legitimacy in the neopatrimonial state is bought through patronage and not institutionalisation the neopatrimonial regime literature suggests that clientelist networks are too valuable to give up: presidents need to stay in office to enjoy power, privilege and prosperity while their clients need them to remain in office to continue delivering particularistic goods (Bayart 1999; Chabal 1994; Chabal and Daloz 1999; Bratton 2007). This strongly suggests that elected presidents should naturally attempt to circumvent or change term limits. Indeed, we would expect formal, legal, paper limitations on presidential “big man” power, like presidential term limits, to be circumvented, ignored, or literally torn up.

However, recent scholarship provides evidence against the conventional wisdom, and suggests that formal rules are attaining increasing importance in African politics. Posner and Young (2007) show that as power is being increasingly institutionalised presidential term limits are being observed: big man rule in Africa is not as important as it once was. Lindberg (2007) finds that elections in Africa are increasing in competitiveness and importance.

Despite this shift in emphasis from informal to formal rules, the consensus remains that there is an interplay between formal and informal rules, the defining characteristic of Africa’s “hybrid regimes” (van de Walle 2002; van de Walle 2003); and that formal institutionalisation is taking place, even as informal institutionalisation remains a feature of African political organisation (Joseph 2008; H Kwasi Prempeh 2007).

Bratton *et al* (2005) and Posner and Young (2007) do share common ground in one area, however: both argue that public opinion is becoming an important factor in determining political outcomes in Africa. Bratton and van de Walle (1997) find that transitions from neopatrimonial regimes are not elite driven, but driven by protests from below: if the actions of mass publics have an effect on authoritarian regimes, it is not that great a leap to hypothesize that mass public opinion would have an effect on Africa's post-transitions democratically elected leaders. Bratton *et al* (2005) hypothesise that "public opinion can be both a cause and a consequence of [political] change" (2005: 1), and like Diamond (2007) contend that public opinion played a role in determining the outcome of the third term debates in Namibia in 1998 and Zambia in 2001.

Of the existing literature on third terms in Africa, Baker (2002) details the progress of the "third term debates" in Namibia, Zambia and Malawi, and the arguments of the protagonists from the ruling party and the opposition and civil society, but does not attempt to explain outcomes, while Von Doepp (2005) argues that the cohesiveness of the ruling party is critical to explaining the outcome of the third term bids of President Nujoma of Namibia, President Chiluba of Zambia and President Muluzi of Malawi. As yet, no study has provided empirical evidence of the effect of public opinion on third term bids. This study is a first attempt to fill that gap. We start by outlining our hypotheses.

Hypotheses

When a sitting president nears the end of the second term a number of outcomes are possible. The first is when no attempt at a third term bid takes place; the second is the tabling of a bill in the national assembly to amend term limits as stipulated in the constitution, and the third is the success or failure of such a bill when put to a vote in the national assembly.

This study focuses on three public opinion variables that we believe to be critical in explaining variation across these outcomes: popular opposition to authoritarian rule, presidential popularity, and popular trust in the president. We make two major assumptions: the first is that public opinion is transmitted to the executive through the news media or through members of their party who are either legislators or party officials; and the second is that presidents, party officials and legislators are aware of what voters think of the president, and are rational political actors cognizant of the costs and benefits of actions which have an impact on the voting public.

During Africa's transitions extensive support for democracy existed in the independent media, voluntary associations and individuals unified in their opposition to authoritarian rule and the life-presidency that was then the rule rather than the exception. Subsequently many of these non-governmental organisations remained opposed to governments on matters of democracy and human rights. These coalitions were re-mobilised during the course of the third term debates to oppose the reversal of term limits, the one constitutional provision that kept life-presidents from becoming a reality once again (Baker 2002).

Opponents of third term bids argued that removing term limits was the first step in a return to life presidency, as the combination of incumbency advantage and personal rule would stifle meaningful competition for the executive over time (Baker 2002). This is not surprising given the widespread antipathy to autocratic rule during the transition to democracy and the short time since transition in many countries. We use opposition to one-man rule as an indicator of opposition to the removal of term limits.

Opposition to one-man rule is probably the most important element of public opinion because it represents the clearest constraint to the success of a third term bid, if we assume that legislators in the national assembly are rational actors that consider the pros and cons of

voting for a constitutional amendment bill that removes term limits. If their constituents are opposed to one man rule, and thus a bill amending term limits, then it is conceivable that a legislator who votes in favour of a third term bill will not be re-elected. Even in a political system where patronage is important, it is logical that MPs will put their own political survival before that of their president. Hence we expect third term bids to succeed when opposition to one-man rule is low, and to fail when opposition to one-man rule is high.

Just as a popular incumbent president ending their first term and seeking re-election for a second would be confident of their chances of re-election, it makes sense that a president seeking a third term would feel confident to do so if they were popular. A popular president would have a credible argument to make to leadership contenders within his own party, legislators in his party, and the nation, that to offer him a third term would be a good thing. It is also feasible that if the president is very popular legislators will be less likely to oppose amending of the constitution; opposition legislators might not want to be seen to be going against the wishes of the people, while members of the president's party would not want to oppose their political patron. For the legislator it is a win-win situation because they can ride the electoral coattails of a popular president.

We expect third term bids to succeed when presidential approval is high and to fail when presidential approval is low. We expect the effect of presidential trust on outcomes to be the same as that for approval of presidential performance. Although we have good logical reasons to assume that the relationship between outcomes and presidential trust would be the same as for presidential approval, we did not deduce a hypothesis from the positions of the protagonists in the third term debates as we did with opposition to one-man rule and presidential approval.

The hypotheses are summarised in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1. Summary of predictions

	Bid Failure	Bid Success
Opposition to one-man rule	High	Low
Presidential approval	Low	High
Presidential trust	Low	High

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CHAPTER THREE

Source of Data

This paper uses public opinion data collected by Afrobarometer. The Afrobarometer is a comparative series of national surveys of public attitudes on democracy, markets and civil society in Africa. It is a joint enterprise of the Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa) and the Institute for Empirical Research in Political Economy (IREEP, Benin). Since 1999, Afrobarometer has accumulated interviews with over 105,000 Africans, conducting four rounds of surveys in 12 of those 20 countries.

