

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **Attitudes of the Sudanese people towards the performance of new transitional government: An exploratory study**

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**The article is exploratory in nature and uses descriptive statistical tools to describe the attitudes of Sudanese people towards certain policy issues faced by the Transitional Government in Sudan, which has emerged after the popular revolution of December 19, 2019, that ousted Bashir's Islamite military regime. The new Transitional Government is now less than two-year-old. Hence it is difficult to evaluate its policies in a credible manner. Thus, the paper hopes to help future researchers to develop more meaningful hypotheses about the performance of the new Transitional Government in Sudan. The major theme of the article is to investigate the attitudes of the Sudanese citizen's attitudes towards the performance of the new Transitional Government regarding certain pressing policy issue area inherited from the previous regime which includes the issues of policymaking, economy, bread shortage, as well as oil and cooking gas shortage, the issues of peace security and corruption.**

**Key words:** Sudan, transitional government, revolution, policy, politics, crises.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Sudan used to occupy an area of one million squares miles before the secession of the southern part and the consequent emergence of the independent state of South Sudan, which chops away one-third of this vast area. Situated at the horn of Africa and stand in the middle between the Arab and African countries, Sudan exhibits the cultural characteristics of both Africanism and Arabism. Whereas the Northern region houses a predominantly culturally-oriented Arabicized Muslim population, other areas (the South, the West, and the East) houses a rich diversity of heterogeneous African and Hamites tribes that adopt Islam, Christianity, and

other pagan religions. Besides Arabic, there are more than 156 local dialects and languages. This diversity creates a problem of identity, with the Arabicized North leaning toward the Arab World and African elites preferring more African-oriented affiliation.

Since Sudan's independence, the Muslim and Arabicized North have dominated the political arena, thereby creating inequality in wealth and power distribution. Therefore, poverty and hunger crises devastated the marginalized regions in the South, the East and West. With the arrival of Bashir's regime and the precipitously declining economic conditions, poverty

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and hunger crises spread out not only in the marginalized regions but also in the Northern Region and Khartoum. This condition resulted from widespread corruption, civil wars, political instability, and international economic sanctions. Consequently, these conditions exploded the political situation and triggered the revolution of December 2019, which toppled down Bashir's regime.

This uneasy coexistence of these diversified entities has tremendous impacts on policies and policymaking, which creates grievances among the non-northern elites and incites ethnic nationalism, which explains the prevalence of civil wars and political instability since the independence of the country in 1956 (Johnson, 2003). This situation has been made more complicated by the advent of the Islamists regime of Omer Bashir in 1989, which adopt an aggressive policy of Islamization of politics and policymaking (Jaspars, 2018). A social revolution overthrew the latter in December 2019, leading to an emergence of a Transitional Government that inherited the challenging policy issues with which the present Transitional Government is struggling with. Since its inception, the Transitional Government has encountered very thorny policy issues, including the fragile policymaking system, economic issues, the shortage of bread crises, the shortage of oil and cooking gas, the debacles of security and peace, and the problem of eradicating endemic corruption. These policy issues are the subject matter of this article.

The recency of the Sudanese revolution and the fact that so far no academic study has addressed this issue underscores the importance and necessity of this article. Thus, as an exploratory work, the paper seeks to provide some preliminary data about this issue to help future researchers develop serious hypotheses and in-depth analysis of the subject.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Evolution of the system of government in Sudan

Since Independence from Egyptian-British colonial rule in January 1956, the country has been caught into a vicious circle of alternating rounds between short-lived liberal democratic systems and military *coup d'états* (Collins, 2008; Berridge, 2020; Woodward, 1980). During this period, Sudan experiences three short-lived multi-party systems in 1956-1958, 1964-1969, and 1985-1989. However, the three military regimes ruled for longer periods between 1958-1964, 1969-1985, and 1989-2019 (Niblock, 1974). The two major parties dominated the politics of the multi-party system: the Umma and the National Unionist parties (Elhoussein, 1989; Mansour, 2014). The two parties derive their support from the two religious sects' loyal followers: the *Ansar* (Mahdist), led by the *Mahdi* family, and the *Khatmiya*, which was led by the *Mirghani* family (Elhoussein, 1989). The influence of

both sects, though still existing, is waning at present because they collaborated with the Bashir's regime.

The competition between these two sects summarized the nature of the three periods of multi-party eras (Niblock, 1987). Hence these multi-party systems were characterized by sectarian politics (Albino, 2006). Popular uprisings eventually ousted the three military governments in October 1964, April 1985, and finally, in December 2019. The latter is the more dramatic because it brought down the Islamists military regime of Omer Al Bashir, which hold a bloody grip on power for thirty years and brought the country to the verge of total collapse. The most influential force which managed, organized, and directs the popular demonstration, which led to the demise of the Islamists military regime, is the Sudanese Professional Association (SPA). Following the collapse of the system, painstakingly tough negotiations between the civilian Freedom and Change Forces (FACF) (composed of SPA, different opposition parties, civic associations, and groups of guerrilla fighters), and the Military Council composed of army generals who help to oust the ruling Islamists regime but who were part of the previous system. With their divergent and conflicting ideological orientations, the lack of harmony among the FACF's members has a destabilizing impact on the new Transitional Government policymaking system.

