

How Durable are Hybrid Regimes? The Case of Zimbabwe as a Hybrid Regime

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Abstract

In general, the durability of the hybrid regime is debated due to the coexistence of democratic and authoritarian regime institutions in the system, functioning in disconnect with each other. There is also the inevitable expectation of a hybrid regime to change. This study argues that a hybrid regime can have lasting durability, using the case of Zimbabwe between 1990 and 2018. A hybrid regime conceptual framework is developed by identifying four indicators of hybridity: elections, civil liberties, tutelary interference, and political elite cohesion. The framework is then applied to Zimbabwe. The country shows five diverse variations of hybridity, which are: liberal; competitive illiberal; competitive; illiberal; and military regimes, grouped by the most observable indicators identified in the hybrid regime framework. Thus, hybridity is found to be fluid and varies within the state over a period of 28 years. As is indicated, different timeframes identified in Zimbabwe experienced more, or less, characteristics of democratic rule or authoritarianism, but never a spill-over to new regime representation. Consequently, due to the adjustable and changeable nature of the hybrid regime, transformation into a different system becomes less predictable. The study further identifies five factors that enable the durability of the hybrid regime: lengthy incumbent government; high political elite cohesion; low leadership turnover; a strong statesman; and competitive opposition.

Keywords: hybrid regime; political elite cohesion; democracy; authoritarian regime; Zimbabwe; political regimes



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Introduction

The durability of the hybrid regime is debated in the literature. A hybrid regime is conceptualised as a political regime that embodies institutions of democracy and autocracy, and this regime has been present for over a decade (Akkoyunlu 2014, 34; Bogaards 2009, 415; Cassani 2012, 4; Diamond 2002, 23; Morlino 2009, 282; Vukovic 2011, 13). The hybrid regime became pronounced after the third wave of democratisation alluded to by Huntington (1991). After the third wave, the hybrid regime was initially perceived as a diminished democracy because it significantly differed from the Western liberal style of democracy. A diminished subtype lacks one or more of the defining attributes (Collier and Levitsky 1997, 448). Adjectives coined to illustrate the diminished nature of democracy are “delegative” (O’Donell 1994, 54); “illiberal democracy” (Zakaria 1997, 22); “defective democracy” (Merkel 2004, 54); “partial democracy” (Epstein et al. 2006, 564–65); pseudo-democracy” (Diamond 2002, 22); “limited” and “protected democracy” (Morlino 2009, 287–94).

The diminished regime hypothesis took an authoritarian regime approach after 2000. Terms offered for a diminished authoritarian regime include “competitive authoritarian” (Levitsky and Way 2002, 52); “electoral authoritarian” (Schedler 2002, 37); which was split into “hegemonic” and “competitive authoritarian” (Diamond 2002, 29). While the diminished democracy typologies focused on the missing elements of the regime, the diminished autocracy typologies emphasised the visible elements of the regime. Furthermore, terms, for example, “political grey area” (Carothers 2002, 9) and “foggy zone” (Schedler 2002, 37) reveal the complexity involved in attempting to understand the “new regime” that was neither liberal democratic nor outright autocratic by nature.

The democracy debate (with its accompanying adjectives) has not been conceptually beneficial—rather it has degenerated into definitional gerrymandering, which is proffering a new phase each time a new anomaly is observed (Collier and Levitsky 1997, 445). Furthermore, vast research has been undertaken regarding diminished subtypes of democracy and authoritarianism; however, this research has not built on existing knowledge (Cassani 2014, 554), but has hampered the nuanced understanding of the hybrid regime.

The coexisting of democracy and autocracy in one political regime is a paradox. These two aforesaid political regimes are antagonistic and have different sets of priorities, hence scholars deliberate on the durability of the hybrid regime. The hybrid regime is observed by scholars to show much resilience and ability to endure over an extended period, indicating its durability (Carothers 2002, 3; Morlino 2009, 282; Mufti 2018, 115). In contrast, some scholars disregard the durability of the hybrid regime. They attest that the hybrid regime is volatile and is more liable to break down due to the incompatible agendas of democracy and autocracy that cause tension within the regime (Epstein et al. 2006, 555; Levitsky and Way 2002, 58–59; Vukovic 2011, 12). If a hybrid regime collapses, it has a higher probability to democratise than for it to evolve into an authoritarian regime (Cassani 2014, 554; 2012, 19). The stability of the hybrid regime

differs with each state—it is not uniform and constant (Gilbert and Mohseni 2011, 234; Menocal, Fritz, and Rakner 2008, 31). Academic literature is inconclusive about the durability of the hybrid regime.