Respondents are selected using a random, stratified, multistage, national probability sample representing adult citizens aged 18 years or older. Each country sample yields a margin of error of ± 3 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level. The pooled, cross-country sample is equally weighted to standardize national samples at 1200 respondents apiece.⁵

The Data Sample

The universe of possible cases is those countries in sub-Saharan Africa with a directly elected president and a constitutional limit on the number of consecutive terms that the president can serve. Afrobarometer surveys, however, are only conducted in countries that are sufficiently stable to allow for the smooth running of the surveys, and sufficiently democratic that the government allows public opinion surveys to be conducted without interference. The population is thus considerably smaller than the universe of possible cases suggests. In each case the corresponding data is drawn from the Afrobarometer survey that was conducted

⁵ Afropaper No124, p. 3. For more information, see: www.afrobarometer.org.

during the constitutionally prescribed second elected term of the president. The sample of 16 cases is shown in Figure 3.1. The cases in which third term bids took place – Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Uganda and Zimbabwe - are highlighted in bold text.

Figure 3.1. Sample of Cases

	Country	President	Second Term Duration	Afrobarometer Survey Dates (Afrobarometer round)
1	Botswana	Mogae	2004 - 2009	May 28 – June 12, 2005 (3)
2	Cape Verde	Neves	2001 - 2006	June 3 – June 14, 2002 (2)
3	Ghana	Rawlings	1996 – 2000	29 Aug – Sept 11, 2002 (3)
4	Ghana	Kuffuor	2004 - 2008	Mar 10 – Mar 21, 2005 (3)
5	Kenya	Kibaki	2007 - 2012	Oct 29 – Nov 17, 2008 (4)
6	Malawi	Muluzi	1999 - 2004	Apr 29 – May 18, 2003 (2)
7	Mali	Konare	1997 - 2002	Jan - Feb, 2001 (1)
8	Mali	Toure	2007 - 2012	Dec 15 – Dec 31, 2008 (4)
9	Mozambique	Chissano	1999 - 2004	Aug 11 – Aug 21, 2002 (2)
10	Namibia	Nujoma	1994 - 1999	Sep – Oct, 1999 (1)
11	Namibia	Nujoma	1999 - 2004	Aug 15 – Sept 28, 2003 (2)
12	Nigeria	Obasanjo	2003 - 2007	Aug 28 – Dec 31, 2005 (3)
13	Senegal	Wade	2007 - 2014	May 19 – Jun 4, 2008 (4)
14	Tanzania	Mkapa	2000 - 2005	July 5 – Aug 6, 2003 (2)
15	Uganda	Museveni	2001 - 2006	Aug 13 – Sep 5, 2002 (2)
16	Zambia	Chiluba	1996 - 2001	Oct – Nov, 1999 (1)

Operationalisation of the concepts

To determine opposition to one-man rule, the Afrobarometer questionnaire asked respondents: There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives: Elections and Parliament/National Assembly are abolished so that the President/Prime Minister can decide everything?⁶

To determine presidential approval, respondents were asked: Do you approve or disapprove of the way the following people have performed their jobs over the past twelve months, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: [President/Prime Minister's name]?⁷

⁶ Source: Afrobarometer Round 3 Questionnaire.

⁷ Source: Afrobarometer Round 3 Questionnaire.

To determine presidential trust, respondents were asked: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The President/Prime Minister?⁸

Analysis Plan

In order to determine what explains whether or not a third term bid is successful we conduct bivariate analyses of our independent variables – opposition to one-man rule, presidential approval and presidential trust against third term bid outcomes, namely bid success and failure. Recall that our hypotheses predicted outcomes based on the level (low or high) of the independent variables.

In the cases in this study - Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia – a constitutional amendment bill requires a two thirds majority vote in parliament to pass. Legislators acting as representatives of their constituents should fulfil the wishes of those constituents. It follows therefore that a parliamentary vote parallels the aggregated interests of constituents as represented by legislators in parliament. We thus used the supermajority of sixty- six percent as the cutoff between low and high levels of the independent variable aggregated at the country level.

⁸ Source: Afrobarometer Round 3 Questionnaire.

CHAPTER FOUR

Descriptives

We begin this chapter by describing the distribution of the dependent and independent variables. Despite the attention that they garner from democracy watchers, third term bid attempts in Africa's republican democracies are rare (Figure 4.1).

In the population from which the sample is drawn there was no third term attempt in 11 cases. Third term bids occurred in only five cases, of which two were successful.