It is safe to argue that the public policymaking systems in Sudan, before the emergence of the current new Transitional Government, in all past civil and military regimes, was the prime culprit that drove Sudan to the club of semi-failed states (Cockett, 2016). It has always been dominated by Arabicized elites drawn from the tribes of northern Sudan and characterized by sectarian politics, ethnicity, and the marginalization of non-Arabicized ethnic groups (Jok, 2015). After independence in 1956, Arabicized northern elites dominated the government policymaking system (Fegley, 2010). In all government branches, the Arabicized northern elite monopolized political power and assigned the marginalized ethnic groups to unimportant ministries, with northerners occupying almost 90% of civil service positions. This condition is also applicable to the top ranks of the army and the police and other security departments, as well as education, healthcare, and local administrations. This discrimination is the primary reason for the grievances of ethnic and tribal groups originating in the southern, the western (e.g. Dar Fur) and the eastern regions (Johnson, 2016). Political parties that assumed political power after independence had no political and economic programs and even no idea about how Sudan was to be governed and no plans for nation-building to accommodate the country's diversified nature (Taha, 1955). The first post-independence northern independent thinker to highlight the seriousness of this issue was Mahmoud Mohammed Taha. As early as 1955, he developed and propagated a comprehensive federal constitution to integrate the different country's different

regions and encourage self-rule and public participation in equal footing for all citizens (Taha, 1955).

During civilian and military regimes, the policymaking system has always been centralized, and the one million square miles country was ruled from the capital Khartoum. Even when the second military regime and the third Islamists regimes adopted deformed versions of Taha's scheme, their policies of decentralization and federalism were designed mainly to control the marginalized population rather than to encourage public participation in the policymaking system (Mansour, 2014). The outcome of this situation was that most economic and political development activities were biased and benefited the Arabized northern part of the country. Thus, one can safely argue that the thorny policy issues staring in the face of the present Transitional Government (that is, the fragile policymaking system, economic crises, the shortage of bread crises, the lack of oil and gas; the debacles of security and peace and the problem of eradicating corruption) are the legitimate outcome of malfeasance, endemic corruption, and inefficiency inherited from previous government systems; aggravated beyond conceivable proportions by the defunct Islamists Bashir's regime (Tossell, 2020).

The revolution that ousted the Islamists regime following massive popular uprising and demonstrations protesting the rising costs of staples and the steeply declining standards of living has created a new political stage. The widespread anger has been brewing slowly for thirty years under Bashir's regime. The regime was able to suppress periodic and unorganized unrest in the past using its brutal security machines. The chief among these machines was the Security Apparatus and the Rapid Forces militia led by general *Himitti*; the latter was formed to protect the regime but eventually sided with demonstrators to topple down the Bashir's government. The Regime ruling party, the National Congress, failed to provide policies to alleviate the economic crises because it was drawn into endemic corruption and became dependent on Bashir's personal rule to sustain its protagonists' interests. The situation precipitated into a vicious civil war led by the marginalized elite in Southern Sudan and Dar Fur. It resulted in the displacement of thousands of civilians in Dar Fur and the South and led to bloody genocide and ethnic cleansing. The latter led to the indictment of Bashir and some of his aides by the International Criminal Court (ICC) (Jok, 2015). The regime was also crippled by its Islamists policies to spread its version of Islam to neighboring countries. This fact alarmed some Arab Gulf states, Egypt, and Western countries, leading to a series of economic sanctions and the designation of Sudan as a state sponsor of terrorism, thereby deepening the economic crises (International Crisis, Group, 2019).

The African Union and the Ethiopian prime minister actively mediated the negotiations between the Military Council and FACF. The talks resulted in the

Constitutional Document that provided for the establishment of three government bodies. The first body is the Sovereignty Council, which consists of some of the previous Military Council members and civilian members chosen by the Freedom and Change Forces. The second body is the Council of Ministers, whose members are mostly appointed by the Freedom and Change Forces. Finally, the third body is an appointed legislative body. The latter has not been established pending the peace negotiations with gorilla warring factions. Thus, the first two bodies represent the current policymaking system entrusted with achieving the main slogans of the revolution: freedom, peace, justice, and *medania* (civilian government). Whereas the predominantly civilian Council of Ministers drawn from FACF possesses all the executive powers to fulfill the revolution goals, the Sovereignty Council was assigned ceremonial and symbolic powers. Nevertheless, maintaining real military force, the latter continues to enjoy real executive powers and put tremendous pressure on the civilian government.

The Sovereignty Council's military component continues to control the army and the police forces through the right to appoint the Ministers of Defense and Interior. Both portfolios are occupied by military and security generals associated with the Sovereignty Council and the previous regime. Since its inception, the Transitional Government has encountered very thorny policy issues, including the fragile policymaking system, economic issues, the shortage of bread crises, the shortage of oil and gas, the debacles of security and peace, and the problem of eradicating widespread corruption. Although Jesus Christ's famous saying that "Man shall not live on bread alone" is, yet the Sudanese revolution of December 2019 proves that the shortage of bread and other staples can uproot a military dictatorship. Ironically the country which Arabic textbooks and economists describe as "the breadbasket of the Arab World" is experiencing an acute shortage of bread (Mahran, 2000).

