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## **BOTSWANA: A ROLE MODEL FOR OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Many African countries have been heaping their economic and political woes on colonialism, several decades after independence. Instead of recognizing post-colonial leadership as the key determinant of a country's economic and political development, defeatist conclusions are being emphasized to exonerate the ineptitude of African leaders. A cursory look at many of the current and post independence African governments offers us a good knowledge of predatory, instead of proprietary states. Botswana is an exception. She enjoys a leadership that has economic interests quite consistent with the citizen's wishes which realizes that policy choice at a critical point in time represents the key factor that determines the wealth and poverty of any nation. In a continent where the outcry from the developed economies is "economic prudence and good governance", Transparency International has ranked Botswana as having the lowest perceived corruption index in Africa. She is also ranked second best among all developing nations and less corrupt than a number of privileged countries, including Japan, Spain, Belgium, Greece and Italy. At the wake of her independence, Botswana adopted four national principles: Democracy, Development, Unity and Self-reliance which she pursued through well thought-out-policies and in accordance with the consent of the governed. Choice, and not historical determinism, is responsible for Botswana's development as well as Sub-Saharan Africa's stagnation in general. On this premise, this paper will address the evolution, challenges and enduring lessons of Botswana including those ideals of sustainable development that could serve as a useful guide for other African Nations.

**Key words:** Botswana, Policy, Economic Development, Political Maturity, Good Governance

### **INTRODUCTION**

Botswana has come to be known as the "African Exception". Its record of economic growth and political democracy stands in stark contrast to virtually all other parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. Botswana's success is closely related to how its founders built the new nation on the parts of traditional culture which were compatible with or essential to democratic development. (Fawcus 2000).

The success story of Botswana could also be linked to the belief of some economists that prevalence of private property, observance of the rule of law as well as the flourishing free markets are inevitable for economic development. However, despite the above assumptions, it is still contentious to pinpoint what other determinants throw light on why some nations are rich, while others who share the same features are poor. From the

point of view of Sachs (2001), and Sachs and Warner (1995, 1997), climate, geography, proximity to the coast, and distance from the equator are very vital determinants of economic growth. The views of the above scholars are complemented by Diamond (1997), who says that harnessing the above determinants positively will gravitate such a political community towards economic development.

However, the above authorities have been challenged by North (1981), and North and Thomas (1973), as well as Rosenberg and Birdzell (1986), who argue that what led to the West becoming rich had been a well managed particular set of institutions, such as polycentric governance, the rule of law, and a respect for private property. In a similar vein, Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson (2001), submit that irrespective of any set of institutions that may be on ground, geography and demography are strong supportive factors because they attest to the quality of the institutions. They advance some reasons to support their view. They noted that during colonialism, low-quality institutions were established in those regions with high-population density and low life expectancy. However, better institutions were established in regions with low population density and high life expectancy.

Invariably, most of the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa were left with mediocre institutions, while their large population equally faces low life expectancy. The colonial masters found solace in areas with large population where level of living standard could be exploited while the effect of mediocre institutions will equally enhance the elongation of the colonial period which serves the interest of the colonial administrators. It is therefore a myth how Bechua-

land, which metamorphosed into Botswana, was able to overcome the pains of Colonialism, while the other sister African countries have not been able to do so.

What then aided Botswana that she came, saw, conquered, and keeps the flag flying among the traumatized developing nations of the global community? It is within this context that Mankiw (1995:303-7), explains that there are so many ways to the top with an admonition that we could seek for appropriate ways within our environment and blending them with what could be accommodated elsewhere for our economic advancement, which will ultimately aid political development. He asserts that our traditional econometric tools cannot sort out the causes of economic growth because our models are constrained by multi-co linearity, simultaneity, and other problems. It is the combination of these that leads him to submit that rather than wait for outsiders to tell us the path to economic or political leeway for our community, we should guard our loins and take the bull by the horns. He submits: "It is not that we have to stop asking so many questions about economic growth, we just have to stop expecting the international data to give us all the answers". (Mankiw, 1995:303-7) Botswana, indeed, gives Africans a lot-to emulate about developing a country and an economy.