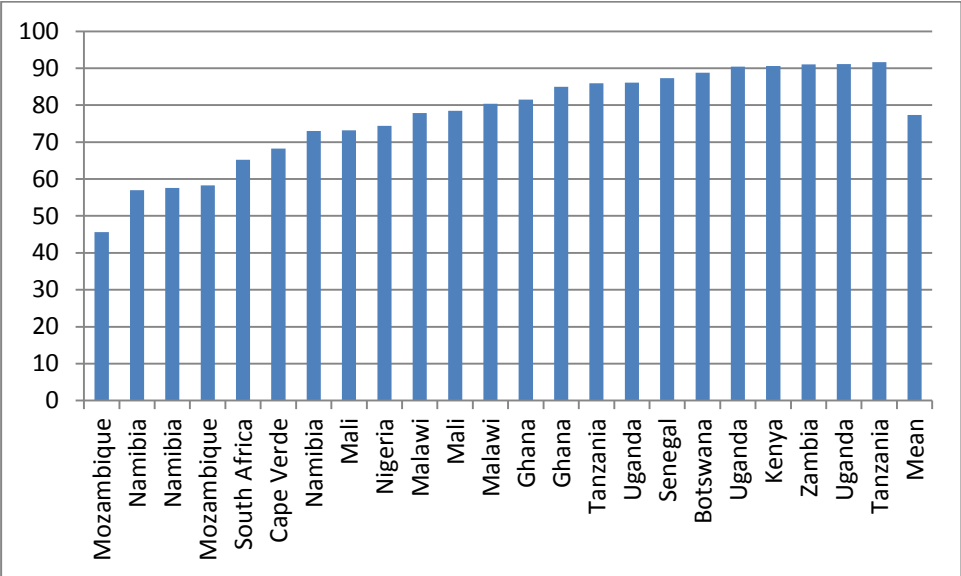
Figure 4.1. Third Term Outcomes

Outcome	Cases
No attempt	Botswana, Cape Verde , Ghana (1), Ghana (2), Kenya, Mali (1), Mali (2), Mozambique, Namibia (2), Senegal, Tanzania
Bid fails	Malawi, Nigeria, Zambia
Bid succeeds	Namibia (1) , Uganda

Note: Ghana, Mali and Namibia have had two third term events each, indicated by the (1) and (2) in parentheses after the country name.

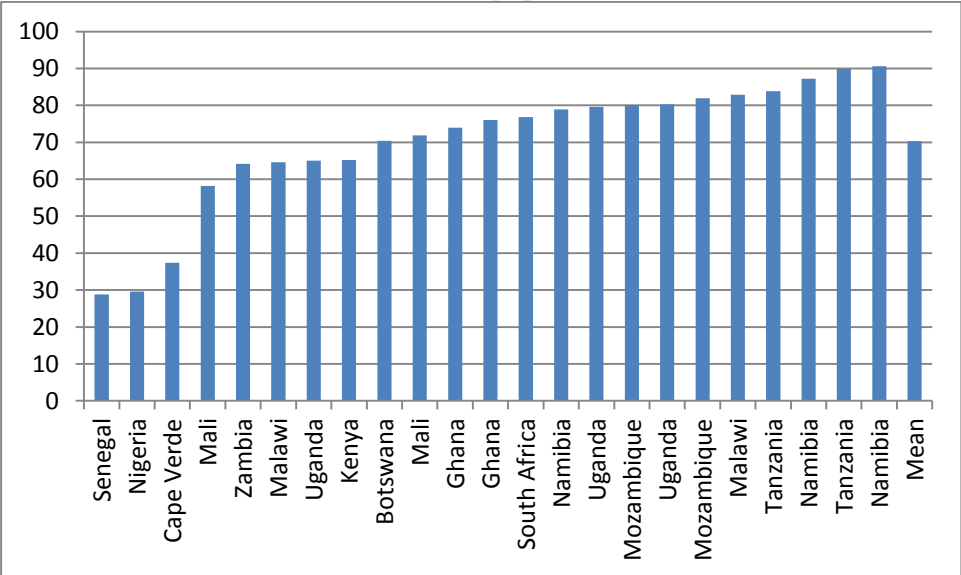
We now proceed to describe the distribution of the independent variables in our sample. Opposition to one-man rule ranges from a low of 46 percent in Mozambique to a high of 92 percent in Tanzania (Figure 4.2). The mean level of opposition to one-man rule is 77 percent.

Figure 4.2. Opposition to one-man rule



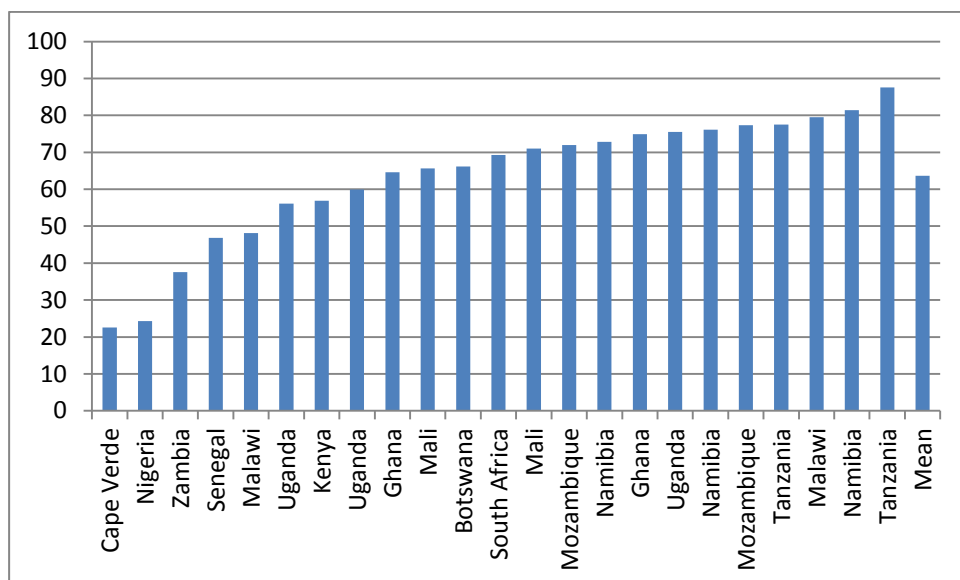
Presidential approval ranges from 29 percent in Senegal to 91 percent in Namibia. The sample mean is 70 percent (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3. Presidential approval



Presidential trust is lowest in Cape Verde, at 23 percent, and highest in Tanzania at 88 percent, while the mean for the sample is 64 percent (Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4. Presidential trust



Bivariate Analysis

We begin the bivariate analysis by looking at the effect of the level of opposition to one-man rule on third term bid outcome (Figure 4.5). The hypothesis that third term bids are unsuccessful when opposition to one-man rule is high is confirmed in three cases and not in one. The hypothesis that third term bids are successful when opposition to one-man rule is low is confirmed in one case.