As scholars debate the durability of the hybrid regime, this study seeks to explore the nature and function of hybrid regimes as political contestations, using the case of Zimbabwe. It is argued that understanding the development and characteristics of the hybrid regime will provide more insight into the durability of the hybrid political regime. First, this study conceptualises the hybrid regime and develops a conceptual framework that is applied to the case of Zimbabwe from 1990 to 2018. Thereafter, the study presents its contribution of hybrid regime conceptualisation, moving on to a discussion of the durability of the Zimbabwean hybrid regime. Lastly, this study proposes factors that enable and facilitate the lasting durability of the hybrid regime.

Conceptualising the Hybrid Regime

The term hybrid regime was first coined by Terry Karl as a regime that has functional attributes of both democracy and authoritarianism (Karl 1995, 80). The hybrid regime is not a half-finished or half-hearted attempt at democratisation or authoritarianism, as alluded to by some scholars (O'Donnell 1994; Schedler 2002; Zakaria 1997). The hybrid regime is a separate and independent regime from democracy and authoritarianism. The argument that a hybrid is a distinct and separate regime has been validated by Adeney (2017), Ekman (2009), Gilbert and Mohseni (2011, 294) and Morlino (2009, 282). Thus, the hybrid regime should not be judged based on the quality, degree or extent of democratisation or authoritarianism that is resembled by the regime. This study conceptualises a hybrid regime to have the following attributes: periodic elections; a multi-party legislature inclusive of the opposition; the regime applies a few limits to the executive arm of the government; and violates citizens' political and civil rights.

Hybrid regimes have increased in number from the beginning of the twenty-first century and it is argued that this political regime type is the most common in the developing world (Brownlee 2009, 5). The Democracy Index 2018 noted that the hybrid regime constituted 24% of the number of countries surveyed (Economist Intelligence Unit 2019, 2). The sources of the hybrid regime have been highlighted as follows: i) The decay of a full-blown authoritarian giving way to democratic institutions, often due to domestic and international pressure; ii) The collapse of an authoritarian regime; iii) The decay of a democratic regime; iv) A post-colonial new government; and v) Unexplainable anomalies of countries that have been hybrid even before the third wave, for example, Turkey and Iran (Adeney 2017; Diamond 2002, 22).

This study ascribes to the multi-dimensional approach suggested by Wigell (2008) and Gilbert and Mohseni (2011) as opposed to the one-dimensional approach that fails to capture the multi-dimensions of the regime. Thus, the study combines Wigell (2008) and Gibert and Moheseni's (2011) hybrid indicators that are similar in classification,

and then develops a conceptual framework illustrated in table 1. The conceptual framework is applied to Zimbabwe.

Table 1: Conceptual framework for the hybrid regime

Traditional indicators Wigell (2008)	Traditional Indicators Gilbert and Mohseni (2011)	Synthesised from Wigell (2008) and Gilbert and Mohseni (2011). The hybrid indicators' name selected for this study
Elections	Competition	Elections
Constitutionalism	Civil liberties	Civil liberties
Election empowerment Election sovereignty	Tutelary interference	Tutelary interference
-	-	Political elite cohesion (additional indicator)

Source: Compiled by the authors

Wigell's framework to analyse hybrid regimes focuses on elections and constitutionalism as indicators. The minimum requirements for elections are being free, fair, regular, and competitive. The process of elections should guarantee electoral sovereignty, electoral empowerment, integrity, and irreversibility. The minimum requirements for constitutionalism are set as the respect of civil liberties and other additional conditions for executive, legal and local government accountability, and integrity.

To analyse the hybrid regime, Gilbert and Mohseni use the indicators of competition, civil liberties, and tutelary interference. Competition is measured using the indicators of multiple political parties, as well as regular and competitive elections. Civil liberties reflect the quality of competition within a regime. The extent to which civil liberties are respected shows the quality of competition. Tutelary interference measures the extent to which elected officials are subservient to tutelary institutions, for example, the military or religious bodies.

This study adds "political elite cohesion" as an indicator that explains the durability of the hybrid regime. Political elite cohesion analyses the unity among key decision-makers and is contextual—and it can only be analysed on a case by case basis. Political elites in a hybrid regime are the agents of more sustainable change than the bottom-up approach from the masses (Menocal et al. 2008, 35). Understanding the coalition of influential actors in a hybrid is important because they assist in maintaining the regime (Mufti 2018, 116). Studies on hybrid regimes suggest examining the recruitment and selection of political elites (Mufti 2018, 116). This study, however, chooses to focus on the unity of elected officials: the recruitment and selection process of decision-makers is solved by the level of competition in a hybrid regime. If there is stiff competition,

there may be a high turn-over of elected officials, while low competition entails a low turn-over of decision-makers.