### **Public policymaking system in Sudan and economic debacle**

The roots of all current crises and challenges (the shortage of bread crises, the lack of oil and gas; the debacles of security and peace, and the problem of eradicating corruption) that are inherited by the present Transitional Government can be attributed to the mismanagement and the low-performance rates of the Sudanese economy. Current reports of international economic and financial organizations paint a gloomy picture of the Sudanese economy (IMF, World Bank, FAO (Moscoso, 2016). During the first decade after independence in 1956, the multi-party government had complete control of the public-sector-oriented economy.

With stable international conditions, the country

witnessed a stable economy that achieved self-sufficiency, at least in food production. Nevertheless, the civil war that broke out in 1955 in the southern region led to some limited economic and political instability whose negative impacts were not felt in the Arabized Northern region but devastated the African population's livelihood in the southern part of the country (Johnson, 2014). To add insult to injury, most northern-dominated governments, more or less, adopt aggressive Arabization and Islamization policies against the African population in the South (Jaspars, 2018).

The first military government that ruled the country in May 1969 to April 1985 whose ideological orientations covered the whole spectrum of political ideologies from the extreme of the socialist left, allying itself with the Soviet bloc and later to capitalism thereby shifting itself to the West, pragmatism, and end up with an Islamic fundamentalist orientation. These developments explain the regime's dramatic shifts in policymaking. From the outset, it adopted the policy of nationalization and was driven later by pragmatism to adopt ambitious development policies. The program failed to boost the productive capacity of the economy, and the government adopted repressive Islamists and economic policies to preserve its shaking legitimacy after the failure of its economic policies (Jaspars, 2018). By the late 1970s, the military government encountered failing export earnings accompanied by rising import bills, tremendous budget deficits, and surging foreign debt. The worsening balance of payment and deepening external debt forced the government to seek the help of the IMF and consequently adopted its austerity policy. Thus, the government approved three development programs in 1978 with financial assistance provided by the IMF. These programs sought to improve the current account, attract foreign investors, increase productive capacity, reducing the rate of inflation, and promoting economic growth. Until 1985 the outcomes of these programs were stagnation of exports, an increase in imports, deteriorating trade balance, and soaring of foreign debt. These factors led to the loss of the purchasing power of the national currency and increased rural and urban poverty. These adverse developments marked the shift from the public-sector-based economy to a more free-market oriented one. One of the political achievements of this regime was to stop the civil war in the South through the Addis Abba Accord in 1972, which provided for an autonomous regional government for the South. The government later reversed this policy to pave the way for its Islamists regime, therefore, leading to the collapse of the Southern regional government and falling into the debacles of the civil war again (Johnson, 2003).

One of the most severe outcomes of these policies is the spiraling of inflation rates leading to poverty and economic crises, which triggered the April 1985 uprising that ousted the military government. Ironically the IMF, whose help was sought to help the government, led to its

demise. This policy was the same factor that triggered the popular uprising against the multi-party system (that came after the fall of the second military government) which also adopted the IMF prescription that paved the way for the military takeover of the Islamic National Front, led by the late Hassan Erturabi, in June 1989. The Islamists military government also adopted the IMF prescription and liberalization of the economy coupled with massive violent and torturous, unprecedented human rights violations to suppress any opposition to the new regime. These policies eventually triggered again the December 2019 revolution that ousted the Islamists military government.

A few other political non-economic factors contributed to the failure of the government to halt the economic decline. These included the civil war in the South that consumed a substantial portion of the national wealth and tremendous resources made available to oppressive internal security forces to suppress the rising opposition to the Islamists government (Bashir, 2010). The oppressive policies of the government, coupled with declining standards of living in the marginalized regions in the West (Dar Fur) and the East, grounded the seeds for the emergence of military insurgence and rebellion in these regions (Cockett, 2016). The emerging insurgent groups, which later conducted fierce guerilla warfare with the proliferation of different armed militia groups representing the marginalized ethnic groups in western and eastern Sudan in addition to the continuing civil war in the South (Jok, 2015). The Naivasha Agreement in 2005 that the Northern government negotiated with the Southern rebels provided for a referendum in the South for self-determination. The latter ended up with secession of the South and the emergence of the state of the independent State South Sudan. This outcome was a result of the Islamist's regime handling of the agreement during the transitional period and the mistrust created thereof (Jok, 2015). Apart from the humanitarian sufferings among the vulnerable population and the environmental damage, the civil war destroyed national wealth. Thus, the war disrupted the financial resources that the government could have directed towards the provision of vital social services such as education and healthcare; currently, the two services continued to deteriorate to unprecedented low levels.

In the second half of the 1990s, the economy achieved favorable higher economic growth rates since the 1960s (Ali and Elbadawi, 2003). This high growth rate was enhanced further by the discovery of oil in Southern Sudan (now the independent State of South Sudan) in 1998. The export of oil resulted in considerable revenues nevertheless it encouraged wide-spread corruption among the ruling party leaders and followers. This time is the only period since the 1960s that witnessed positive rates of economic growth. Since the 1990s, the Islamists regime embarked on aggressive economic liberalization.