Figure 4.5. Opposition to one-man rule and outcome

	Low	High
Bid Succeeds	Namibia [57%]	Uganda [90%]
Bid Fails		Malawi [78%] Nigeria [74%] Zambia [91%]

The hypothesis that third term bids are successful when presidential approval is high is confirmed in two cases (Figure 4.6). The hypothesis that third term bids are unsuccessful when presidential approval is low is confirmed in three cases.

Figure 4.6. Presidential approval and outcome

	Low	High
Bid Succeeds		Namibia [79%] Uganda [80%]
Bid Fails	Malawi [65%] Nigeria [30%] Zambia [64%]	

We complete the bivariate analysis by turning to the relationship between presidential trust and third term bid outcome (Figure 4.7). The hypothesis that third term bids are successful when trust in the president is high is confirmed in one case. The hypothesis that third term bids are unsuccessful when trust in the president is low is confirmed in three cases but not in one case.

Figure 4.7. Trust in the president and outcome

	Low	High
Bid Succeeds	Uganda [60%]	Namibia [73%]
Bid Fails	Malawi [48%] Nigeria [24%] Zambia [38%]	

Discussion of Results

The distributions of the independent variables hinted at some of the relationships that we hypothesized and proceeded to test with bivariate analysis. The third term bid succeeded in Namibia where opposition to one-man rule was relatively low. Third term bids in Nigeria and Malawi were unsuccessful, in the face of higher levels of opposition to one-man rule. It is surprising though, that the third term bid in Uganda was successful despite the highest level of opposition to one-man rule in the sample.

Third term bids in an environment with low presidential approval as was the case in Nigeria, Zambia and Malawi failed; conversely presidential approval was relatively high in Uganda and Namibia, where third term bids were successful.

In Nigeria and Malawi failed third term bids occurred in an environment of low trust in the president. In Namibia where the third term bid was successful trust in the president was relatively high, yet the opposite occurred in Uganda where the third term bid succeeded despite relatively low levels of trust in the president.

We deduced the hypotheses tested in the bivariate analysis from the arguments of the protagonists in the countries in which third term bids took place. The main argument marshaled by opponents of third term bids was that amending term limits amounted to endorsing one man rule. In alluding to the slide to autocracy that occurred after independence in many of these countries, it was a powerful argument to make, particularly given the newness of Africa's democratic transitions. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that we thought opposition to one man rule would be the most important predictor of the outcome of third term events and had the most confidence in generating hypotheses for the outcomes of third term bids for low and high levels of opposition to one-man rule.

The main argument of supporters of third term bids was that the president was doing a good job - in some instances going as far as to claim there was no other candidate who could

do the job that the president was doing - and should be allowed to continue to do so. Although weakened by being a partisan argument, it made sense, and we also felt confident in generating hypotheses for the outcomes of third term bids for low and high levels of presidential approval. Logically trust in the present seemed a corollary of presidential approval, so we thought the effect of either variable on bid outcomes would be the same.

A summary of the results of the bivariate analysis is shown in Figure 4.8. Figures in bold indicate that the outcome for the level of the variable was as predicted, i.e. that the hypothesis was confirmed. We were able to correctly predict the outcome of the third term bid given the level of opposition to one-man rule in four out of five instances. We correctly predicted bid outcome using the level of presidential approval in five out of five instances; and the bid outcome given the level of presidential trust in four out of five instances.

Figure 4.8. Overview of Cases, Outcomes and Variable Values

	Bid Outcome	Opposition to one-man rule (%)	Presidential approval (%)	Trust in the president (%)
Malawi	Fail	78	65	48
Namibia	Succeed	57	79	73
Nigeria	Fail	74	30	24
Uganda	Succeed	90	80	60
Zambia	Fail	91	64	38

Contrary to what we expected, we find that presidential approval, and not opposition to one-man rule, is the best predictor of third term outcomes. High and low levels of presidential approval presaged bid success and failure in all cases. Levels of opposition to one-man rule and trust in the president corroborate our hypotheses for all cases except one.

Table 4.8 can also be interpreted in another way. If, instead of reading down the columns containing the variables we read across the rows containing the cases we see that the only case in which public opinion did not predict the outcome of the third term bid was Uganda. Uganda has similar levels of presidential approval to Namibia, but has, by some

margin, the highest levels of opposition to one-man rule of the four countries in which a third term bid was attempted.

In other words, opposition to one-man rule, presidential approval and trust in the president correctly predict the outcome of the third term bid in four out of the five countries where such bids took place. We think this interpretation of the results of the bivariate analysis is more compelling, and offers up an interesting avenue of further inquiry: why does presidential approval temper the impact of such high levels of opposition to one-man rule in Uganda?

We finish this chapter by couching our analysis of the impact of our three independent variables within a broader democratic context. Bratton *et al* construct a demand and supply model to explain the consolidation of democratic regimes in Africa (Bratton et al, 2005). In the model the demand for democracy in a country is made up of the percentage of people who both express support for democracy and also reject three authoritarian alternatives (one-party rule, one-man rule and military rule). The supply of democracy is the percentage of the population that is satisfied with the way democracy works in the country and also thinks the country is democratic.

Opposition to one-man rule thus feeds directly into this demand and supply model of democracy. As for presidential approval and presidential trust, Bratton *et al* find that an additive construct of presidential approval and trust in the president is linearly related with aggregated rates of satisfaction with democracy (Bratton *et al*, 2005: 245).

Opposition to one-man rule, presidential approval and presidential trust are important components of measures of intrinsic attachments to democracy and empirical assessments of democracy captured in the democratic demand supply model.

Countries where opposition to one man rule is high and presidential approval and trust in the president are low, should also be countries where the demand for democracy exceeds

citizen’s perceptions of its supply. These are countries where the legitimacy of the government is low, meaning the demand for political accountability is high, and citizens expect their leaders to behave democratically. As a result the likelihood of success of a third term bid in such a country is low.