## **THEORETICAL ORIENTATION**

Several scholars have given various interpretations to the concept of theory. The application of the concept by social scientists contributes to its misperception. "What is central, however, is that a theory should always have scientific propositions which, when tested, are certified to be valid while its predictive value should be rated high". (Akinboye & Otto 2005:51).

For the purpose of this paper, the concept of theory, as submitted by Hoffman (1969:30) is considered pertinent. In his words, theory is understood as "a systematic study of observable phenomena that tries to discover the principal variables, to explain the behaviour, and to reveal the characteristic types of relations among national unit". On this premise, therefore, the theory of nation-building and state-building as offered by Kotharn (1976), is employed primarily to situate the development strides in Botswana. Kotharn observes that the concept of state-building and nation-building represents the political aspect of a country's development, while modernization is concerned with its economic, technological and administrative aspects. These twin concepts of nation-building are indeed analogous to the concept of political development, considered important for the developing societies in Asia, Latin America, and Africa, with Botswana, as the focus.

In view of Botswana's geographical location, which makes her a landlocked country, she addresses the problem of multi-ethnic diversities through non-adversarial integration. Botswana also inculcates cultural homogeneity as an antidote for nation building. Essentially, "nation-building stands for the process by which people transfer their commitment and loyalty from smaller tribes, villages, or petty principalities to the larger central political system. It involves developing a sense of communality among the people within the jurisdiction of a political system and provides for a sense of identification, a common object of their allegiance, an emotional bond and social solidarity". (Gaub, 2007:495). The invocation of this theory by the Botswana state actors has enabled her to integrate the diverse sectors and strata of society and is producing

the anticipated consensus and co-operation necessary for internal cohesion and political effectiveness. The effect of the above could be gleaned from the political stability and economic vibrancy that Botswana has been enjoying since her independence in 1966.

## **THE EVOLUTION OF BOTSWANA AS A NATION**

As with most with branches of learning, history is concerned with the explanation of how and why certain events and situations have come about, (Smith, 1982). He further explains that besides these duties, lies the possibility of extracting from the past, lessons for the present and future. It therefore signals a means of helping humanity in the understanding and handling of its problems. A brief historical perspective of Botswana will be aptly situated within this context.

Botswana is a landlocked nation, with a population of about 1.6 Million People. The country is bounded on the North-East by Zimbabwe, on the East and South by South Africa, while it is bounded on the North and West by Namibia. Further, Botswana touches Zambia at one spot on the River Zambezi. As a result of the expansive areas of land covered by the Kalahari Desert, which renders most of the land in Botswana barren, eighty percent of the population lives along the Eastern border of the state which is fertile. (Parson, 1984:4).

The earliest known inhabitants of the region, were the San, otherwise known as the Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert followed by the Tswana who later became dominant. Tswana polities under Tswana chiefs moved into Botswana from the South and East in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries for various reasons. The move was not unconnected with the rise and encroachment of the Zulus and by the Boers from Transvaal

which threatened the peace in the region. Missionary incursion into the Tswana region began in 1816 and throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Tswana polities were inculcated into trade, Christianity and the migrant labour economy anchored in South Africa, while also defending themselves against incursions from the north east and the south. In 1885, the British declared the area as "the Bechuanaland Protectorate" in order to forestall any expansion by the Germans in Southern Africa and Paul Kruger's Transvaal Republic. Further, in 1895, in a famous visit to Britain by three chiefs (Khama III, Bathoen I, and Sebele I), they appealed to Queen Victoria's government for further assistance to avert Bechuanaland's subjugation by South Africa. The presence of other peripheral usurpers was not unnoticed. Examples were the Boers and Cecil Rhodes British South Africa Company, for which the assistance of London Missionary Society was solicited. The threat of subjugation was almost actualized with the provision inserted in the Union Agreements that ended the Aglo-Boer War which made many people assume that Bechuanaland will be ultimately absorbed into South Africa. What appeared as a saving grace was the spirited efforts by Botswana Chiefs, aided by allies in Britain, who waged a long and successful campaign against the incorporation of Bechuanaland into South Africa. What served as the catalyst against the subjugation were the dastardly policies of South Africa's National Party government, resulting in Sharpeville massacre of 1960 and South Africa's withdrawal from the commonwealth. Those immediate actions culminated in the British government's decision to refuse the handover of Bechuanaland to South Africa, despite the latter's repeated demands.