Hybrid Regime Indicator: Elections

Elections in a hybrid regime are highly competitive; however, unfair competition is experienced (Gilbert and Mohseni 2011, 285). The incumbent party actively participates in elections and cannot reduce them to be a mere façade; nonetheless, major political change is never certain but remains a possibility (Diamond 2002, 22; Levitsky and Way 2002, 55). The incumbent party resorts to the use of bribery and co-option of the opposition party members. Furthermore, the incumbent could use subtler forms of persecution such as using tax authorities, compliant judiciaries, and state agencies to “legally” harass or extort cooperative behaviour from critics (Levitsky and Way 2002, 53). An election run-off is conducted if there is no majority winner (O’Donell 1994, 60). The incumbent party uses elections to generate results, gather information, co-opt a few opposition members into the legislature, thereby fragmenting and weakening its opposition (Cassani 2012, 12). Elections serve as a source to gain domestic and international legitimacy for the dominant party. In conclusion, elections in a hybrid are conceptualised as competitive.

Hybrid Regime Indicator: Civil Liberties

In a hybrid regime, there is unfair competition between different political parties and the incumbent compromises on the enforcement of civil liberties (Gilbert and Mohseni 2011, 285). There are limitations on political freedoms, state media is censored and there are few independent alternative sources of information (Karl 1995, 82). Civil society exists but its influence is limited due to being banned or controlled by the government (Wigell 2008, 242). The judiciary is weak, it fails to effectively exercise limits on the executive and there is minimal horizontal accountability (O’Donell 1994, 61). The incumbent party dominates the legislature and can easily advance its preferred policies. Although the legislature is weak, it is a focal point for opposition parties to engage the ruling party by sharing ideas and it is a mechanism to share power (Cassani 2012, 5; Ekman 2009, 5). Decision-making is centralised to close political elites (Menocal et al. 2008, 33). Informal practices of clientelism, patronage and nepotism exist and sometimes take precedence over formal practices (Merkel 2004, 29).

Hybrid regimes occasionally have unaccountable strong leadership, which rarely commits to constitutional norms, resulting in opaque decision-making (Merkel 2004). The president can use either the legislature or the constitution to remove limitations on presidential terms because they detest them (Van Cranenburgh 2009, 63). There is no equality of citizens before the law, with a level of public corruption prevailing in the state (Menocal et al. 2008, 33–34). The institutions that enable fair competition among political players in a hybrid regime exist, for example, a constitution, parliament, and the judiciary. However, there is selective discretion towards the incumbent in the application of these institutions.

Hybrid Regime Indicator: Tutelary Interference

Tutelage is when external bodies coerce elected officials to circumvent proper decision-making processes or lead to national legislation being circumvented (Gilbert and Mohseni 2011, 286; Mufti 2018, 115). Tutelage can be applied by a person, group, family, or institution, which could be the military, religious bodies, a monarchy, regional bodies, terrorist groups, and other sovereign states. Under tutelage, the guardian is the one in control while the elected representative is their puppet (Wigell 2008, 239).

Tutelage is experienced in different ways. First, tutelage is observed when elected officials do not serve their full constitutional term, possibly because of being ousted (Schedler 2002, 45). Another case is when election empowerment is not upheld. Election empowerment is when elected officials have the right to govern without being subjected to any formal domains of power. The third way in which tutelage is exhibited is when election sovereignty is not adhered to. Election sovereignty is when elected officials' actions through informal channels are not subservient to actors outside the decision-making process. (Wigell 2008, 239–40). This study emphasises that tutelage may not be experienced in some hybrid regimes. It proposes that in a hybrid regime that is less competitive and guarantees less civil liberties, there is a higher possibility of tutelage. Conversely, in a hybrid regime that is highly competitive and adheres to providing civil liberties, the possibility of tutelage is less.