Conversely, where opposition to one-man rule is low and presidential approval and trust in the president are high, or countries where the supply of democracy exceeds the demand of citizens for it, the chances of success of a third term bid is high. In these countries the legitimacy of the government is not in question as the leadership provides more democracy than the people want, meaning constraints on executive power are not politically salient; a third term bid can literally fly under the radar, as was the case in Namibia.

We calculated the demand and supply of democracy as well as the difference between the demand for democracy and its supply for the five cases (Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9. Demand and supply of democracy and third term outcome

Case	Demand for Democracy (percent)	Supply of Democracy (percent)	Demand - Supply (percent)	Democratic Category	Third Term Outcome
Nigeria	45	16	29	Demand-driven	Fail
Malawi	39	27	12		
Zambia	59	47	12		
Uganda	35	44	-9	Supply-driven	Succeed
Namibia	26	53	-27		

Table 4.9 confirms that third term bids failed in demand-driven countries, where the demand for democracy exceeds the supply, and the legitimacy of the government is low; and succeeded in supply-driven countries, where the supply of democracy exceeds demand, and the legitimacy of government is high.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Importance of Context

The preceding chapter showed that opposition to one-man rule, presidential approval and residential trust aggregated at the country level predicted the outcomes of third term bids in four of five cases. This macro level analysis showed that the effect of opposition to one-man rule, an otherwise reliable predictor of bid outcome, was tempered by presidential approval in once instance, suggesting that the national context within which the third term bid took place was a key factor.

We ended the analysis with a discussion of the demand for and supply of democracy at the national level. We find that third term bids succeeded in the two cases where regime legitimacy was high (Namibia and Uganda) and failed in the three cases where regime legitimacy was low (Malawi, Nigeria and Zambia). We now look in more detail at the course of the third term debates in our five cases, starting with Namibia.

Namibia

Namibia was the first democratic country in the region to experience a third term bid. Sam Nujoma won a second term as president of Namibia in 1994. Unlike other countries in which third term bids took place, as we will subsequently see, the campaign in Namibia was a relatively muted affair. There were a number of reasons for this.

The first and most important is the position of Swapo in Namibia's consciousness. In 1972 the United Nations General Assembly recognized Swapo as the sole legitimate representative of the people of Namibia. Swapo guerrillas fought a long civil war against the South African troops occupying the country, and laid legitimate claim to be the movement that liberated the country. Secondly, the long-time Swapo leader Sam Nujoma was seen as

the father of the Namibian nation. The high esteem in which Nujoma was held meant that there was no mass public campaign against the third term bid. Finally, Swapo possessed the two thirds majority in the national assembly required to change the constitution. As a result, according to Namibian political scientist and Swapo member Henning Melber the decision was Swapo's to make regardless of opposition.⁹

The May 1997 Swapo congress decided to allow Nujoma to stand for three terms. The argument advanced was that since he had been appointed by the constituent assembly in 1999 he had only actually been elected once. Senior Swapo figure and Ambassador to London Ben Ulenga resigned from Swapo in protest at the decision, and later went on to start the Congress of Democrats opposition political party.

The Namibian Constitution First Amendment Bill was passed in the National Council by 19 votes to 4 on November 20, 1998.¹⁰ Swapo's majority in the lower house meant that the vote passed without incident.

Zambia

Frederick Chiluba's third term bid in Zambia was notable by the overtness of the campaign and the extent to which it polarized the country. Chiluba made no secret of his desire for a third term. Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) leaders in the districts canvassed extensively to drum up support, particularly from chiefs and other traditional leaders. In February 2001, Vernon Mwanga, MMD Secretary General said that Chiluba wished for an open debate on the third term, a sentiment that Chiluba echoed in a speech to church leaders when he said [tongue in cheek] that not allowing debate on the third term would be undemocratic.¹¹

⁹ <http://www.newera.com.na/article.php?articleid=7954>. Accessed 7-2-11.

¹⁰ <http://www.mg.co.za/article/1998-11-20-nujoma-third-term-passed>. Accessed 7-2-2011.

¹¹ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1162462.stm>. Accessed 7-2-2011.

Opposition to the move came from many parts of civil society. After a meeting in January 2001 leaders from the Christian Council of Zambia, the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia and the Zambia Episcopal Conference issued a statement condemning the third term bid, calling it “unconstitutional and undemocratic.”¹² The Zambian labour movement, which Frederick Chiluba had once led in challenging the autocratic rule of Kenneth Kaunda, was also opposed. Derrick Chaala, the General Secretary of Zambia’s Trade Union Confederation said: “history has taught us that the continued stay of presidents in office has built them into dictators and that dictators often survive by resorting to large scale abuse”¹³

The Church, the Law Association of Zambia and the Non-Governmental Coordinating Committee formed OASIS, a civil society umbrella body to lead opposition to the third term. Civil society demonstrations were organized in Lusaka and major urban areas, where Chiluba did not enjoy as much support as he did in rural areas. It was in Eastern province that Chiluba declared on April 6 that he was “determined to fight on and win the battle against those opposed to my third term.”¹⁴

The bid split provinces and senior leadership of the MMD in the run-up to the MMD national convention in 2001. Four out of Zambia’s nine provinces supported the bid. MMD National Secretary Michael Sata was a strong proponent of the constitutional change, while Ackson Sejani the party’s chairman for elections was opposed.¹⁵ Chiluba’s Vice President Christon Tembo became a major figurehead of the opposition, famous for addressing their rallies. MMD Vice President Godfrey Miyanda and Chiluba’s wife Vera Chiluba were also against the bid, prompting jokes about Chiluba’s marital troubles among the opposition.¹⁶

A special MMD convention to amend the party’s constitution to allow Chiluba to stand again was convened on May 1, 2001. A ban by Chiluba on campaigning against the bid

¹² <http://afcast.org.zw/index.php/the-third-term-bid-by-president-chiluba>. Accessed 7-2-2011.

¹³ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2001/may/04/chrismcgreal>. Accessed 6-2-2011.