The spirit of nationalism manifested all over

Africa in the early 1960s. In Bechuanaland, the protectorate looked forward to independence. This led to the formation of political parties. In 1961, Britain granted a constitution to the country. The move to independence, though, not without apprehension due to Bechuanaland's land-locked posture, was relatively peaceful. In 1966, independence was granted to the newly named Republic of Botswana.

Owing to the absence of undue attachment to tribal sentiments, indigenous conditions in Botswana contributed largely to the prevalence of cultural homogeneity. According to Acemoglu, et al, (2001) tribal chiefs were highly respected. They determined whether land should be allocated for hunting, farming, or residences. They equally resolved conflicts within the tribe and between tribes. Nevertheless, despite the enormous political power wielded by the chiefs, they were regarded as peoples peers. According to Ayittey (1992:325) one crucial institution in guaranteeing equality between the chief and his constituents was the custom of tribal gatherings called the Kgotla. It is the main forum for political discussions and the forum helped the chiefs to be closer to their people. It enabled all adult males to review issues and advise the chiefs accordingly. It is in such a cordial environment, where interactions are mutual that knowledge about economic and political issues are shared for the benefit of all. Such political connection created a political connection between the chief and his people, while at the same time, the people too also had important economic connection with their chiefs. Most of the Botswana Chiefs were large cattle owners who had the intention of increasing the value of their herds, through sound economic decisions that are also beneficial to the entire tribe.

The chiefs were, however, confronted with some challenges. The invasion of the Zulus from 1818 to 1830 created a lot of distractions in Bechuanaland and although, the Zulus objectives were defeated, it left sour memories by creating artificial borders among the tribes in Bechuanaland. However, Acemoglu *et al* 2003, submits that many of the vague borders separating the tribes around Bechuanaland were clearly remapped, which formed the basis on which Botswana's modern borders were structured. p.6. Another test of will for the chiefs in Botswana was the invasion by the Boers who challenged the Southern and Western Tswana tribes. The Boers were eventually defeated at the battle of Dimawe in 1852. These persistent invasions by the belligerent neighbours of the Tswana tribes compelled the Tswana Chief, Sechele, to beckon to the British for the protection. The British rejected the invitation on the ground that it would appear taking sides. The British rather opted for diplomacy in handling the Boers/Tswana Tribes issues. Besides, the British public opinion was in favour of outright colonization of Bechuanaland instead of granting it a protectorate status.

However, what served as a catalyst in favour of Chief Sechele's demand for protection for his people arose in 1884 when Germany annexed South West Africa, the present day Namibia. The proximity of Bechuanaland to South West Africa became a source of serious concern to the British. This situation turned Bechuanaland into a region of strategic importance to Britain (Acemoglu, 2003:94). As Cecil Rhodes put it: "Bechuanaland was the Suez Canal into Africa's interior" (Gann and Dulgan 1967:203).

In order to pre-empt the colonization of Bechuanaland, Great Britain agreed to pro-

vide offer of protection to Bechuanaland against the Boers and Germans. In 1885, Chief Sechele, on behalf of the people of Bechuanaland, accepted Great Britain's offer and the Bechuanaland protectorate was proclaimed. It covered most of the present day Botswana. The terms of protection prohibited any foreign invasion of the territory. They did not show any vested interest in the territory because they perceived Bechuanaland lacked valuable natural resources. Furthermore, colonial excesses in India, South Africa, and Rhodesia stretched the British Empire's colonial budget. Discouraged by dearth of financial resources to take on another large colonial project, the British did not see much attraction in Bechuanaland to warrant its colonization, and so left her as she was. This episode compels some scholars to submit that the British were not actively involved in Bechuanaland. Some historians also maintain that the British operated a policy of benign neglect there. (Dale,1995). Although, the British did not take much resources from Bechuanaland and did not leave much in the way of social and physical development, they empowered the people of Botswana to protect themselves against the Germans and the Boers. The British attempt, after the second world war to combine the Bechuanaland Protectorate with their South African colony was stoutly resisted by the Tswana tribes of Bechuanaland. Parson (1984:22)