Hybrid Regime Indicator: Political Elite Cohesion

Four elements denote political elite cohesion, which are political elite cooperation, factionalism, prevention of threats from external actors, and leadership turnover. Political elite cooperation is when political elites collectively work on keeping power within the incumbent party. High cooperation signifies high political elite cohesion, while low cooperation indicates low political elite cohesion. Factionalism is the disagreement among different political elite groups within the incumbent political party. Low levels of factionalism imply that there is strong political elite cohesion, while high levels of factionalism indicate low political elite cohesion. The prevention of threats from influential actors is the ability of political elites to thwart the likelihood of a coup occurring, especially from the military (Cassani 2012, 6). Low military involvement denotes high political elite cohesion, while high military involvement within the incumbent party signifies lower levels of political elite cohesion. Lastly, leadership turnover refers to the rate at which there is leadership renewal of the critical institutes of the incumbent party. Low leadership turnover implies high levels of political elite cohesion, while high leadership turnover is indicative of low levels of political elite cohesion. High political elite cohesion is proposed to be an explanatory variable that causes the durability of the hybrid regime.

Zimbabwe's Hybrid Regime Development

This section applies the hybrid regime conceptual framework to the case of Zimbabwe between 1990 and 2018.¹ The findings show five distinct periods of Zimbabwe's hybrid regime development. These periods are named according to the most observable indicators of the hybrid regime framework. A summary of Zimbabwe's hybrid development is discussed in this section. Figure 1 illustrates the distinct hybrid types observed in Zimbabwe over a 28-year period, thus reflecting the durability of the regime.

Liberal Hybrid Regime 1990–February 2000

In this period, Zimbabwe exhibited a liberal hybrid regime. Regarding the 1990 presidential and parliamentary elections, Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), the incumbent party, emerged victorious in both. The 1995 parliamentary election outcomes confirmed ZANU-PF dominance despite an increase in the number of political parties formed after 1990 (Sithole and Makumbe 1997, 127). Opposition parties failed to put forward contesting candidates, giving ZANU-PF a winning advantage (Dorman 2005, 157). In 1996, Mugabe contested as the only candidate in the presidential race because the other candidates withdrew from the election, citing an uneven playing field (Sithole and Makumbe 1997, 127). Elections in the liberal hybrid were routine, uncompetitive and confirmed ZANU-PFs dominance.

1 1980 to 1990 is excluded from the hybrid development because Zimbabwe exhibited an authoritarian regime. ZANU-PF dominated approximately 70% of the electoral votes, which is representative of an authoritarian regime (Levitsky and Way 2002, 52).

Liberal hybrid regime	Competitive illiberal hybrid	Competitive hybrid regime	Illiberal hybrid regime	Military hybrid regime
Elections: Non-competitive Uneven playing field	Elections: Competitive but violence occurs Uneven playing field	Elections: No elections in this period	Elections: Non-competitive contested election Uneven playing field	Elections: Competitive however these are contested Uneven playing field
Civil Liberties: Judiciary impartial Rule of law strong Horizontal accountability high State media inaccessible to opposition parties Soft intimidation of political opponents Government perceived as legitimate Public corruption rising slowly Civil society partially active Incumbent majority in parliament	Civil Liberties: Judiciary partial Rule of law weak Horizontal accountability low State media inaccessible to opposition parties State-sponsored violence on opposition members Government perceived as illegitimate Public corruption high Civil society active Incumbent majority in parliament	Civil Liberties: Judiciary partial Rule of law weak Horizontal accountability average Limited access to state media by opposition parties Soft intimidation of political opponents Government perceived as legitimate Public corruption high but some cases are publicly exposed Civil society partially active Opposition majority in parliament	Civil Liberties: Judiciary partial Rule of law weak Horizontal accountability low Limited access to state media by opposition parties, social media platforms used as alternatives Soft and coercive intimidation of political opponents Government perceived as illegitimate Public corruption high Civil society active Incumbent majority in parliament	Civil Liberties: Judiciary partial Rule of law weak Horizontal accountability low State media partially accessible to the opposition, social media platforms used as alternatives Soft and coercive intimidation of political opponents Government perceived as illegitimate Public corruption high Civil society active Incumbent majority in parliament
Tutinary interference: Present but mildly active	Tutinary interference: High and active	Tutinary interference: Challenged by the opposition but still present	Tutinary interference: High and active	Tutinary interference: High and active
Political cohesion: Relatively strong	Political cohesion: Fragmenting but still solid	Political cohesion: Temporarily high	Political cohesion: Weak	Political cohesion: Weak Leadership renewal of incumbent party

Figure 1: Zimbabwe's hybrid regime development from 1990 to 2018

Source: Compiled by the authors

In terms of civil liberties, the main opposition parties argued that the environment was skewed to favour ZANU-PF. The state's resources and regulations favoured ZANU-PF (Kriger 2005, 20). Before 1999, Zimbabwe was characterised by a pluralistic media, an independent court system and growth in political parties (Chikwanha-Dzenga, Masunungure, and Madingira 1999, 6). Corruption cases, involving senior government officials and cabinet ministers interfering with the tendering processes to enrich those politically connected to ZANU-PF, increased (Mumvuma, Mujajati, and Mufute 2004, 49).