One of the politically motivated policies of the Islamists

regime was the destruction of agriculture, especially the Jazeera Cotton Scheme, which represented the backbone of export trade and source of foreign currency because it was the house of the strongly leftist-oriented Framers Union. Agriculture remained the backbone of the Sudanese economy, contributing to more than one-third of the country's GDP and account for the livelihood of 80% of the population. With a total area of 684 million acres of land and substantial economic resources, including arable and grazing land, water, livestock, minerals, gold, and diversified climate zones, the government could have used these natural resources to produce many types of crops such as cotton, sorghum, groundnuts, sesame, Arabic gum, wheat, and sunflower. The government targeted the three sectors of agriculture (the traditional rainfed, the mechanized rainfed, and the irrigated areas) for two different reasons: to suppress political opposition and generate revenues to finance the enormous bureaucratic apparatus. The policy against agriculture discriminates against cotton by effectively destroying the Jazeera Scheme. Other crops suffered heavy explicit and implicit taxation. Producers of cotton and groundnuts suffered from the fact that the government priced their crops at values that were lower than their market prices. In contrast, their inputs were valued at the higher free market rate and thereby disincentivizing the producers of these crops (Mahran, 2003). Therefore, the farmers deserted agriculture and migrate to Khartoum to work in foreign currency speculations, thus creating severe urbanization problems and deprived the country of valuable agricultural products.

Other sectors suffer similar types of harmful policies, such as Sudan Railways, which also housed the strong leftist Workers Union. The net outcome of all these policies was the gradual decline of the whole economy, bringing it to the edge of collapse and leading to crises in all essential commodities and account for the thorny issues which the Transitional Government is facing now. The crisis is evident in the shortage of bread crisis, the deficiency in the supply of oil and gas, the debacles of security and peace issues, and the problem of eradicating corruption. The culminating effect of these problems was to ignite the sparks of the revolution in all urban and rural areas in Sudan. Despite the importance of these factors, the economic crisis that caused the downfall of the regime originates in part from South Sudan's secession in 2011. The establishment of an independent state in the South deprived the government from the nearly three quarters of oil revenue because most of the discovered oil fields exist in the Independent state of South Sudan.

Previously, oil exports provided half of all tax revenues and two-thirds of Sudan's foreign exchange revenues. Although the secession agreement provided for a series of lump-sum payments of around three billion from the South to Khartoum, but soon the South failed to provide these lump-sum amounts of money because of the civil

war which broke out in the newly independent state of South Sudan between competing tribal elites in December 2013. The inability of the Islamists policymaking system to deal with the crises worsened by international isolation, the US sanctions led to shortages of hard currencies reserves, which resulted in a lack of fuel. A small boom in gold production has not made up for the loss of oil revenues because traders decline to sell their gold to the Central Bank and instead smuggled it to countries where prices are higher. Furthermore, Sudan's foreign debt, estimated at 60 billion, prevents Sudan from accessing foreign loans, except for some intermittent loans from Gulf states. Its designation by the US as a state sponsoring terrorism deprived it of illegible debt relief under the joint International Monetary Fund-World Bank Heavily Indebted Poor Country Initiative (HIPC). Other policies encouraged by the IMF, such as the devaluation of the national currency and cutting off of state subsidies to social services, led to more decline in the standard of living (The International Crisis Group, 2019). In addition to these problems, the voluminous malfeasance, graft, and corruption among the Islamists elites aggravated and deepen the crises.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research question

The main research question of this article is "what are the attitudes of Sudanese citizens towards the new Transitional Government's performance regarding certain policy issues?" Since the study is only exploratory, the authors adopt a convenient sample. Convenience sampling of research subjects from social media is becoming more appropriate and is frequently used by researchers. To address this research question and the exploratory purpose of this article, the authors design a questionnaire to collect the data for this article through an online survey sent to Sudanese individuals active in social media because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The authors have selected the questionnaire questions with the help of a professional statistician and IT specialist to address the core issue policy areas. The IT specialist has overseen and helped in the outreach for respondents and, together with the statistician, assisted in tabulating the raw data. In designing the questionnaire, the IT specialist has facilitated the QuestionPro tool which is an online survey software used to create, distribute, and analyze surveys and questionnaires. It facilitates creating a range of online questions such as multiple-choice questions, dropdown lists, and many other forms of questions. It also supports the distribution of survey questions through social media platforms, emails, and websites. The software provides raw data in various file formats such as Excel, SPSS, and CVS. It also supports the application of some initial descriptive statistical analysis of data and some charts. The authors distributed the questionnaire online using Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and other Sudanese social media groups during the period extending between March and May 2020. The survey link was distributed via multiple social media that are known to have Sudanese members. These include WhatsApp groups, Facebook, and were sent through Twitter accounts. The survey link would lead the respondent directly to the survey page, accessible by smartphones, tablets, and laptops. Thus, though appropriate to the exploratory nature of this article, the data collected express the

opinions of these groups exclusively and do not represent the opinion of Sudanese people at large. The data collection tool, the questionnaire, consists of 33 questions reflecting the respondents' views about the performance of the new Transitional Government in different consequential policy issue areas.

The questionnaire utilizes the Likert Scale consisting of five scores and ranging between 1 indicating strong disagreement, 2 indicating disagreement, 3 depicting a neutral response, 4 showing agreement, and 5 indicating strong agreement with the different statements of the questionnaire. Therefore, a mean response closer to 2 represents disagreement, and consequently, a mean response above three represents agreement with the views of the survey. A mean around 3 indicates indecisiveness and neutrality towards the specific issue area. Each issue area is operationally defined by several statements grouped under one table bearing the name of the issue area. The authors have also calculated the means and standard deviation for each statement and use the grand mean (the mean of means) to represent the sample's average response on each of the tables. The research has encountered certain limitations mainly arising from the Covid 19 pandemic, which limited the researchers' ability to facilitate in-person questionnaire distribution. This fact limits the applicability of research findings to specific sections of the Sudanese population. However, this limitation is not very serious since the article's objective is to collect preliminary data to help future researchers develop an in-depth study of the present Sudanese debacle.