What was intriguing about the people of Bechuanaland which aided their resolve to resist merger with South Africa could be found in two issues. First, there was a burning spirit of nationalism which blew across Africa after the Second World War. From this background, a political party, the National Party, which was focused towards an independent Bechuanaland, was formed in 1948. Further,

the uniqueness of 1948 to Bechuanaland Protectorate could be found in the intensity of the apartheid policy by South Africa in the Southern African sub-region. South Africa's apartheid regime also put pressure on the British Government never to allow Seretse Khama taste power in Bechuanaland on account of his anti-apartheid nature. However, the action taken against Seretse Khama by the British Government did not go down well with the people of Bechuanaland as most people in the protectorate gave their full support to the activities of Seretse Khama. This particular issue further exacerbated the relationship between Bechuanaland and South Africa.

As a house divided against itself cannot stand, an internal cohesion with the political actors in Bechuanaland was struck through which Khama rescinded his claim to chieftaincy, paving the way to his eventual return to Bechuanaland in 1956. By 1960, another political party focused against apartheid and colonialism was formed under the name Botswana Peoples Party (BPP). Khama rose up to fill what he saw as political gap in the protectorate by forming with like minded political actors, a new political party known as Botswana Democratic Party, (BDP). The BDP was a grassroot party that appealed to the rural communities and the tribal chiefs, unlike the BPP which was an urban based party. The formation of political parties enhanced nationalism. This development sent signals to the British Government that they were losing grip of the protectorate of Bechuanaland. Dramatically in 1965, Britain officially recognized Botswana's Independence. After a general election in which all the political parties in Botswana participated, the Botswana Democratic Party, led by Khama won resoundingly and Seretse Khama became Botswana's first President.

Since then, his party has been in control of both the Presidency and the country's National Assembly. Mention should also be made of the existence of a co-existing party, the Botswana National Front (BNF) which is explicitly a socialist party, and equally making waves in the political activities of Botswana. Botswana has a parliament comprising the House of Assembly and a House of Chiefs. The House of Chiefs is purely advisory. The Parliament has the power to "make laws for the peace, order and good government of Botswana". Parson (1984:39). Additionally, Botswana inherited a British common-law legal framework. Be that as it may, Botswana's post-colonial legal frame work combines some of the important features of tribal laws with some important aspects of the British common law.

## **COLONIAL AUTHORITIES AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

It is on record that the British colonial authorities provided honest administration but very little development of physical or human resources. An observer once stated that the British left Botswana with nothing but on a quick reflection retorted back that although the British might have not left Botswana with any appreciable infrastructural development, they did not give room to the culture of an imported population intimidating or taking over from the indigenous inhabitants. The often experienced acrimony in various transiting colonies of colonial Africa, breeding a bureaucracy of privileged civil servants, was absent in Botswana. Above all, Botswana did not experience the rapacious rule of the Belgian Congo or other exploited colonies in Africa. (Thomas & Camdae II 1997). The British may have left nothing in Botswana, but the conspicuous absence of the aforementioned scourges of a human

race in Botswana is indeed a blessing. However, the successive resident commissioners and those who reported to them occasionally had stormy relationships with some chiefs, notably Tshekedi Khama, a nephew of Khama III, who was particularly independent and assertive. These disputes often arose when commissioners tried to exercise greater control over areas designated as the chiefs prerogative. That prompted the British to establish a Native (Later African) Advisory Council in 1919, followed by a European Advisory Council in 1920, although, only few whites were living in Bechuanaland at the time. In 1951, a Joint Advisory Council (JAC) was established comprising eight members from each of the aforementioned advisory councils, complemented by four government members. This Joint Advisory Council was, in 1956, mandated to begin debating and commenting on a proposed legislation for the protectorate, even though, laws for the protectorate were still being promulgated by the Colonial Government in London. A major conflict erupted in 1948, and its eventual resolution heavily influenced Botswana's political history. Seretse Khama, a grandson of Khama, the Great, and heir apparent to the chieftaincy of Bangwato, was expected to abhor marriage with any white lady on account of the tribe's experience with South African apartheid administration, but fate decided otherwise.