The National Constitutional Assembly (NCA), founded in 1998, and the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), an opposition political party founded in 1999, changed the political landscape of Zimbabwe (Mangongera 2014). NCA called for a redrafting of the Zimbabwean Constitution. The government set up a Constitution Commission in 1999 responding to pressure from NCA (Raftopoulos 2009, 206–9). In 2000, MDC and NCA campaigned for the successful rejection of the government-led draft constitution. This defeat was the ZANU-PF government's first major defeat from any opposition party since independence (Raftopoulos 2009, 210). Civil society became more assertive in questioning the government's growing intolerance of the opposition from 1996.

Tutelar influence was exhibited by ZANU-PF political elites who influenced the decisions of elected officials. Influential actors within ZANU-PF were the presidium, senior security sector and government officials, war veterans and politically connected business people. Regarding political elite cohesion, political elites were able to manage external threats resulting in relatively strong political elite cohesion within ZANU-PF. In some constituencies the politburo, a decision-making organ in ZANU-PF, imposed candidates who were not the incumbent candidates, causing tension. In 1997, Mugabe paid the war veterans an unbudgeted gratuity because he needed new allies as these had reduced (Moore 2018, 3). Diverting from being a ZANU-PF loyalist resulted in harassment, being expelled or victimisation by other party members (Dorman 2005, 154). A group of soldiers who disagreed with the country's involvement in the 1999 DRC war failed a coup attempt (Moore 2018, 4). There was a relatively low leadership turnover of the presidium, politburo and central committee levels.

Competitive Illiberal Hybrid Regime March 2000–2008

Zimbabwe exhibited a competitive illiberal hybrid regime in this period. There were five rounds of elections between 2000 and 2008.² In 2007, elections were synchronised to be conducted collectively with effect from March 2008. MDC's³ parliamentary margin grew from 47% in 2000 to have the combined majority vote in parliament in

2 Parliamentary elections in 2000, 2005 and 2008, the presidential election in 2002 and 2008, and the local government in 2003 and 2008.

3 In 2005, MDC split into two factions known as Movement for Democratic Change: Tsvangirai (MDC-T) and Movement for Democratic Change: Mutambara (MDC-M). These factions were differentiated by the different leaders' surnames.

2008 (Ncube 2013, 100; Pottie 2001, 49). There was no majority winner in the 2008 presidential election, hence an election run-off was conducted. The MDC presidential candidate pulled out because of the violence directed towards his party's members by ZANU-PF. Elections were characterised as competitive, defying ZANU-PF's dominance.

Regarding, civil liberties, the period was marked by declining freedom of association, freedom of speech, and limited independent media sources. For political survival, ZANU-PF implemented the Fast-Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) in early 2000. The FTLRP resulted in expropriation from White commercial farmers' land without compensation and displaced 4 000 commercial White farmers and 450 000 farm labourers (Mlambo 2014, 235; Raftopoulos 2009, 212). President Mugabe implemented the FTLRP as revenge on White commercial farmers for sponsoring MDC (Thomas-Greenfield and Wharton 2019, 9). The major beneficiaries of the farms were senior security sector officers, cabinet ministers, government permanent secretaries, senior judges, and senior ZANU-PF officials (Bratton and Masunungure 2018, 46). There was a marked decrease in horizontal accountability. Chief Justice Gubbay of the Supreme Court, resigned in 2001 before his term expired due to pressure from ZANU-PF. Several senior judges were forced into retirement as part of the judiciary restructuring process in 2000, resulting in a mistrust of the judiciary system locally and internationally (Bratton and Masunungure 2008, 46). Politically motivated violence against the opposition increased from 2000 with the height of violence experienced in 2008 under operation *Mavhoterepi* "whom did you vote for" whose aim was to prevent a ZANU-PF presidential run-off loss, especially in the rural areas. State institutions, ZANU-PF supporters and youth militia conducted acts of massive violence towards opposition members (Bratton and Masunungure 2008, 50; LeBas 2014, 54; Mangongera 2014). Due to the election violence and flawed procedures, the ZANU-PF government did not gain international legitimacy.