### Sample description

The authors distributed 1000 questionnaires. The sample size after the exclusion of ones not completed is 792, 75% (594) were males, and 25% (198) females (only one respondent didn't indicate their gender type). Based on education levels, 0.25% just completed primary, and 0.25% middle-school, 5.8% high school, 5.4% with Diploma, 51.9% with Bachelor degree and 36.4% hold post-graduate degrees (only one person didn't specify the education level). According to the age groups, there is 1.4% of age less than 20; 15.4% between 20 and 29; 23.9% between 30 and 39; 21.8% between 40 and 49; 23.6% between 50 and 59; and 13.9% are 60 or over. Based on the respondent's occupation there are 8.1% students, 4.5% are labor workers, 52.3% are professional workers, 17.3% are business persons or freelancers, 9.2% are unemployed, or homemakers and 8.6% are educators. Regarding the geographical areas of the respondents, there were 65.4% from the middle region, 23.86% from the Northern region, 5.56% from the Western region, 4.42% are from the eastern region and 0.76% are from the Southern region. In terms of political party affiliation, 87.2% are not affiliated with any political party, while 12.8% are members of a political party. On the other hand, there are 62.6% of the respondent indicated that trust the SPA, and 37.4% do not.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Data analysis

Table 1 concerns the issues related to the policymaking system, which have emerged after the triumph of the December 2019 revolution. The first statement in table 1, "I believe the distribution of government powers between the civilians and military is fair," reflects the belief of the respondents that the distribution of government powers between the civilians and military is not fair with only 19.4% of the respondents are in favor, and 52.4% are

against the proposition, with 28.2% are either neutral or not responded. The mean of 2.6 with SD 1.152 supports this conclusion, which is explainable by the widespread opposition among the respondents to the participation of the military in the Sovereignty Council because all of them were active members in the defunct government. This conclusion finds additional support from the respondents' reaction to the statement "the Transitional Government powers are not efficiently utilized". Whereas 78.5% believe that the Transitional Government does not use their powers efficiently, only 10.1% cast positive responses, and 11.4% are neutral or did not respond to the statement. The high mean score of 3.98 supports this conclusion, which indicates the belief of the respondents that the Transitional Government is not utilizing its powers efficiently. The responses to the third statement, "the military component in the Sovereignty Council impedes the government performance," shows that while a majority of the 63% of the respondents blame the military component in the Sovereignty Council for the impediment of the Transitional Government performance, a minority of 22.2% does not subscribe to this assertion with 14.8% are either neutral or did not address the statement. The high mean score of 3.67 with SD 1.285 sustains the conclusion that the military members in the Sovereignty Council are to be blamed for the disruption of the government work.

However, a majority also holds the belief that "the diversity and disharmony among the Freedom and Change forces hinder the government decision-making," with 76.4% agreement with that statement. While only a minority of 11.6% opposes the statement, 12% are either neutral or did not respond to the statement. The high mean score of 4.02 and SD 1.064 supports this conclusion. Moreover, most respondents believe that "the anti-revolution groups obstruct the government decision-making and policy implementation negatively," with 51.6% supporting the statement. Whereas 25.5% disagree with it, 22.9% are either neutral or did not respond to the statement. The high mean score of 3.53 and SD 1.267 lend considerable support to this statement. Finally, regarding the last statement, "the previous regime affiliates obstruct the government decision-making and policy implementation," the respondents believe that the previous regime affiliates impede the government decisions and actions, with 59% subscribing to the statement. While 28.6% oppose it, 12.4% are either neutral or did not respond. The high mean score of 3.45 and SD 1.298 support the assertion in the question. In conclusion, the responses to the statements in Table 1 reveal the mistrust and suspicions shared by the respondents against the military members and the role of the previous regime's supporters. The grand mean of 3.49 and Std. 1.2 reveals the unsuccessful efforts to reform the policymaking system.

Table 2 includes questions regarding economic problems and issues inherited from the previous regime. While only a minority of 27.1% agree with the statement

**Table 1.** Policy making issues.

Question	No.	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
I believe the distribution of government powers between the civilians and military is fair	792	1	5	2.26	1.5
The transitional government powers are not efficiently utilized	792	1	5	3.98	1.0
The military component in the Sovereignty Council impedes the government performance	792	1	5	3.67	1.3
The diversity and disharmony among the Freedom and Change forces hinder the government decision-making	792	1	5	4.02	1.1
The anti-revolution groups obstruct the government decision-making and policy implementation	792	1	5	3.53	1.3
The previous regime affiliates obstruct the government decision-making and policy implementation	792	1	5	3.45	1.2
Grand Mean	792	1	5	3.49	1.2