In 1948, while Seretse was studying law in London, he fell in love with an English woman, Ruth Williams, whom he married. Ironically, the South African elections had just been won by the racist National Party, which made strong representations to the British Government about this mixed marriage. A big controversy, reported in the world press heralded Seretse's marriage.

Within Bechuanaland, there was equally a disapproval initiated by Tshekedi who was outraged, since Seretse had married without his permission, outside the tribe, and to a white woman. At a confrontation in the Kgotla, the traditional gathering place in the village which served as a judicial chamber, in Serowe, Seretse defended his marriage and was sided by an overwhelming majority. Tshekedi and Seretse still became estranged, leading to the latter being banned from the protectorate by the British (Outfield, 1980). However, in 1956, Seretse and Tshekedi reached an accord. Both agreed to renounce claims to the chieftaincy, resulting in Seretse and his family being permitted to return. Subsequent reforms to give room for elected tribal councils to advise chiefs was climaxed in 1959, which allowed Tshekedi to serve as the first secretary to the Ngwato Tribal Council, while Seretse followed after the former's tenure.

One salutary aspect of colonial rule in its final decade was the role of Peter Fawcus who became Resident Commissioner in 1959. Together with his legal adviser, Alan Tilbury, they parleyed with Khama and Masire on the necessary legal and constitutional changes in Bechuanaland from 1961 to 1965. These well-meaning colonial officers, together with Fawcus felt comfortable with the democratic, and non-racial dispositions of the leadership of the popular BDP, which influenced Fawcus' report about happenings within Bechuanaland protectorate to the British. (<http://www.amazon.com/Botswana-road-independence-Peter-Fawcusdp/9991261680>) - Retrieved on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014. This report motivated the increase of annual expenditure in the protectorate by twenty-fold between 1954 and 1965. A new constitutional arrangement which led to the establishment of an African Council, a European council and

a Legislative council went into effect in 1961 following an approval from London. The Legislature was composed as follows; Ten Africans (Eight selected by Africa council and two appointed), Ten Europeans (Eight selected and two appointed, One Asian, and Ten Government Officials). The Legislative Council was presided over by the Resident commissioner and it signaled the first body in Bechuanaland constitutionally empowered to pass legislation with procedures predicated on the West Minister style. Synonymous with countries in Southern Africa on account of their proximity with South Africa where apartheid policy loomed large, racial discrimination became a contentions issue in Bechuanaland protectorate. To counter the menace, a legislative committee on Race Relations was set up. It held public hearings in the nooks and crannies of the protectorate, during which concerned black majority, including members of the Botswana Peoples Party pressed for deterrent legislation in order to let those who indulge in racism realize the enormity of the scourge. In addition to the legislative Council which had been established to lay down regulative policies, another forum, called Executive Council, was inaugurated, comprising two Africans and two Europeans which was the offshoot of ministerial appointments as those four acted as political Ministers. The overall ground work for constitutional framework helped in harmonizing the civil servants with the nitty-gritty of political activities while enhancing the African Council in comprehensively undertaking major forms of institutions of local government. It was this review that eventually substituted the autocratic rule of local chiefs with democratic process.

A constitutional conference was inaugurated in 1963 by Peter Fawcus in which he

invited the three political parties in the protectorate BPP, BDP, and BNF. The chiefs, and the Europeans were to select three representatives each to represent their interest. It was from this constitutional conference that the draft constitution for self-rule in Bechuanaland emerged. Foreign Affairs and Finance were to be handled by the Colonial Masters in London. The constitutional conference forwarded their recommendation to the Legislative Council which equally adopted the draft and forwarded it to the British Authorities for assent. (Morton and Ramsey, 1987).