Tutelary interference was exerted by the security sector. The Joint Operations Command (JOC) was resuscitated in 1999 and comprised of the heads of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF), the police, prison services and the Central Intelligence Organisation (Moyo 2016, 354). JOC was an unregulated autonomous body that could implement binding operations that were not discussed by parliament or cabinet. Significant JOC operations were Operation *Maguta*⁴ "feed the nation" (2005), Operation *Murambatsvina*⁵ "clean the filth out" (2005), Operation *Dzikisai Mutengo*⁶

4 Military officers were absorbed by the government and state-owned enterprises, thus receiving two salaries, from the army and the government (Bratton and Masunungure 2018, 49).

5 Informal vending sites and other informal housing premises in the urban areas were demolished in May/June 2005. Approximately 700 000 people became homeless and lost their source of livelihood (Ndlovu 2012, 100).

6 This instructed shops to reduce the prices of goods and services, which led to massive shortages of goods in the country (Mangongera 2014, 73).

“reduce the prices” (2008) and Operation *Mavhoterepi* (2008). JOC influenced electoral processes and outcomes to safeguard their interests and those of the ZANU-PF political elites. ZANU-PF elites and security sector leadership relied on each other for personal gain, political relevance, and survival.

Political elite cohesion within ZANU-PF was solid but slowly fragmenting because of factionalism and competition to succeed the president. In 2004, two factions were present, one led by Joice Mujuru, and another led by Emmerson Mnangagwa (Mangongera 2014, 75). Mujuru became the vice-president in 2004. JOC assisted Mugabe to win the 2008 presidential run-off. A pact was made by Mugabe that he would hand over power to Mnangagwa (Magaisa 2018). These actions further fragmented ZANU-PF political elite cohesion. There was low leadership turnover and political elites managed the possibility of any external threats taking over power. Although there were divisions within ZANU-PF, it exhibited high political elite cooperation. The period had competitive elections; nevertheless, there was a reduction in the freedoms that citizens enjoyed during the liberal hybrid regime, thus it became illiberal.

Competitive Hybrid Regime 2009–June 2013

This period is termed competitive hybrid regime because the 2008 elections were competitive. Combined MDC formed the majority in parliament, a role that ZANU-PF had held since 1980 (Vollan 2013, 28). This resulted in a Government of National Unity (GNU) between MDC and ZANU-PF, which was negotiated in September 2008. The GNU was mediated by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and became operational from February 2009 to July 2013. Regarding civil liberties, horizontal accountability significantly improved. ZANU-PF elites could not bulldoze their policies without negotiating with the combined MDC. There was less victimisation of MDC supporters than during the preceding regime. In addition, the number of independent media sources increased (Freedom House 2013). The GNU was internationally perceived as legitimate. The greatest achievement of the GNU was producing a new Zimbabwean Constitution.

Regarding political elite cohesion, some senior ZANU-PF members and military personnel detested the GNU. However, the period enabled ZANU-PF to formulate strategies to regain domestic support. ZANU-PF political elite cohesion was high because members collectively worked towards securing a majority government, thus eliminating the possibility of another coalition government. There was low leadership turnover in ZANU-PF. Tutelary interference was exerted by senior ZANU-PF members, war veterans, and senior members of the security sector. JOC and President Mugabe continued to conduct their weekly meetings without inviting the Prime Minister from MDC, Mr Tsvangirai, to the meetings (Mangongera 2014, 74). The nature of this hybrid regime is regarded as competitive.

Illiberal Hybrid Regime July 2013–October 2017

July 2013's harmonised election ushered in the beginning of the illiberal hybrid regime. Mugabe won the presidential elections and his party regained a two-thirds majority in parliament (Ncube 2013, 100). The environment was tilted to favour ZANU-PF. Election results were disputed by civil society, opposition parties, and the international community (Ncube 2013, 100). The judiciary was biased towards ZANU-PF (Magaisa 2019b, 143–57). The election was devoid of large-scale violence, unlike the preceding periods. ZANU-PF used soft intimidation of reminding voters of the past violent acts. Horizontal accountability was minimal. There was an increase in urban protests and a reduction in the freedoms citizens had enjoyed in the competitive hybrid. Elections were non-competitive and the political environment was tilted in favour of ZANU-PF.