**Table 2.** Economic issues.

Question	No.	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
The transitional government policies help in resolving the economic pressing issues	792	1	5	2.60	1.2
The declining exchange rate of the national currency against the USA dollar is due to the speculations of some influenced people who are dedicated to the old regime	792	1	5	3.59	1.4
Subsidies for strategic goods encourage their smuggling to neighborhood countries	792	1	5	3.72	1.2
I believe the economy is satisfactorily improving	792	1	5	2.27	1.0
The political freedom to me is more important to me than economic issues	792	1	5	2.70	1.3
Grand Mean	792	1	5	2.98	1.2

that the "Transitional Government policies help resolve the economic issues" inherited from the previous regime, 50.2% do not support the statement, and 21.6% are either neutral or did not respond to the statement. The low mean scores of 2.6 and SD 1.193 indicates low approval levels to the Transitional Government effort to straighten up the economic issues. Regarding the statement "The declining exchange rate of the national currency against the USA dollar is due to the speculations of some influential people who are dedicated to the previous regime", 59.9% agree with it, and 24.5% are against it, and 25.6% are either neutral or did not respond to the question. The steep decline of Sudanese currency exchange rates against the dollar is responsible for the deterioration of living standards. The high mean score of 3.59 and SD 1.351 lend support to the idea that currency speculators associated with the previous regime use their monopoly status to attack the local currency to augment the economic problems inherited from the previous government.

A total of 63.7% of the respondents believe that "government subsidies for strategic goods encourage their smuggling to neighboring countries" while 24.4% are against this assertion, and 11.9% are either neutral or did not respond to the question. The high mean score of 3.72 and SD 1.225 supports the statement. In response to the statement, "I believe the economy is satisfactorily improving," whereas only 13.7% believe that the economy is satisfactorily improving, 61.2% disagree with the assertion, and 25.1% are either neutral or did not respond to the question. The low score of the mean of

2.27 and SD 1.016 supports the statement. Notably, 48.4% agree with the statement "the political freedom is more important to me than the economic issues, and 29% are against it, while 22.6% are either neutral or did not respond to the statement. The low score of the mean of 2.7 and SD1.321 proves that economic issues are more important than political freedom. In conclusion, the respondents believed that the Transitional Government fails to resolve the persistent economic problems. The most astonishing result is that the respondents believe that political freedom is more important than economic issues. However, the low grand mean of 2.98 and Std. 1.0 underscore the failure of the government to address the economic problems.

Table 3 deals with the acute bread shortages, which is evident in the long queues in front of bread bakeries. Regarding the statement "the shortage of the bread is created by the previous regime influential members", whereas 49.6% express agreement with the statement that the previous regime influential affiliates create the bread crisis, and 30.9% disagree with the statement with 19.5% are either neutral or did not respond to the question. The relatively high mean score of 3.34 and SD 1.391 substantiates this conclusion. This conclusion is further confirmed by the response to the statement that "the distribution of the bread flour procedure continues as before the revolution," in which a majority of 55.4% agrees with the statement and 11.1% are against it. In comparison, 34.5% are either neutral or did not respond to the question. The mean score of 3.66 and SD 0.941 substantiates this conclusion. In response to the

**Table 3.** Bread crises.

Question	No.	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
The shortage of bread is created by the previous regime influential members	792	1	5	3.34	1.4
The distribution of the bread flour procedure continues as before the revolution	792	1	5	3.66	.94
The management of the Bakeries and government oversight over them are weak	792	1	5	4.07	.94
Some of the military members of the government benefit from the shortage of bread	792	1	5	3.28	1.2
The transitional government is working hard to resolve the shortage of the bread problem	792	1	5	3.52	1.2
The government failed to provide the bakeries with enough flour	792	1	5	2.62	1.2
Grand Mean	792	1	5	3.42	1.1

statement, "the management of the Bakeries and government oversight over them are weak, while 71.9% of the respondents agree with this statement, 7.6% disagree with it. However, 20.5% are either neutral or did not respond to the statement. The high mean score of 4.07 and SD 0.943 attest to the fact the respondents are not happy with how the government addresses the bread crises, which has originated in the previous regime, its malfeasance, and monopolies.

In the statement that "some of the military members of the government benefit from the shortage of the bread," unexpectedly, 43.3% of the respondents believe that some of the military members of the Sovereignty Council benefit from the shortage of the bread, and 26% are not supporting this statement with 30.7% are either neutral or did not respond to the question. The high mean score of 3.28 and SD 1.243 substantiates this conclusion. The statement that "the Transitional Government is working hard to resolve the shortage of the bread problem" is supported by 47.9% and opposed by 21.9%, whereas 31.2% are either neutral or did not respond to the question. The mean score of 3.52 and SD 1.239 lend support to this conclusion. Regarding the statement "The government failed to provide the bakeries with enough flour" is endorsed by 22.5% are and rejected by 50.6%, with 26.9% either neutral or did not respond to the questions. The low mean scores of 2.62 and SD 1.88 is good news to the Transitional Government.

In conclusion, although a majority of the respondents express their belief in the Transitional Government, they believe the bread issue is deliberately perpetuated by the supports of the previous regime to destabilize the Transitional Government. Again, the mistrust towards the military members of the government reappears again here. Although the grand mean for this issue area is slightly above 3 with Std.1.1, it indicates moderate, though not consequential, success for the government efforts to address bread issues.