### **CHALLENGES POSED BY PARTY POLITICS IN THE EMBRYONIC NATION - THE BUILDING OF BOTSWANA**

If the act of politics is perceived as concealing facts, the science of it is nonetheless assumed to be laying those identifiable facts bare before the people. Party politics has wrecked havoc to many developing nations of Africa because many of the political actors who assumed leadership after the departure of the imperial powers have not imbibed the spirit of service into both their actions and the political parties which they used in claiming political power. The political parties formed in Botswana were geared towards identifying those challenges that serve as cog in the wheel of both the political and economic development of Botswana, while equally not unmindful of the role of culture as an agent of growth if positively harnessed. An African adage says that man grows as factory grows, but it is man that should first grow, after which the factory will be attended to. This adage captures the challenges posed by party politics in the embryonic nation building of Botswana in the 1960s.

There were, at the wake of independence,

many focused political actors who had the vision of being among those to wrestle power through the instrumentality of political parties in the protectorate of Bechuanaland, which metamorphosed into Botswana towards independence. The leading political figure in the protectorate was Seretse Khama who combined royalty with charisma, and an in depth foresight of the impending challenges facing the protectorate. He was a member of the Legislative Council and sensing an obvious deficiency in addressing the political challenges of the protectorate by the only political party in vogue then, the Botswana Peoples' Party, he convinced the African members of the Legislative Council in 1961 to form a new party to refocus the path of addressing those challenges.

Towards creating a solid base for political participation in Botswana, a committee was set up for the purpose of drafting a new party constitution. After the exercise, a new party named Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), was launched in 1962, with Seretse Khama as the Party President while another equally versatile political giant, Quett Masire emerged as the Secretary General. The party enticed membership from the nooks and crannies of the protectorate as the party membership cut across the geo-political zones of Botswana. Further, it was a party predicated on the ideal of a national, non-tribal and non-racial platform.

They fraternized with many shades of opinion through traveling round the country, engaging in conversation with teachers, civil servants, farmers and those local chieftains, recognized as meeting those criteria for identifying social problems. Through this method, they were able to recruit membership for the party while equally asking them

to air their views on ways of moving Botswana forward in view of the enormous challenges the country will face at independence. Ideas were garnered and discussions on popular aspirations for an independent Botswana dominated the country wide tour. For the purpose of propagating the party objectives, and to even reach wider audience, a publishing company was established by the new party named Therisanyo, with the Secretary General of the party, Quett Masire as the Editor.

The political organization known as Botswana Democratic Party got itself entrenched in all the constituencies of Botswana, to the extent that when elections to usher in independence were held in 1965, the party won 81 percent of total number of votes, with twenty eight out of the thirty one seats in the nation's parliament.

Political Education played a significant role in the activities of the leadership of the party as they have studied and experienced racism in apartheid South Africa. They were focused, and looked cautiously before leaping. They studied the mood of the citizenry of Botswana and methodically, coupled with enthusiastic patriotism, stooped to conquer. (Botswana Democratic Party 2002). At a time, both Khama and Masiru journeyed abroad to understudy electoral politics and policy making in other countries. They equally studied, by even incorporating party leadership, a holistic review of other countries' constitution as well, with a view to striking a balance between theirs and those advanced democracies. The party equally attracted specialists from other countries for the purpose of organizing seminars for those on whose shoulders the day to-day administration of Botswana will rest upon. These included members of the cabinet, the whole

members of the parliament, as well as civil servants to enable them realize the implication of whatever decision they would be taking to meet public expectations on Botswana's future. The Botswana Peoples Party also gave room to criticism of any sort by encouraging their citizens abroad to bring back whatever observation about what appeared to them as successes or failures in their countries of sojourn for comparative analysis. Equally given priority was the practice of sending other politicians and civil servants to other countries to understudy the rudiments of governance in order to be adequately equipped for the challenges of nation building. These solid foundations were instrumental to the progress recorded in Botswana because they have benefited from the mistakes and experiences of others.