Factionalism and succession politics escalated the fragmentation of political elite cohesion within ZANU-PF. There was conflict between the two major factions within ZANU-PF, that is, “Gamatox” led by Mujuru and “Lacoste” (previously known as “Weevil”) led by Mnangagwa (Magaisa 2018, Mangongera 2014, 64). In December 2014, Mujuru was removed as the vice-president of ZANU-PF and was replaced by Mnangagwa. Mujuru and her loyalists were expelled from ZANU-PF in 2015. After Mujuru's dismissal there began another battle between Lacoste and Generation Forty (G-40). Lacoste was more inclined to the military, war veterans and senior ZANU-PF officials while the G-40 group was more inclined to educated, young and enterprising ZANU-PF officials (Mandaza and Reeler 2018, 20). President Mugabe aligned himself with G-40. The battle between G-40 and Lacoste escalated by the end of the illiberal hybrid regime. This period was marked by low political elite cooperation, high factionalism, increasing leadership turnover and increasing military involvement, which resulted in weakening political elite cohesion. Tutelage was applied by the same actors observed in the competitive hybrid regime.

Military Hybrid Regime November 2017–2018

While the previous hybrids had changed their nature due to an election period, this last hybrid developed due to political elite cohesion. The weak ZANU-PF political elite cohesion in the illiberal hybrid catalysed the transformation into a military hybrid from November 2017. Mnangagwa was fired as vice president on 6 November 2017, due to succession politics and factionalism. The military implemented Operation Restore Legacy on 14 November 2017, which forced President Mugabe to resign. Mugabe was replaced by Mnangagwa. Regarding political elite cohesion, there was high leadership turnover at all leadership levels within ZANU-PF, high military participation and lower levels of political elite cooperation.

Tutelage was applied by the ZDF and aligned ZANU-PF elites exerted tutelage. ZDF applied pressure on Mugabe, a constitutionally elected president, to resign due to factional differences. The hybrid nature thereafter was aligned to military rule. ZANU-PF's leadership structures from top to bottom significantly changed with more leadership

representation from the army and retired military personnel, for example, Sibusiso Moyo, Perence Shiri and Constantino Chiwenga. The military, instead of the police, patrolled the streets for five weeks from 14 November 2017 (International Crisis Group 2017, 6).

In the July 2018 elections, ZANU-PF retained a two-thirds parliamentary majority. The presidential elections were highly competitive, Mnangagwa narrowly won over Chamisa, the Movement for Democratic Change-Alliance (MDC-A) leader who was his major opponent (Beardsworth, Cheeseman, and Tinhu 2019, 582). Before elections, the political environment was open to imposing minimum restrictions on political gatherings and freedom of speech, as compared to between 2000 and 2017 (Magaisa 2019a, 145). Soft intimidation was reported in rural areas, but the election-related violent acts reported in previous elections were absent (Kanyinga 2018, 148). International election observers from Britain and the European Union, who had been banned since 2002, were allowed to participate (Magaisa 2019a, 149). After the elections there was an intolerant political environment. Protesters who demanded the release of the presidential election results were responded to violently by the military, resulting in the death of six civilians and many injuries (Kanyinga 2018, 147). Election results were contested and the ZANU-PF government failed to secure international legitimacy.

Zimbabwe had transformed into five different forms of hybridity in 28 years. Thus, the Zimbabwean case has been presented.

Discussion: Reasons for the Durability of the Zimbabwean Hybrid Regime

When comparing hybrid regime states, it has been confirmed that they resemble different hybrid forms (Gilbert and Mohseni 2011). This paper finds that hybridity is fluid within a regime and not stagnant. The hybrid regime is observed to be durable, however, it can exhibit different forms. Zimbabwe transformed into five different hybrid regime types in 28 years, without consolidating into a democracy or disintegrating into an authoritarian regime.

This study proposes two hypotheses that explain the durability of the Zimbabwean hybrid regime. Hypothesis 1: ZANU-PF, the party and the actors, prevented the hybrid from maturing into a democracy and if left unchallenged, it could have progressively transformed into an authoritarian regime. Hypothesis 2: Opposition political parties, regional integration and international norms and practices applied pressure on ZANU-PF to abide by democratic principles; thereby, denying it to recede into an authoritarian regime. The resultant effect of applying both hypotheses was the creation and maintenance of a hybrid regime.

Explaining hypothesis 1, ZANU-PF political elites have consistently been the same actors to a great extent. Some strategic politicians within ZANU-PF retired from politics

or passed away. Other key elites were expelled and started their own political parties, for example, Tekere and Mujuru. President Mugabe was the leader for 37 years and he retained and recycled mostly the same actors to hold different portfolios at different times within the cabinet and the politburo. One strategic example is Emmerson Mnangagwa, who was a politburo member from 1980 to 2018. He held different ministerial and government portfolios, the highest being the vice-president and president posts. Political elite cohesion within ZANU-PF was illustrated in the hybrid development as a factor that varied because of factionalism. Although factionalism existed, the collective goal was for power to remain within ZANU-PF. Having the same elite group governing Zimbabwe for an extensive period impacted the minimal development of democratic institutions, thus explaining the durability of the hybrid regime.