Table 4 also deals with the very pressing public policy issues of the acute shortage of oil and cooking gas, which stifled the country and impeded the movement of goods and services. The problem is inherited from the previous regime. The statement that "the previous regime affiliates deliberately perpetrate the oil and gas shortage"

gains the approval of 49.7% of the respondents. However, 30% of the respondents do not agree with the statement, and 20.3% are either neutral or did not respond to the statement. A high mean score of 3.34 and SD 1.138 in table 4 indicates considerable agreement with the statement. This conclusion is supported by the responses to the statement that "the previous regime supporters use the shortage of oil and gas as a tactic to overthrow the Transitional Government." This statement is endorsed by a majority of 68.7% of the respondents, while 11.9% are against the statement, and 19.4% are either neutral or did not respond to the statement. The high mean score of 3.96 and SD 1.100 indicates the high level of agreement among the respondents concerning the role of the previous regime's supporters to destabilize the Transitional Government.

Nevertheless, the statement that "the shortage of oil and gas is due to the failure of the government to provide enough quotas of these commodities" receives the agreement of 30.3% with a majority of 43.3% blaming the Transitional Government for this shortage, with 26.4% of the respondents are either neutral or did not respond to the question. The table shows a relatively low mean score of 2.83 and SD 1.186 that sustains the statement. The responses to the statement "managing, distributing and monitoring of oil and gas are not done properly" substantiate the previous results, with 72.6% of the respondents supporting the statement with only 5.8% disagree with it, and only 20.4% of the respondents are either neutral or did not respond to the statement. The mean score of 4.1 and SD 0.861 carries no good news to the Transitional Government since a large portion of the respondents blames it for this failure. It seems from the responses in this table that the respondents blame the Transitional Government for the shortage of oil and cooking gas. The grand mean of 3.56 and Std. 1.1 points to slightly positive views about the efforts of the government in this issue area.

Table 5 unveils the altitudes of the sample towards the sensitive issue of internal security and the civil war. The response to the statement that "the Transitional Government succeeded in enforcing internal security" is approved by 26.5% only. 38.3% of the respondents reveal negative attitudes towards the efforts of the Transitional



**Table 4.** Oil and gas problems.

Question	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std.
The previous regime affiliates deliberately create the Oil and Gas shortage	792	1	5	3.34	1.3
The previous regime supporters use the shortage of oil and gas to overthrow the transitional government	792	1	5	3.96	1.1
The shortage of oil and gas is due to the failure of the government to provide enough quotas for these commodities	792	1	5	2.83	1.2
Managing, distributing, and close monitoring of oil and gas are not done properly	792	1	5	4.10	.86
Grand Mean	792	1	5	3.56	1,1

**Table 5.** Peace and security problems

Question	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
The transitional government succeeded in enforcing internal security	792	1	5	2.77	1.1
The peace negotiation process with the militant groups is going on the right way	792	1	5	3.08	1.1
The personal interest of some of the military body in the government jeopardizes the peace process	792	1	5	3.59	1.145
I believe we will reach a comprehensive peace soon	792	1	5	3.34	1.1
Handing the former president to ICC will expedite the peace process	792	1	5	3.76	1.2
The behavior of the policemen and other security staff towards the civilian has changed,	792	1	5	2.58	1.2
Grand Mean	792	1	5	3.1	1.1

Government in this area, 35.2% of the respondents are either neutral or did not respond to the statement. The low mean scores of 2.77 and SD 1.129 indicates dissatisfaction with the government efforts in the area of peace and security. The attitude of the respondents towards the statement "the peace negotiation process with the militant groups is going on the right way" is not optimistic and gets the approval of only 37.3%. With the disapproval of 26.8%, 35.9% are either neutral or did not respond to the question. With a mean score of 3.08 and SD 1.088, the Transitional Government receives moderate support in this issue. The statement that "the personal interest of some of the military members in the government jeopardizes the peace process" is approved by a majority, 52.6%, disapproved by 17%, and 30.4% who are either neutral or did not respond to the statement. The mean score of 3.59 and SD 1.145 supports this conclusion. Regarding the question "The personal interest of some of the members of the military body in the government jeopardizes the peace process," with a mean of 3.59 and SD of 1.145, the respondent reveals a deep mistrust of the military component intentions. This conclusion is a natural because the members of the military component were top officials in the previous regime.

The vital statement, "I believe we will reach a comprehensive peace agreement with the militant groups soon," receives 44.7% approval. While 19% are against 36.3% are either neutral or did not respond to the question. The mean score of 3.34 and SD 1.089 is

relatively optimistic in this crucial area. The statement "handing over the former president (Omer Bashir) to International Criminal Court will expedite the peace process" receives the approval of 58%, the disapproval of 16.5%, and 25.5% of the respondents are either neutral or did not respond to the statement. The high mean score of 3.76 and SD 1.271 indicates substantial approval from the respondents since the issue is closely related to ending the civil war in Dar Fur and the Blue Nile region. The statement regarding "the behavior of the policemen and other security forces towards the civilian has changed" seems to get very low approval of 23.6% compared to the 46.7%, who believe the security forces have not changed their behavior, with 29.7% are either neutral or not respond to the question. The mean score of 2.58 and SD of 1.245 prove this conclusion. The grand mean of 3.1 and Std. 1.1 indicates the respondents' general indecisive position toward the government's achievement regarding the thorny issue of peace and security.