### **ENDURING LESSONS FROM BOTSWANA TO THE DEVELOPING ECONOMIES OF AFRICA**

It is a popular saying that those who fail to plan, plan to fail. It is also a popular aphorism in African communities that a house built on a solid foundation will endure the vicissitudes of the environment while those built on mere sand can be pulled down by an intangible trade wind. This emphasizes the significance of an adequate process of policy making as a prelude to any perceived success in any venture. Human beings are central to any government policy, if policies are not to be mere abstract intentions. Botswana emphasized the principles of consulting with and educating the electorates as a cardinal point of policy-making process. Democratic tenets are firmly rooted and it is neither an issue of a particular set of political gladiators in government nor being in power, as synonymous with leadership pro-

pensities of many African Countries. This practice was adopted to enable the party in government realize that selecting any policy option required choices and process for making such decision. Cost/benefit analysis is usually carried out and this must be subsumed within an understanding that the pros and cons of the risks involved must be given adequate calculation. It is in line with the aforesaid that the Executive Council in the protectorate worked collaboratively with the Legislative Council from 1961 to 1964 when the practice of involving experts in the civil service in direct discussion with cabinet ministers and other politicians was developed. Through such collaboration, politicians were able to understand the technical areas of cogs on their preferences, while the concerns of the political leaders were equally exposed to the technical experts as well. (Lewis 1997).

A good case study was when Botswana decided to establish her currency, the Pula, in 1975, to pave way for parting of ways with South Africa's currency, the Rand. Botswana engaged in wide spread publicity about the new currency, taking into cognizance its effects on economic and social activities of Botswana indigenes as well as the country's international relations in the global community. Issues like establishment of a Central Bank, regulation of the activities of Commercial Banks within Botswana were carried along in such currency introduction. Equally given priority to before a decision was made were interest rate policies, as well as anticipated value of Botswana currency in the international market. In order to ensure smooth transition from South African Rand to the new Botswana currency, a macro economic planning unit was established in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning to co-ordinate the take-off of the project.

Seminars were organized for the economic committee of the cabinet and senior civil servants, as well as party caucuses on the articulation and initiation of national development policies. Attention was placed on balance of payment and reasons behind the rise and fall of exchange reserves globally, which equally must have its impact on Botswana's currency, the Pular. As Earlier mentioned, the pride of liberty is eternal vigilance. The effect of desert encroachment which Kalahari Desert could on leash on the country compelled Botswana to plan in advance for ways of combating it. With cattle-rearing as a foreign exchange earner in the country, drought could be disastrous. The Botswana Government is mindful of this and has put in place drought management schemes and veterinary personnel for any eventuality. Being a landlocked country, it realized there might be a possibility of disruption of energy supplies by South African Government, due to an incompatibility of ideology. The Government of Botswana mobilized in advance pertinent foreign and local experts to holistically study the situation for either avoiding or mitigating the menace. The report of these experts were carefully studied, after which plans were made and the citizen educated, before the government executed the report according to the experts' advice (Harvey, 1981). It is a common aspect of dependency theory that developed economies often dictate terms or priorities to their host communities. Despite the fact that Botswana enjoys the highest flow of foreign aid per capita above any country in Africa, Botswana never shirked its sovereign powers in positively managing its relationship with donor agencies in ensuring that the donors priorities conform with those of Botswana government. Botswana has a tradition of incorporating suitable foreigners to tackle grey areas

but never to compromise the internal security of the country. The compromise sealed between traditional leaders and political actors which were concretized by Khama III and Ishakedi were incorporated into democratic governance. Above all, pretence which leads to an entrenched mediocrity in governance, is an aberration in Botswana. The leaders there did not mind accepting they were not sufficiency equipped in any skill or knowledge as doing so will amount to being happy or joyful when there is no need for such. Rather, they were willing to make a decision when needed, but not before a full briefing and positive response of the citizens. This is a good lesson for various African governments.