¹⁴ <http://afcast.org.zw/index.php/the-third-term-bid-by-president-chiluba>. Accessed 7-2-2011.

¹⁵ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1162462.stm>. Accessed 7-2-2011.

¹⁶ http://www.afrol.com/News2001/zam003_chiluba_3_term.htm. Accessed 7-2-2011.

led to 200 party members boycotting the convention. Violence at the convention saw people, including three cabinet members, beaten up by Chiluba supporters. The MMD moved to expel members who had boycotted the convention but this move was prevented by a High Court injunction.¹⁷

The battle within the MMD having been won, the MMD now brought the constitutional amendment to the national parliament. Opposition to the amendment in the legislature was led by MMD Vice President Christon Tembo, who laid out plans in the legislature to impeach the president for his actions.

Despite the MMD majority in parliament (131 seats), 80 out of 158 MPS in parliament signed a declaration of opposition to the constitutional amendment. MMD Vice President Christon Tembo led plans in the legislature to impeach the president. In response Chiluba threatened that they would lose their seats.

Chiluba announced at a press conference on 4 May 2001 that he would not stand again for election as president. There was skepticism at this announcement especially since he had the day previously expelled his Vice President and eight other cabinet members from the MMD party for opposing his third term plans.¹⁸ Despite the announcement the battles had split the MMD irrevocably, as 80 MMD members resigned from the Executive Committee.¹⁹

Malawi.

Zambia's neighbor Malawi was the next country to experience a third term debate. Political observers noted that true to form, what happens politically in Zambia follows soon afterward in Malawi (autocratic Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda was forced to concede to democratic demands just before Kamuzu Banda of Malawi had to do the same).

¹⁷ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2001/may/04/chrismcgreal>. Accessed 6-2-2011.

¹⁸ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2001/may/07/chrismcgreal>. Accessed 6-2-2011.

¹⁹ http://www.afrol.com/News2001/zam006_mmd_splits.htm. Accessed 7-2-2011.

Bakili Muluzi won re-election for a second term in Malawi's general election of June 1999. Within two years an unofficial campaign was underfoot within the ruling United Democratic Front (UDF) party to secure a third term for him. The president, while not stating his own position on the issue, did not discourage the campaign. In January 2001 in the first official comment on the issue Clement Stambuli Minister of Information said on national radio that the issue had not been commented on at cabinet level.²⁰

In May 2001 the leadership of one of the largest ecumenical gatherings in the country, the CCAP, issued a lengthy pastoral letter that detailed the governance shortcomings of the Muluzi administration. In strongly worded language referring to the third term murmurings, the letter accused the Muluzi government of the "rape of the constitution."²¹ The CCAP pastoral letter set the stage for an increasingly tense standoff between civil society and the government over the third term issue. The stance the church took in issuing a pastoral letter had great significance because of the precedent set by a pastoral letter from the Catholic bishops in Malawi denouncing the authoritarian excesses of the Kamuzu Banda regime. This letter entered popular lore as the signal that marked the beginning of the end of the Banda regime. The pastoral letter also presaged a split on the Muluzi third term issue on religious lines, as Islamic religious organisations came out in support of Muluzi. This was notable since religion had not previously been a divisive factor in Malawi politics. Indeed, Muluzi, a Muslim, was elected president despite the country being predominantly Christian.

Civil society organisations grouped together to form an umbrella body to oppose the third term in 2002, called the Forum for the Defence of the Constitution. Former Malawi Vice President Cassim Chilumpha was a member of the leadership of the FDC. He had been fired from the cabinet by the president in November 2001 over allegations that he had been involved in corrupt tendering procedures when Minister of Education. Another Minister

²⁰ <http://208.106.251.104/Report.aspx?ReportID=16688>. Accessed 7-2-2011.

²¹ <http://allafrica.com/stories/200105140450.html>. Accessed 7-2-2011.

named in the same report by the Anti-Corruption Bureau, Minister of Transport Brown Mpinganjira, was also sacked from the cabinet and went on to form an opposition party called the National Democratic Alliance.

The adversarial relationship between the independent media and the government, which the government felt was biased towards the opposition, worsened during the third term campaign. In February 2002 the editor and a number of journalists of *The Chronicle* newspaper were beaten by members of the UDF Young Democrats, the party's youth militia. In May 2002 the International NGO Committee to Protect Journalists reported that the offices of the publishers of two large independent newspapers *The Malawi News* and *The Daily Times* were barricaded by UDF supporters protesting the papers' anti-third term stance.

In May 2002 Muluzi banned demonstrations around the third term. An application for an interdict on the ban was made to the High Court which declared in June 2002 that the ban was unconstitutional. In response, Muluzi said he would ignore the court decision. In an interesting twist of fate, Justice Mwaungulu, the author of the High Court verdict, had previously been the target of a UDF attempt to impeach him and two other judges in 2001 for being biased against the government²²

When the Constitutional Amendment Bill was presented to parliament the bill failed to pass by only three votes.²³ The defeat was a surprise, as the government thought it had convinced enough opposition MPs to vote in favour. On July 5 2002 Muluzi announced to the nation that he would respect the parliamentary vote.

However the third term campaign continued under another guise. Rather than a third term bill, the president's supporters mooted the idea of an open term bill instead, which would remove term limits altogether. A 2,000-strong march in Blantyre, in January 2003 as parliament began debating the open terms bill was dispersed by police with teargas. In

²² <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2024844.stm>. Accessed 7-2-2011.

²³ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2096691.stm>. Accessed 7-2-2011.