In addition to hypothesis 1, ZANU-PF's political elite under-developed democratic institutions for their profit. ZANU-PF members, ZANU-PF youth, war veterans, businessmen linked to political leaders and senior security sector members have enjoyed unquestionable access to resources of the state. Furthermore, these aforesaid actors had preferential access to business opportunities, loans and access to vast natural resources. ZANU-PF loyalists were the major beneficiaries of an Indigenisation Policy that required foreigners to cede 51% of their shareholding to indigenous Zimbabweans and expropriated White-owned farms under the land reform (Bratton and Masunungure 2008, 46). Political elites, by creating patron-client relationships, encouraged a lack of rule of law and spiralling corruption in Zimbabwe. Political elites lacked the political will to develop strong institutions that support democratisation, because strong and effective institutions would hinder their personal privileges of unquestioned syphoning of the state's resources. Thus, due to underdeveloped institutions, the hybrid could not consolidate as a democracy.

Strong personalities dominated weak institutions, which further explains the first hypothesis. Mugabe was a strong leader who influenced how the country was governed. His strong personality could have enabled the development of strong and independent institutions, but he lacked the political will to do so. His leadership adhered to democratic principles in most cases—if by doing so it rewarded ZANU-PF elites and loyalists. The competitive illiberal and illiberal hybrid regimes have demonstrated that the motive for conducting elections was to gain domestic and international legitimacy.

Regarding hypothesis 2, MDC was a significant actor whose presence compelled ZANU-PF to occasionally adhere to democratic principles. MDC provided stiff competition for ZANU-PF between 2000 and 2018. To protect the interests of ZANU-PF, the state used violence and intimidation in responding to MDC's challenge to ZANU-PF's hegemony, with the climax of violence being in 2008. These actions reveal the autocratic nature of Zimbabwe's hybrid. MDC did not fracture, especially during the competitive illiberal hybrid period. MDC formed the majority in parliament in the 2008 elections, which compelled ZANU-PF to form a coalition government. Thus,

having a competitive opposition party was instrumental in pushing ZANU-PF to occasionally abide by democratic principles. Perhaps if ZANU-PF was left unchallenged, it could have evolved into an authoritarian regime.

Regional integration was critical in compelling ZANU-PF to adhere to democratic principles supporting hypothesis 2. SADC mediated the deadlock between ZANU-PF and MDC to form a GNU during the competitive illiberal regime. SADC's influence during Zimbabwe's political crisis of 2008 compelled ZANU-PF to adhere to democratic principles. Moreover, the military under Operation Restore Legacy did not implement an apparent coup because SADC and AU guidelines do not support coups. In the absence of SADC guidelines, the coup could have been bloody. Therefore, regional integration compelled ZANU-PF to consider adopting and applying democratic principles.

This study suggests the following factors to ensure the durability of a hybrid regime, drawn from the analysis of Zimbabwe:

- An incumbent political party in power for a long time.
- High political elite cohesion of the incumbent political party.
- A strong statesman.
- Low turnover in political office.
- A competitive opposition political party.

Conclusion

This study sought to understand the functioning of the hybrid regime in order to explore its durability. Zimbabwe's hybrid regime development between 1990 and 2018 was traced to demonstrate durability. For this period, Zimbabwe exhibited five types of hybrid regimes, namely liberal, competitive illiberal, competitive, illiberal, and military hybrid regimes. The findings show that within a single state, hybridity shows diverse forms and these hybrid forms are fluid, influenced by changes in the political landscape. Furthermore, lasting durability can be observed, without changing into a democracy or authoritarian regime. The acknowledgement of the fluidity of the hybrid regime within political systems offers the projection that resilience is much greater than initially thought and acknowledged. The study forecasts that Zimbabwe will continue to exhibit the military illiberal hybrid regime from 2019 until 2023, when harmonised elections will be conducted. The hybrid regime will transition into another hybrid form after the elections, but this will be dependent on who holds the levers of power. Future studies can apply the hybrid framework developed in this study on a comparative design of hybrid regimes to provide further insight on the factors that facilitate durability, and measure their applicability.

Declaration

This article is based on a doctoral thesis submitted at Stellenbosch University (2020), Department of Political Science, completed under the supervision of Dr Derica Lambrechts.

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