#### **IDEAL OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FROM BOTSWANA**

Politics, devoid of acrimonious partisanship is the hallmark in Botswana. A massive transformation of political system and the development of an effective process for making economic policies without procrastination were nurtured and nourished by the political leadership. The foundation for a record of economic and political success, unmatched in Africa or in most of the developing nations was predicated on the afore-stated political dexterity. The leadership in Botswana fully inculcated the culture and tradition of the people of Botswana by making only those changes required for the achievement of the peoples' larger objectives such as creating a unified, self-reliant, and a democratic country in which people could realize their best economic potentials. Good lessons from else where are borrowed and imparted, while failings in other countries are also painstakingly studied with a view to avoiding similar problems. A significant example is the non-emulation of Botswana's three past presidents – Khama, Masire, or

Mogae, who often consulted widely to avoid the divisions on tribal and ethnic lines that had plagued other African nations. On the contrary, many other African Heads of state, constitute a kitchen cabinet in order to maintain power, or employing their power to render innocuous rivals through manipulative tendencies. The attendant risks involved in being transparent in governance notwithstanding, various Heads of State in Botswana embraced the risks deliberately. Virtually the major policies were patterned along the tradition of laying facts bare, embedded in deep consultations for sustainable development. This does not imply an absence of friction in the polity but where it occurs, it is on issues considered detrimental to the essential needs of the long-term objectives of the people of Botswana. (Hom and Molutsi, 1989).

The political actors, particularly those that have been in government over the past decades, the BDP, often remark that while they hoped not to lose any election, they wished to establish a tradition of treating opposition parties and leaders as partners in progress because they are the alternative government, should political fortune change someday. They are mindful of the expectations of their society which are good governance and the interests of their people. They never lose cognizance of the regular referendums on their performance by the electorate, which keeps the political actors on their toes. (Sillery, 1977). While sensitivity to the existing culture is critical for making changes in Botswana, the need to attend to how the culture is evolving is not sacrificed. Above all, Botswana encourages democratic tenets, such as free speech, fairness and tolerance.

## CONCLUSION

Botswana's current political stride depends on the people in power, rather than complacency with the past. The country places greater emphasis on policy rather than early colonial institutions. Khama's market – friendly policies led to high growth, and high growth produced better policies that led to more growth. It was Khama's policies that were the exogenous shock that helped Botswana get on a sustainable high growth. (Acemoglu *et al*, 2001:112).

When Khama faced the challenge of establishing a post-colonial transitional development plan, he set out to establish Botswana's government as a "Financially viable entity" (Republic of Botswana 1966). Diamond mines were opened to foreign investors (Hartland-Thunberg 1978) and strong international ties were established. Botswana's good policy choice at the time of independence was an eye opener to genuine commitment to the country's long-term development.

Ayittey (1992:10) suggests that atrocious post-colonial African leadership was responsible for the African tragedy. Invariably, empirical indices of underdevelopment in many African Nations attest to the notion that post colonial leadership must be recognized as the key determinants of a country's economic development. Diamond, which is the main Botswana's foreign exchange earner, is prudently managed while the country is not in the web of foreign financial institutions. Every African nation could have turned out like Botswana but African leaders often choose reform paths that are not conducive to long term economic growth. Indeed, the fundamental point is that leadership, referring to policy choice at a critical point in time, is always the key factor which deter-

mines the wealth and poverty of nations. Africa nations have a lot to learn from those policy decisions of Seretse Khama. (Harvey, C. 1981, Lewis, S.R. 1997).

The leadership that took Botswana into independence knew South Africa and the problems of a society organized on the basis of race, which provided the political actors in Botswana the clear vision of racial and tribal issues. We must, however appreciate the fact that Botswana's experience was different from that of several African countries. This made the creation of a functional nation-state difficult, unlike that of Botswana. However, policy choice-not historical determinism-is the real story of Botswana's development in particular and Sub-Saharan Africa's stagnation in general (AJR2003, p.112). Although the country is facing some challenges, particularly, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, steps taken to curb the menace, coupled with the usual deep policy measures, will result in its eventual maximum control. Further, the prevalence of lively and active democratic politics in Botswana is a good signal for a better future. Finally, Botswana's consistent ability to sustain some important elements of traditional culture, hinged on consultation and respect for the rule of law, makes one optimistic about her future.

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