

## **Political Functionalism as a prerequisite for Political Development: Evidence from Uganda's General Elections 2011**

David R Olanya<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Gulu University, Public Administration and Management, Gulu, Uganda

davidolanya@yahoo.co.uk

There have been a series of multiparty elections in many Africa countries ranging from less competitive to competitive ones. In some countries weak oppositions artificially exist making the political competitions to be dominated by the incumbents. Elections have been the key element in process democracy in most African countries. Voting in elections to produce governments and officials to run public offices has been the practice in most African countries. It is the government that is produced to provide public values to its citizens because of the legitimate power that has been given to them. However, the process of running 'free and fair' elections has been non transparent in most countries. Oppositions have been crying fawn regardless of whether they have been defeated legitimately and cheated in the elections.

This study focuses on political functionalism as prerequisite for political development in Uganda. The ability of political parties to compete depends on their internal party capabilities including leadership, structures, recruitment and conflict management among a few. However, this is not the case for most political parties under political pluralism. They are weak, without political and administration structures to run the countrywide programs during and after elections, internal power struggles and ethnicity put these political parties at a poor advantage. Moreover, some political parties only surface on the scene during elections and are mostly constrained economically making them unable to compete with the incumbent.

With the introduction primary elections in Uganda, in which each candidate competes for a position within the party, almost all political parties including incumbent regime have not been developed politically. The ruling regime primaries have been marred with vote rigging and violence. Those who felt cheated have opted to run as independent candidates. These events have made citizens doubt the credibility of organizing elections moreover happening in within the incumbent's camp. The main issue is how these parties will handle internal democracy. This is gist of the investigation. This study therefore employs a case study methodology in analyzing the elections under multiparty system in Uganda.

**Keywords:** Political Pluralism, capabilities, internal democracy, and elections