Table 6 deals with the corruption problem that occupies a central place in the Transitional Government's agenda because of the prevalence of corruption and malfeasance in the previous regime. Therefore, the statement that "I don't think there is significant corruption in the country" receives only 7.0% approval and 70.3% disapproval, and 22.7% are either neutral or did not respond to the question. The mean deficient scores of 1.88 and SD 1.007 indicate a strong belief in the prevalence of corruption. However, the statement "the government has

**Table 6.** Problems of corruption

Question	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
I don't think there is significant corruption in the country	792	1	5	1.68	1.0
The government has succeeded in eradicating the previous regime political organizations,	792	1	5	2.34	1.1
The government has succeeded in eradicating the previous regime economic organizations	792	1	5	2.15	.97
The existence of the previous regime influential affiliates is the leading cause behind the failure to uproot corruption	792	1	5	3.85	1.1
The transitional government has succeeded to eradicate corruption to some extent	792	1	5	3.00	1.1
There are some government members resisting the effort of fighting the corruption	792	1	5	3.96	1.0
Grand Mean	792	1	5	2.67	1.0

succeeded in eradicating the previous regime political organizations" receives a very low approval of only 17.2% of the respondents. While 53.9% disagree with the statement, 29.9% are either neutral or did not respond to the statement. The noticeably deficient mean scores of 2.34 and SD 0.076 suggest the failure of the Transitional Government to uproot corruption. The statement that "the government has succeeded in eradicating the previous regime economic organizations" gets the approval of only 10.4% of the respondents and the disapproval of 59.7%, with 29.9% who are either neutral or did not respond to the statement. Again, the low mean scores of 2.15 and SD 0.973 send a negative signal to the Transitional Government about its efforts to eradicate the previous regime's economic organization.

Regarding the statement, "the existence of the previous regime influential affiliates in the government institutions is the main cause behind the failure to eradicate corruption." While 64.1% agree with this assertion, only 13.1% disagree, and 22.9% are either neutral or did not respond to the question. The mean score of 3.85 and SD 1.121 is consistent with the views of the respondents in this statement.

The Transitional Government gains a slightly significant rate of approval to the statement "the Transitional Government has succeeded in eradicating the corruption to some extent," with 36.2% approving, 29.8% disapproving, and 34% are either neutral or did not respond to the question. The mean score of 3.0 and SD 1.136 gives the Transitional Government moderate approval. The response to the statement that "some government members resist the effort to eradicate corruption" is approved by 64.2% and disapproved by only 9.7%, with 26.1% are either neutral or did not respond to the question. The high mean score of 3.96 and SD 1.082 indicates the strong belief among the respondents of the role of the previous regime military elements in the Sovereignty Council and civil service as responsible for blocking the Transitional Government efforts to eradicate corruption. In conclusion to these results, one can safely say that the respondents generally believe that the government did nothing much to combat corruption. The grand mean of 2.67 and Std.1.0 indicate

the view of the respondent's that the government did nothing much to uproot the endemic corruption.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this study is exploratory. Therefore, it is difficult to provide any meaningful recommendations or definitive results. By writing this article, the authors intend to help future researchers to develop more sophisticated hypotheses to the area of politics and policymaking in the post-December revolution in Sudan. For this purpose, the article traces the evolution of the Sudanese poetical system and policymaking in an attempt to illuminate the roots of the present crisis that generates the package of the critical policy issue areas staring at the fragile Transitional Government and its institutions. The article highlighted the continuous efforts of the anti-revolution elements and the active pockets of resistance by the supporters of the defunct regime to destabilize and overthrow the new system. However, this conclusion is not very ambitious in terms of offering specific practical pieces of advice to the Transitional Government in the absence of testable hypotheses. Hence it is sufficient to summarize the significant findings of the study.

In general, the study has not brought good news to the Transitional Government. For example, issues areas receive grand means slightly above 3 with policymaking issues (3.49), economic issues (2.98), bread shortage (3.42), oil and gas shortage (3.56), peace and security (3.1), and (2.67) for the eradication of corruption. These results indicate the prevalence of indecisiveness and neutrality on the part of respondents. This behavior is not unexplainable at this stage. However, the grand mean of 2.98 for economic issues suggests the failure of the Transitional Government to address these critical economic issues. However, it is not astonishing at all that the Sudanese Professional Association (SPA), which effectively planned and direct the demonstrations against the previous regime, received the support of a majority of the respondents (62.6%).

Nevertheless, the respondents blame the Sovereignty Council for these failures. The study also clearly reveals

the mistrust and suspicions shared by the respondents against the military members in the government and the role played by the supporters of the previous regime in blocking the efforts of the government. They blame the military component in the government for the weak performance of the government. The respondents are generally unhappy with the Transitional Government performance on the other thorny issues. Still, in all these issues, they blame the anti-revolution and supporters of the previous regime for hindering the Transitional Government performance in different public policy issues.

The study highlights many managerial and administrative implications and challenges for the Transitional Government in Sudan and other governments that will take over after the transitional period. These challenges include the serious flaws in the edifice of the administrative apparatus, corruption, lack of transparency, lack of institutionalism, and good governance. The most damaging legacy of the previous regime is recruiting civil servants according to political loyalty rather than merit, thereby leading to declining indecency in the civil service. These challenges underlie the roots of almost all issues and crises encountered by the Transitional Government. Addressing these challenges represents the avenues for future researchers.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interest.

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