February 2003 the Minister of Justice obtained a court order banning further protests planned by the Forum for the Defence of the Constitution.²⁴

In the face of continued, widespread public opposition to the bill the Minister of Justice referred the open terms bill to the Justice Committee of parliament for comment. This was interpreted as a face-saving way for the government to allow the bill to die a natural death. However, the third term campaign only came to a definitive end with the announcement by Muluzi on April 2, 2003 that the UDF Congress had decided that Bingu wa Mutharika would be its presidential candidate in the 2004 general elections.²⁵

Uganda

Yoweri Museveni entered Kampala at the head of a rebel army, the National Resistance Army (NRA) that overthrew Milton Obote's government in 1986. In a bid to restore stability to a country that had suffered from years of civil war and brutal dictatorship, the NRA morphed into the National Resistance Movement (NRM) and effectively banned all meaningful activity by political parties, which were allowed to register, but could not hold public meetings nor campaign for their candidates.

Museveni won the 1996 election and in the NRM manifesto for the 2001 election declared that the second term he was then seeking would be his last (the post-civil war constitution that was adopted in 1995 prescribed a two term limit for the president).

However, in March 2003 the NRM national conference resolved to remove presidential term limits. Despite this decision, there was opposition from prominent members within the movement to extending Museveni's time in office. In May 2003 in a cabinet reshuffle, Museveni dismissed ministers who had publicly expressed their opposition to the

²⁴ <http://www.mg.co.za/article/2003-02-17-malawi-bars-demos-against-muluzis-third-term-bid>. Accessed 7-2-2011.

²⁵ <http://www.aegis.org/news/ips/2003/IP030401.html>. Accessed 7-2-2011.

constitutional amendment. These former ministers – Eriya Kategaya, Bidandi Ssali and Miria Matembe – went on to spearhead the campaign against the third term.

Despite these clear machinations behind the scenes towards securing the amendment, Museveni was publicly opaque on the issue. In delivering his state of the nation address to parliament on 5 June 2003, he chided interest in the campaign to remove presidential terms as mere politicking, saying that his main concern was the state of security in the north of the country.²⁶

In September 2003 the cabinet decided to push for an amendment to the constitution. The government made a submission to this effect to the Constitutional Review Commission. Considerable political pressure was the exerted on the commission to produce a report that endorsed the cabinet's position, and also endorsed a constitutional change which allowed for a referendum on the issue to precede a parliamentary vote.

The main political opposition to the third term came from NRM dissidents and opposition parliamentarians in the legislature. The Reform Agenda (RA) was a group that was made up of supporters of the first prominent NRM member to break ranks with Museveni, Kizza Besigye. Besigye left the movement and challenged Museveni in the presidential election of 2001, going on to lose after a fractious campaign in which he and his supporters were severely harassed. After the election he fled to exile in South Africa. Opposition members of parliament (drawn in the main from the Democratic Party and the Uganda People's Congress) formed the Parliamentary Advocacy Forum (PAFO) in 2003 to fight the third term bid. The RA and PAFO merged in August 2004 to form the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC). This group led political efforts to counter what it members saw as Museveni's anti-democratic tendencies. The FDC was registered as a political party in December 2004, after a legal battle to combat objections raised by front parties for the NRM.

²⁶ <http://allafrica.com/stories/200306060682.html>. Accessed 6-2-2011.

The harassment of opponents of the third term bill continued. Museveni henchman Kakoza Muthale was suspected of orchestrating a campaign of violence by youth militias to intimidate opponents of the bid,²⁷ while opposition members of parliament Reagan Okumu and Michael Ocula, public opponents of the campaign, were arrested and charged with murder in 2005.

The Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2005 was presented to parliament by the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs in February 2005. It proposed the repeal of presidential term limits and a referendum on the “no politics” system of government; the first to be decided by parliamentary vote and the second by national referendum.²⁸

The NRM ensured success in passing the legislation by gaining control of the critical committees that reviewed it - in particular the Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee - and offering monetary incentives to its own parliamentarians to vote in favour of the bill. In addition NRM legislators managed to push through a change to the rules so that voting on the Constitutional Amendment Bill would be an open and not secret vote, making it extremely unlikely that MPS who had promised to vote for the amendment in public to follow their conscience in a secret ballot.

The LPAC voted in favour of changing term limits in April 2005, and in July 2005 parliament voted in favour of the Constitutional Amendment Bill. Museveni signed the bill into law in September 2005.²⁹

²⁷ http://www.newsfromafrica.org/newsfromafrica/articles/art_10257.html. Accessed 6-2-2011.

²⁸ [http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=14321&no_cache=1](http://www.namibian.com.na/index.php?id=28&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=14321&no_cache=1). Accessed 6-2-2011.

²⁹ <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Museveni-to-stand-for-3rd-term-20050929>. Accessed 6-2-2011.

Nigeria

Olesegun Obasanjo was Nigeria's first democratically elected president after a long period of military rule, and an aborted democratic election in 1993. In July 2005 the National Political Conference met to recommend changes to the constitution merited by the new democratic dispensation. The conference voted to retain two terms of office for the president. However, this decision was overlooked by a Sub-committee in the Nigerian Senate that decided in November 2005 that the constitution should be changed to allow the state president and 26 state governors to stand for third terms.

The Obasanjo third term campaign proceeded by stealth. His public statements on the matter and those delivered by his proxies did not say that he would not stand for a third term, but rather that he would respect the constitution of the country.

Just as in the other countries with third term bids that we describe here, opposition within the ruling party came from party leaders with aspirations to the top job. Nigerian Vice President Atiku Abubakar was quoted as saying: "we have seen how tinkering with the constitution to allow for tenure elongation in some African countries led to sit-tight dictatorships."³⁰ In August 2005 Obasanjo accused Abubakar of disloyalty on television and Abubakar later publicly called for Obasanjo to resign over his third term bid.³¹

The Committee for the Defence of Human Rights and other civil society and human rights bodies voiced their opposition to the third term campaign; it pitted the Nigerian Labour Congress representing workers, against the Manufacturer's Association of Nigeria whose chairman supported the bid.³²

Critically, the third term bid threatened to upset the unwritten agreement between Nigeria's political elites of the unofficial rotation of executive power between the mainly Muslim north and predominantly Christian south of the country, and between the Yoruba,

³⁰ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4923006.stm>. Accessed 6-2-2011.

³¹ http://www.nairaland.net/mobile/thread.php?topic_id=73. Accessed 6-2-2011.

³² http://www.newsfromafrica.org/newsfromafrica/articles/art_10550.html. Accessed 2-2-11.

Hausa and Igbo ethnic groups, prompting fears of large-scale disruption in a country with a fractious history of federalism.³³ BBC correspondent Alex Last, writing on April 19, 2006 on the third term debate in Nigeria, said that “one issue above all else has gripped Nigerian political life. It dominates the front pages of newspapers each day, and has done so for months.”³⁴

The amendment required the approval of supermajorities in both houses of the national assembly and 24 out of 36 states to pass. Weeks of debate on the recommendations of the Senate subcommittee that suggested removing the presidential term limit ended on May 16, 2006 when the Senate voted against the bill by voice vote, televised live. Although discussion continued in the lower house of parliament, this vote formally brought to an end legislative activity on the bill.³⁵

Founding Fathers and Liberators

We started this chapter with the observation that third term bids succeeded in countries where government legitimacy was strong and failed in those where government legitimacy was weak. In countries where the legitimacy of the government is high citizens feel that they are getting more democracy that they want. Given these conditions, we would expect third term campaigns in these countries not to be controversial. Conversely, in countries where the legitimacy of the government is low, citizens feel that they are not getting the democracy they want, and that the government is responsible for this democratic deficit. We might expect therefore third term bids in these countries to be controversial and generate a lot of opposition.

The course of the third term debates we described starting with Namibia, then Zambia, Malawi, Uganda and finally Nigeria, confirms these expectations. The third term campaigns

³³ <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=58473>. Accessed 2-2-2011.

³⁴ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4923006.stm>. Accessed 6-2-2011.

³⁵ <http://www.mg.co.za/article/2006-05-16-nigerian-senate-rejects-third-term-for-obasanjo>. Accessed 6-2-2011.

in Malawi, Nigeria and Zambia were strongly opposed by large mass publics, led by civil society groupings in an echo of the pro-democracy movements of not so long before. The intense focus of political activity and interest on the outcome of the bids, reflected the high stakes that were at play.

The third term campaigns in Namibia and Uganda were almost staid by comparison. Recall that earlier we wondered why presidential popularity was able to trump such high levels of opposition to one man rule in Uganda. Museveni became very popular in Uganda because he was able to bring peace and stability to a country that had experienced military dictatorship and civil war for many years. This change was especially marked in the rural areas. At the same time, activities in civil society were also stifled, meaning that the Uganda did not have the kind of active civil society that existed in Malawi and Zambia. If we consider civil society to be a proxy for public opinion, in that civil society organizations voice the concerns of mass publics that are not ordinarily politically active, then in Uganda public opinion was actually not a factor in the political calculus of the resident as conceptualized in this thesis.

Perhaps the critical factor in the impact of mass publics in Namibia and Uganda was the stature of presidents Sam Nujoma and Yoweri Museveni, respectively. Both were held in high regard, indeed reverence in some parts of the population, for bringing peace and stability, and liberation, to their countries. Although in Uganda it was not a liberation *per se*, but given the horrors of dictatorship and civil war the country had endured at the hands of Idi Amin and Milton Obote, its citizens might be forgiven for thinking that it was.

CHAPTER SIX

Summary of Findings

We conclude this paper with a summary of the findings. We have shown that opposition to one-man rule, presidential approval and trust in the president aggregated at the country level have predictable effects on the outcomes of the third term bids that occurred in five African countries.

The public opinion hypotheses that we generated predicted the correct outcome of these third term bids in four cases: Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria and Zambia. We only failed to predict the outcome of the third term bid in Uganda.

While this paper has shown that public opinion is a good predictor of third term bid outcomes, the exceptionalism of the Uganda case reminds us of the importance of country contexts in determining the outcomes of third term bids.

Implications

Our analysis demonstrated that the reason that opposition to one-man rule, presidential popularity and trust in the president are such reliable predictors of the outcomes of third term bids is that they are substantively important markers of the demand for and supply of democracy at the country level.

With the crest of the third wave of democratic transitions having passed, the focus of democratic scholarship has shifted to democratic consolidation, or the cementing of democratic regimes. Diamond (2007) argues that the central question of the field of democratic consolidation is the empirical question posed by Przeworski *et al* (1996): “what makes democracies endure.” The literature suggests that democratic consolidation can take place through institutionalisation, modernisation or legitimation. Though it may seem to be

stating the obvious that this study assumes that public opinion is politically important, this is significant, as it reflects on democratic consolidation.

Does presidential respect for term limits in countries with high popular opposition to authoritarian rule provide evidence of the legitimization of the regime through popular consent, evidence that the consideration of public opinion is becoming routinised in the way that we associate with democratic regimes? Or, is it the institutionalisation of the disincentives represented by term limits that ensures they are respected by incumbent presidents? Using Bratton *et al's* (2005) demand and supply model of democratic consolidation, we find that countries in which third term bids were unsuccessful are demand-driven democratic regimes while countries in which third term bids were successful are supply driven.

This paper provides evidence to suggest that formal rules are being institutionalized and that democracy, represented by public opinion, the will of the people, is important. In only four out of sixteen cases, instances where an incumbent democratically elected president was in their second term and faced a constitutionally mandated term limit, was a third term bill to remove that limit introduced in parliament. The fact that these leaders followed constitutional procedures in seeking to stay on indicates, as Posner and Young (2007) argue, that formal rules have indeed taken root in Africa. Yet, in showing the importance of public opinion in determining the outcome of these bids this paper adds to the argument that Bratton (2007) makes for a continuing focus on the importance of informal rules in Africa's hybrid regimes.

Finally, we return to the normative sentiments that inspired this paper. The support for term limits in Africa's mass publics is high; we can only hope that leaders continue to respect the will of the people so that presidential dictatorship can finally be consigned to the dustbin of Africa's history.

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